

Disclosing the Far East: Transpacific Encounters and the Beginnings of Global History in the  
Early Modern Iberian World (1565-1670)

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## ABSTRACT

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This dissertation avers that the transpacific circulation of narrative artefacts — travel accounts, letters, *relaciones*, and illustrated codices— enabled the emergence of a new global history that departs from the ancient tradition of universal history. In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Iberian missionaries and historians began to incorporate into their histories and chronicles of the Indies sources and material dealing with China, Japan and other regions of the Far East. The dissertation argues that this transpacific interaction enabled historians to produce synchronic modes of writing that were emancipated from ancient narrative models. To develop this argument, the dissertation examines how historians and missionaries gradually separated the reading of ancient books from their own modern experience of narrating the Far East. By incorporating sources and material produced mainly in Macau and Manila, scholars not only imported new knowledge related to East and Southeast Asia into the Iberian and European world, but they also transformed the genre of general and universal histories of the Indies developed during the 16th century in the New World. Instead of considering the gradual integration of America with Eurasia and Africa to be the main and only fact that defined the emergence of a new global history, this dissertation argues that it was the discovery of the Far East from the West Indies that enabled historians to create forms of writing global histories that departed from the tradition of universal history.

The dissertation puts into dialogue coexisting models and methods of composing global histories that emerged in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. To do so, I examine the emergence of narratives that integrated the Far East into historical genres developed in the West Indies during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In this part, I explore the writings of scholars who wrote about the Far East by projecting a perspective that emerged from their production developed in the West Indies: Martín de Rada (1533-78), Francisco Hernández (1517-1587), Juan González de Mendoza (1540-1617), José de Acosta (1540-1600), the authors of the Boxer codex (ca. 1590), Adriano de las Cortes (1577-1629), and Antonio de León Pinelo (1595-1660). Furthermore, the dissertation analyzes the emergence of global modes of writing by focusing on the writings of Jesuits who arrived in the Far East from the oriental Portuguese route, such as Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), Diego de Pantoja (1571-1618), and Nicolas Trigault (1577-1628). These correlated productions incorporated the Far East into the narratives of the Iberian world by redefining categories associated with the Orient and reformulating methods of historical writing. By building a corpus of sources that refer to the arrival of Iberians to the Far East, this dissertation advances the thesis that the creation of systems of exchange and the transpacific circulation of *relaciones*, letters, and codices made possible and shaped new forms of composing global histories in the early modern Iberian world.

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## ABBREVIATIONS OF LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

AGI	Archivo General de Indias (Seville, Spain)
AGMH	British Library (London, United Kingdom)
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid, Spain)
BNF	Bibliothèque National de France (Paris, France)
BNP	Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (Lisbon, Portugal)
BPR	Biblioteca del Palacio Real de Madrid (Madrid, Spain)
BPL	Boston Public Library (Boston, US)
BRAH	Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid, Spain)
HSA	Hispanic Society of America (New York, USA)
JCBL	John Carter Brown Library (Providence, USA)
LL	The Lilly Library (Bloomington, Indiana, US)
MPM	Museum Plantin-Moretus (Antwerp, Belgium)

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In loving memory of my father

## INTRODUCTION

### **I. Histories that Moved in the Early Transpacific Age**

This dissertation narrates two interrelated histories. The first recounts the emergence of new ways of writing and composing global histories in the Iberian world after the establishment of a transpacific route in the 1570s. This story explores texts and images that narrate the arrival of Iberians in the Far East and focuses on the production of narrative artifacts written and exchanged by missionaries and travelers between Manila, Macau, New Spain, the Iberian Peninsula, and Europe. The second details the role that the transoceanic circulation of narrative artifacts played in shaping a new global history that departed from the ancient model of universal history. Both stories take the Iberian world and globalization as their case study. In doing so, I examine how the local practice of writing literary reports, diaries, and letters interacts with the art of composing global histories. By examining these two interrelated histories, I argue that the creation of systems of communication and the production of new methods of historical writing shaped new forms of composing global histories in the Iberian world.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, concepts and categories associated with European discoveries were particularly dynamic and changeable. The evolution of the concept the New World (*Novus Orbis*, *Nuevo Mundo*), the term "Indies," and the geographical and historical distinctions between the East and West Indies are determined by the same historical and philological question: How did early modern scholars adapt ancient and medieval words and references to the experience of exploring and exchanging information in a global and transoceanic context? As I argue in this dissertation, the turning point that transformed

anachronistic modes of writing into synchronic forms of thinking in global terms was the period of transpacific encounters and exchanges that began in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Until the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, scholars had been writing and interpreting the New World and the East Indies through ancient and medieval sources written by Pliny the Elder, Ptolemy, Marco Polo, and others. This historical anachronism began to end in the second half of the 16th century, when the Portuguese arrived in China and Japan from the Indian run [*Carreira da India*] and the Spaniards established the Manila Galleon route. For the first time, these developments connected Asia to the Americas and the Portuguese Indian run to the Spanish western route. This global juncture of routes produced new modes of circulation and motivated new forms of writing and exchanging histories between the Iberian hubs of the Far East, which were Macau and Manila, and the Iberian hubs in Europe, Asia, and the New World: Rome, Madrid, New Spain, Lisbon, Goa, and Malacca. As this dissertation shows, the writing of literary reports and histories in the Iberian world did not simply reflect a process of gradual connection of separated worlds, but it was also producing a redefinition of coexistent anachronistic spatial configurations that were attached to the narratives that circulated through the writings of early modern missionaries and travelers.

By situating the transpacific encounters and productions at the center of my narrative, I displace the centrality of early Atlantic and Western narratives. According to Peter Sloterdijk, the Atlantic western turn and the “dis-Orientalization of European interests” began after Christopher Columbus and Magellan’s expeditions to the “East Indies.” Sloterdijk argues that “the revolutionary dis-Orientalization that begins with Columbus’s aspiration of searching for the East by sailing west made possible the emergence of a neo-Indian continent that was named

America.”<sup>1</sup> Sloterdijk observes that the “Globe Time” and the historical turn toward the West are interrelated dynamics that, starting with the discovery of the New World in 1492, motivated the denial of the “mythological and metaphysic primacy of the Orient”<sup>2</sup> and the beginnings of westernization and globalization. As this dissertation argues, more than the Atlantic discovery of the New world, the beginnings of globalization and the redefinition of a mythological Orient began during the early period of transpacific exploration.

Instead of associating the dynamics of globalization with the discovery of the New World and with the early period of Atlantic explorations (1492-1565), I investigate the process of rediscovering the Far East and its transpacific dynamics from the moment in which the Iberians finally reached the East Indies. Often neglected in early modern scholarly studies, the year 1565 is a major date in the history of European explorations that began with the voyages of Christopher Columbus and concluded with the scientific expeditions of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>3</sup> In the year of 1565, “the revolutionary dis-Orientalization that begins with Columbus’s aspiration of searching for the East”, in Sloterdijk's words, finally concludes with arrival in the Far East and with the route that connected the East Indies to the New World. It is from this moment that historians began to create new forms of exchanging information on a global scale. Similarly, scholars gradually began to realize that ancient words and ideas were no longer useful references to continue the modern exploration of the Orient.

Moreover, by examining the transpacific encounters and discoveries in the Far East, this dissertation questions the assumption that the main feature from the point of view of the

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Sloterdijk, *En el mundo interior del capital, Para una teoría filosófica de la globalización* (Madrid, Siruela, 2010), p. 52

<sup>2</sup> Peter Sloterdijk, *En el mundo interior del capital, Para una teoría filosófica de la globalización*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> In this dissertation, I define the beginnings of transpacific interaction in 1565, and not in 1522 with Megellan's expedition, because this is the beginning of a real circulation and exchange between the New World and Asia.

emergence of global history in the early modern period is the gradual integration of America with Eurasia and Africa. Thus it challenges the following argument delivered by Sanjay Subrahmanyam argued in his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France in 2013: "there is no doubt that the central objective fact from the point of view of a global history at the turn of the sixteenth century was the gradual integration of America with Eurasia and Africa."<sup>4</sup> Rather than considering the New World as something that had to be integrated into a pre-existent historical framework, I unpack instead how historical genres developed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century New World were exported and adapted into narratives dealing with the Far East and Asia. Through this lens, the dissertation does not simply focus on the ways that information, images, and objects were exchanged, but it better defines how circulating histories changed the process of writing itself. Thus, the dissertation explores those "histories that are in movement,"<sup>5</sup> as Subrahmanyam's articulates it, by focusing on the relationship between the dissemination of texts and images and the invention of modern forms of narrating the Orient.

In coining the term "connected histories," Subrahmanyam's proposed twenty years ago the methodology of tracing circulations and networks as an antidote that might transcend the partialities, prejudices, and artificial boundaries of national history.<sup>6</sup> Since the late 1990s, many books and articles have contributed to define an emergent discipline that promised to reimagine the past beyond the borders of national historiographies. More recently, Jeremy Adelman has inversely signaled the limits and exclusions of global history: "despite the mantras of integration and the inclusion on the planetary scale, global history came with its own segregation – starting

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<sup>4</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History* (Inaugural Lecture delivered on Thursday 28 November 2013), p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History*, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia." *Modern Asian Studies* 13, no. 3 (July 1997): 735-762.

with language. Historians working across borders merged their mode of communication in ways that created new walls."<sup>7</sup> Writing after the recent rise of conservative and anti-globalization nationalist movements, Adelman has further observed that, global historians have tended to favor narratives of integration by selecting transnational figures that symbolized a positive and inclusive form of globalism: "as the only game in town, globalization produced a new popular genre that might be called patriotic globalism."<sup>8</sup> As Adelman has pointed out, although often neglected by the supposedly inclusive narratives of global history, national narratives and anti-globalism are both "immersed in transnational mutual adoration networks."<sup>9</sup>

Entering the fray of these debates over global history and globalization, my dissertation studies the art of composing global histories in the Iberian world by defining how writings and cultural production about the Far East redefined historical narratives dealing with the Iberian expansion. The dissertation contributes to better understand how global history is constructed in the early modern period by making visible three points that are an essential part of the dynamics of globalization and global history in the early modern world.

First, by revealing the configuration of transpacific dynamics of circulation and the interrelated dialogue between literary accounts (relaciones, letters, diaries) and the composition of global histories, this dissertation illuminates how the New World appeared not just as a naked space to be written, but also as an agent that invents its own narratives and ways of representing the world that were applied beyond its own borders. As this dissertation demonstrates, it is not

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<sup>7</sup> Jeremy Adelman, "What is global history now? Historians cheered globalism with work about cosmopolitans and border-crossing, but the power of place never went away," Aeon, 2017, web.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Adelman, "What is global history now?" Aeon, 2017, web.

<sup>9</sup> Jeremy Adelman, "What is global history now?" Aeon, 2017, web.

the discovery of the New World and the gradual integration of America into a pre-existing historical framework that made it possible to think history in global terms, but rather the exportation of modes of writing and thinking the world that were first developed in the Americas. In other words, global history emerged when Asia began to be thought and written about from the Americas, not when the New World started to be written from Europe. This counterintuitive perspective complements a well-known Columbian perspective, which consisted of projecting onto the New World a European idealization that was related to the medieval East Indies. Instead of narrating the European discovery and invention of America, this dissertation examines how scholars projected narratives developed in the Americas onto Asia and how these narratives reconfigured the Spanish historical genres of chronicles and histories of the Indies.

Second, the dissertation reveals the importance of the appearance of synchronic methods of writing history in the formation of global narratives. The notion of synchronic histories refers to narratives that are emancipated from ancient and medieval literary forms of describing the Far East, the Indies, and the globe inherited in Europe. As this dissertation shows, the transoceanic circulation of *relaciones* and manuscripts enabled historians to produce gradually histories that separated gradually an old spatial configuration from the modern experience of traveling and producing narratives about the Far East. In the early modern period, geographers and historians depicted the Cathay of Marco Polo as a different kingdom than the China of the Ming dynasty. This form of duplication of the same historical and geographical space proves that there was not a systematic continuity between the medieval narratives of travelers and the writings of the early modern Iberian explorers who visited the Far East. By exchanging sources and manuscripts, scholars identified gradually differences between ancient forms of narrating the Far East and



their modern constructions. In doing so, they integrate the Far East into an interconnected narrative perspective and put in dialogue synchronic and global forms of historical writing.

Third, the dissertation questions conventional Eurocentric histories by signaling that China's hegemonic power in Asia evoked to the Europeans their own peripheral role. The dissertation shows how the awareness that China was the dominant power in the region stimulated Eurocentric notions and visions of European cultural and technological superiority in the writings of missionaries and historians. This new idealization of Europe is particularly recurrent in the writings of Jesuits established in China and Japan. Unlike the missionary experience in the West Indies, the Jesuits and missionaries in the Far East had to accommodate the doctrine to the customs and rules of China and Japan. On the other hand, the expansion from the Americas to the Far East challenged forms of representing the political and cultural domination developed in the Spanish Indies. After a short period in which the Spanish administration in the Philippines envisaged a military intervention in China, the Spanish missionaries and officials adapted their colonial dynamics attached to the New World to a multisided arena dominated by the economic and political power of China.

Moreover, besides the redefinition of the political agenda, the Spanish transpacific expansion represents a turning point in terms of circulation and exchange of commodities. As Andre Gunder Frank has demonstrated, "Christopher Columbus and after him many Europeans up until Adam Smith knew that the entire world economic order was Sinocentric."<sup>10</sup> As Frank skillfully argued, the peripheral economic role that Europe played in the Afro-Eurasian world economic network began to change when Europeans "plug the Americas into [the Far East] as

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<sup>10</sup> Andre Gunder Frank, *Reorient, Global Economy in the Asian Age*, Berkeley : University of California Press, c1998. P. 117.

well."<sup>11</sup> In other words, the so-called European hegemony in the modern world, which Frank situated not before the late 18<sup>th</sup>, began to be possible when Europeans participated in the Asian world economy through the surplus of production and the trade of gold and silver originated in the Americas. Following Frank's ideas in relation to the origins of Eurocentrism, this dissertation shows that the Iberian and European encounter with the Far East had a major impact in shaping the basis of narratives associated with the Western-European hegemony.

The modern discovery of China represents a turning point in the configuration of an early modern Iberian and European imagination. Besides the impact that the European trade through the Americas with China had in the transformation of the world economy, the circulation of manuscripts and books opened a range of possibilities for historical production and enabled historians to produce new forms of historical writing. Instead of incorporating the writings of ancient scholars, European historians began to produce new methods of writing about the Far East and about other remote regions in Asia. From this perspective, the goal of this dissertation is not simply to define how Iberians and Europeans discovered and narrated a modern Orient with their own eyes and words, but how the modern discovery of the Far East produced new historical narratives that gradually shaped a new consciousness of globalism in Europe.

The four chapters of the dissertation define how the writings and cultural production dealing with the Far East shaped new forms of composing global histories. Titled “New Spain Discovers Asia: Transpacific Interactions and the Art of Composing Global Histories,” the first chapter argues that the early transpacific interactions between China, Manila, and New Spain transformed historical genres developed in New Spain during the 16th century. The chapter explores the role of *relaciones* in the transformation of historical genres known as *historia*

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<sup>11</sup> Andre Gunder Frank, *Reorient*, p. 115.

*universal* and/or *general de las Indias* [universal and general History of the Indies]. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part examines accounts narrating Miguel Lopez de Legazpi's transpacific expedition in 1565 and it defines the role of the Spanish *relaciones* in the historical production related to the Indies. The second part examines Martín de Rada (1533-78) and Francisco Hernández's (1517-1587) works about China and Asia produced in Manila and New Spain during the 1570s. The third and final section focuses on Juan González de Mendoza's (1540-1617) *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reyno de la China* (1585) and José de Acosta's (1540-1600) *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* (1590), which represent a turning point in the transition towards the production of a new forms of composing global histories. These two works renovated the genre of chronicles of the Indies by incorporating the Far East into their scope. In this chapter, I argue that the early period of transpacific circulation of manuscripts enabled historians to transform the genre of chronicles of the Indies into an interconnected global narrative production.

The second chapter, titled "Visual Reports: Depicting Deities, Monsters, and Social Types in Manila," focuses on the Boxer Codex (BC, ca. 1590)), which is a manuscript that contains illustrations, *relaciones*, and narratives of ethnic groups of the western Pacific islands and continental Southeast and East Asia. The chapter explores how the culture of illustrated codices developed in New Spain during the 16th century was exported to and transformed in Manila during the 1590s. I concentrate on practices within the illustrated manuscript culture of the Americas and East Asia by examining the impact that images had on transforming ways of writing histories: How does the construction of narratives in the Boxer codex reformulate ways of conceiving the relationship between images and words? What kind of narrative artifact is the codex? Also divided in three parts, the first section focuses on the opening foldout image of the

codex and the first account, which both deal with the native people of the *Ladrones* islands. Next, the chapter explores how the interaction between text and image establishes religious, social, and political distinctions. The third section analyzes the parts of the BC related to China and defines modes of categorizing social types, deities, animals, and monsters by means of images and texts. By analyzing the *relaciones* and images included in the codex, this chapter shows that the BC is an artifact that reproduces and reformulates practices associated with the culture of composing illustrated codices in the New World.

Titled “Inverted Exoticism: Jesuits and the Idea of a Domestic Globe,” the third chapter examines the production and circulation of Jesuits letters, *relaciones*, and printed books dealing with China. Divided into three sections, the first part analyzes Diego de Pantoja’s (1571-1618) letter written in Spanish in 1602 (published in 1604) describing the Jesuit mission in Nanjing and Beijing. This section explores how and why Pantoja’s letter was translated, printed and diffused in Europe by the Jesuits. Next, I analyze Nicolas Trigault’s (1577-1628) *De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas* (1615) along with materials related to Trigault’s travels throughout Europe promoting the Jesuit mission in China. This second part examines *De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas* was also translated into many different languages and had a major impact in Europe as a rhetorical artifact intended to promote the Jesuit mission in China. The third and last section examines Adriano de las Cortes’ (1577-1629) *relación* produced in Manila in 1627. Adriano's *relación* recounts the captivity of a heterogeneous group of Japanese, Iberians, African slaves, and Indians from the Philippines who were imprisoned by the Chinese authorities after their ship sank on the coasts of China in 1625. The chapter argues that the Jesuit letters and manuscripts played a pivotal role in redefining a domestic conception of the world.

Similarly, the chapter shows how Jesuits writings articulated an inverted exotic image of the West Indies and Europe as seen through the eyes of the Chinese.

Titled "Writing the World in a Room: Codices, Artifacts, and the Material Turn of Global History," the fourth chapter explores the impact that the circulation of manuscripts and artifacts dealing with Asia and the Americas had on transforming scholarly practices in Europe. The chapter examines how the practice of collecting exotic artifacts changed the production of historical narratives dealing with Asia and the New World. The first part explores fray José de Sigüenza's (1544-1606) description of the library of El Escorial included in the *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo* (1605), focusing on the description of codices and scientific instruments. The second section analyzes Antonio de León Pinelo's (1595-1660) archival work related to the East and West Indies by concentrating on Pinelo's *Epitome de la Biblioteca Oriental I Occidental* (1629) and *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo* (1645-50). Finally, the chapter examines Athanasius Kircher's (1602-1680) *China Illustrata* (1667) and it explores Kircher's activity in the *Museum Kircherianum*. This final chapter illuminates how the practice of collecting exotic material and sources reformulated discourses about antiquity and enabled historians and antiquarians to create new methods of historical writing: How did scholars incorporate knowledge from exotic codices into their historical writings? How did exotic artifacts (tablets, codices, images, letters, and figures) transform scholarly practices of antiquarians? By analyzing the art of collecting exotic artifacts, the chapter argues that the accumulation in Europe of artifacts and sources dealing with Asia and the New World opened the range for new methods of composing global histories in the early modern period.

## II. Global History and the Multiple Sides of the Iberian Globalization

As scholars have often observed, global history does not mean telling the story of everything in the world. Global history refers to a method, and not to a comprehensive coverage of a geographical and historical domain. As a methodology, it places the emphasis on connections, scale and integration.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, global history does not necessarily develop an absolute point of view about the globe or about a particular region. In his book *What is Global History?* Sebastian Conrad proposes three different varieties of global history as they are practiced today. The first way to approach global history refers to the history of everything and to the history of what happens worldwide. The second paradigm focuses on exchange and connection and it can be applied to all places and to all times. The third approach, which is the main topic of Conrad's book, reflects on global integration in a global scale. According to Conrad, this third approach emphasizes the global conditions that made possible and shaped historical narratives emerging in a particular setting.<sup>13</sup> Closer to this third approach, my dissertation defines the global conditions that made possible and shaped historical narratives that emerged in the Iberian world from the early interactions in the Far East until the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The goal of this dissertation is not to provide a comprehensive coverage of Iberian sources dealing with the Far East. On the contrary, the goal is to define the emergence of a historical narrative in the Iberian world by exploring how the discovery of the Far East and the Iberian globalization altered ways of writing and knowing the world.

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<sup>12</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History*, p. 5. As Subrahmanyam observes, Fernand Braudel applied the term global history to the idea of a “total history.”

<sup>13</sup> Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton University Press, 2016), p. 10.

The process of global integration in the early modern period accelerated irreversibly when a transpacific route connected Asia to the New World and new forms of circulation and exchange were progressively established in the Iberian world. The new forms of global exchange that emerged in this context were not simply transforming a world-wide economic system, but it also made possible and shaped new forms of producing historical narratives. However, instead of defining the beginnings of global history as a unique method of historical writing that refers to global integration, I have identified a heterogeneous corpus of *relaciones* and histories that emerged in dialogue with the global conditions of the period and with a new global consciousness that was completely emancipated from ancient modes of writing and thinking the world. Through this lens, the dissertation examines how historians and travelers gradually distanced themselves from ancient methods of narrating the Far East. As this dissertation shows, it was in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century that scholars realized that the writings of ancients were no longer a useful framework and reference to think and write about Asia and the New World.

The tendency in global history has been to avoid questions that refer to the literary and philological dimension of globalization. In this dissertation, the creation of methods and forms of composing global histories refer mainly to the appearance of new ways of writing about remote worlds in the texts of Iberian scholars and travelers. I have defined the early modern transition towards a real awareness of globalism by examining ancient and modern narratives in the work of Iberian scholars and travelers.<sup>14</sup> In the early modern period, words and categories applied to the New World and Asia were flexibly used and they were often anachronistically read and

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<sup>14</sup> I draw the expression "awareness of globality" from Roger Chartier's comment on Serge Gruzinski and Sanjay Subrahmanyam's articles included in a collective volume that appeared after the Journée d'études "Penser le monde, xve-xvme siècle?" organized in may 2000. Roger Chartier, "La conscience de la globalité (commentaire)," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 56e Année, No. 1. Cambridge University Press (Jan. - Feb., 2001), pp. 119-123.

interpreted. For instance, the Cathay of Marco Polo was read and even mapped by late 16<sup>th</sup> century scholars as something different from early modern China. Similarly, the term West Indies was applied to a large geographical area that included the New World and the Western islands of the Pacific Ocean. In the same way, the notion of "new world" was applied to regions in the Far East, including China. More than the effect of a plurality of time, the flexibility of these words and notions reflects the coexistence of a plurality of narratives that were temporally and spatially disordered. It is mainly in the reconfiguration of terms, narratives, and concepts applied to remote worlds that we can speak about the emergence of new methods of composing global histories that shaped a new consciousness of globalism in the early modern period.

Scholars have often defined the existence of "plural temporalities" in the Renaissance. In *Anachronic Renaissance*, Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood explored how the plural temporality of works of art "generated the effect of a doubling or bending of time."<sup>15</sup> According to Nagel and Wood, "what was distinctive about the European Renaissance, so called, was its apprehensiveness about the temporal instability of the art work, and its re-creation of the artwork as an occasion for reflection in that instability."<sup>16</sup> Recently, Serge Gruzinski has examined the production of Iberian histories in *La machine à remonter le temps*. In this book, Gruzinski explores how Iberian scholars began to fabricate and impose a universal way of constructing the past to other societies in the world. As Gruzinski signals, "globes and maps of the world became the instruments to penetrate distant lands, they allow to control economic routes and the Imperial spaces."<sup>17</sup> As Gruzinski observes, the imposition of forms of writing history and the so-called

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<sup>15</sup> Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*, p. 13

<sup>17</sup> My own translation. Serge Gruzinski, *La Machine à Remonter le Temps, Quand l'Europe S'est Mise à Écrire L'histoire du Monde* (Paris: Fayard, 2017), p. 17.



homogenization of the space occurs in parallel with a process of homogenization of the past that impacted the whole world: "gradually, in the whole planet, the relation to the past became homogenous in turn. Or rather, the time of European elites provides the time of the globe, a universal time everywhere oriented and cut out in past, present, and future."<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, Gruzinski had previously explored the 16<sup>th</sup> century dynamics of globalization and the Iberian dreams of conquest in China and America in *The Eagle & the Dragon*.<sup>19</sup> In this book, Gruzinski examines the projects of conquest in China and Mexico led by Tomé Pires and Hernán Cortes that were simultaneously initiated in 1516 and 1517. As Gruzinski signals, "it was with Iberian globalization that Europe, the New World and China became world partners."<sup>20</sup> By analyzing this process of simultaneity in the Iberian world, Gruzinski concludes that "failure in Asia and the impossibility of conquering China made the Pacific into a boundary between worlds, a huge gulf between East and West. And America was for a long time chained to the Old World."<sup>21</sup> As Gruzinski suggests at the end of his book, the impossibility of conquering China represented a breakdown in the history of the Iberian expansion. However, although the Far East remained a sinocentric world and Iberians had to adapt their expansionist agenda to the dynamics of the region, this dissertation shows that the transpacific interactions in the Far East played a fundamental role in the shaping of a global consciousness in the Iberian world.

In the writings of late 16<sup>th</sup> century scholars, the coexistence of narrative spatial configurations that belong to different periods of time shows that the transition towards a real

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<sup>18</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *La Machine à Remonter le Temps*, p. 17.

<sup>19</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *The Eagle & the Dragon, Globalization and European Dreams of Conquest in China and America in the Sixteenth century*, translated by Jean Birrell, first published in Fayard as *L'Aigle et le Dragon* in 2012 (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014)

<sup>20</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *The Eagle & the Dragon*, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Serge Gruzinski, *The Eagle & the Dragon*, p. 277.

awareness of globalism dealt primary with the long process of separating the writings of ancient and medieval authors from new methods of composing global histories. This process of reconfiguration took place through the redefinition of ancient words and narratives. However, this redefinition of histories does not reflect simply a process of a homogenous globalization and westernization of the world. The study of histories in the Iberian transpacific context shows that the transformative evolution of histories integrates always *mixturas* that are the product of a collective and delocalized historical production.

In the writings of Juan González de Mendoza and in the Boxer codex, which are analyzed in the first and second chapter, a writing method originated in the Americas is applied to the cultures and communities of the Far East. In the third chapter, the circulation of forms of writing is analyzed by opposing two *relaciones* that develop a different approach to describe China in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. On the one hand, the letter-*relación* written by the Spanish Jesuit Diego de Pantoja projects an experience that emanates from a background in Europe and Macau that is related to the Jesuit education of missionaries sent to Japan and China. On the other hand, the *relación* written by the Jesuit Adriano de las Cortes reflects a previous experience of years as missionary in the Visayan Islands in the Philippines. Unlike Diego de Pantoja's letter, Adriano de las Cortes develops an ethnographical writing that is closely related to the process defined in this dissertation: the extension and circulation of modes of writing from the West Indies to Asia. In my dissertation, the notion of histories that are in movement does not refer simply to the exchange of books and letters, but also to the circulation of methods of writing histories that were also circulating and applied to different political and geographical realities.

In this dissertation, I use the terms global history and Iberian globalization to describe a multi-sided process that involved interactions across the political, religious, and scientific

spheres and that neither signified Iberian domination over the Orient, nor gradual political integration on a global scale. On the contrary, the multiple actors that intervened in the transpacific arena and the impossibility of exporting the Spanish colonial model developed in the Americas to the Far East announced rather a period of relapse in the Spanish expansionist agendas. As Manel Ollé has explored, soon after the arrival of Spaniards to the Philippines, several missionaries began to plan the conquest of China. Discussed by scholars during the 1570s and 1580s, the project of conquering China was however abandoned after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The debate dealing with the conquest of China determined the writings of Spanish scholars and historians during the first period of transpacific exchange (1565-1590), which are examined in the first chapter of this dissertation.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, as Robert Markley has shown, the European representations of the Far East need to be read in light of Europeans' awareness that China was the dominant power in the region. By questioning conventional Eurocentric histories, Markley signals through the reading of canonical English authors that China's hegemonic power in Asia evoked to the English their own peripheral role and challenged their Eurocentric notions. According to Markley, the experience of Europeans in the early modern period stimulated visions of western cultural and technological superiority.<sup>23</sup> The arrival of Iberians to the Far East also challenged their own forms of representing a political and cultural domination. However, Iberian historians do not reproduce a homogenous image of the Far East. The Portuguese João de Barros (1496-1570) and Cristóbal de Acosta (1515-1594) maintained in their works that China was the most advanced

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<sup>22</sup> For this question, see Manel Ollé, *La empresa de china, de la Armada Invencible al Galeón de Manila* (Barcelona: Acantilado, 2002)

<sup>23</sup> Robert Markley, *The Far East and the English Imagination (1600-1730)* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). See also, Christina Lee, *Western Visions of the Far East in a transpacific Age 1522-1657*, Introduction.

kingdom in the world. On the Spanish side, the experience of conquest in the Americas and the rivalries with Portugal determined their historical production. According to José de Acosta, although China and Japan were among the most sophisticated civilizations in the world, an Indian from Peru or Mexico who has learned to read and write with Spanish missionaries know more than the wisest Mandarin.<sup>24</sup>

Moreover, although the period following the arrival of Iberians to the Far East was soon marked by the commencements of Imperial crisis, it also signaled the beginning of the Iberian union of crowns (1580-1640). This political union did not suppose however a complete juncture of the two colonial branches of the Iberian world. The cities of Manila and Macau had their own local dynamics. There were moments of both collaboration and rivalry in the Far East during the Iberian union of crowns period. From this perspective, the dissertation does not reduce the Iberian transpacific world to a homogenous and unilateral process of integration. On the contrary, it explores coexisting models that emerged simultaneously in relation to a multifaceted Iberian globalization that was continuously redefining the historical production of the expansion and the intricate art of composing global histories. As this dissertation shows, the multisided environment of the Far East challenged Iberian forms of representing their political and cultural domination and stimulated methods of writing histories that shaped a new form of global consciousness. Completely emancipated from the writings of ancients, the new art of composing global histories emerged only as a possible narrative when Iberians finally reached the Far East and dis-Orientalized the phantasies of monsters and marvels that had been rooted in the European minds for centuries.

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<sup>24</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Naatural y Moral de las Indias*, p. 322.

## CHAPTER I

### **New Spain Discovers Asia: Transpacific Interactions and the Art of Composing Global Histories**

In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Spanish word *India* was still associated with the Orient and with the endings of Asia. As it is noted in Covarrubias's dictionary, *India* meant first an "Oriental region," and second, "the end of Asia."<sup>25</sup> Covarrubias' definition included both the *Indias Orientales*, which corresponded with the lands of South and Southeast Asia, and the *Indias Occidentales*, which were the lands discovered by Spaniards in the Americas and the Pacific Ocean. In Covarrubias' dictionary, the definition of *India* also distinguishes between ancient and modern Indies: "today there is more information about the Indies than in ancient times. There are Oriental and Western Indies."<sup>26</sup> Covarrubias' definition shows that the term *India* meant simultaneously different and even contradictory things. On the one hand, *India* is an oriental region. On the other, the definition adds that *India* can also be Occidental. Moreover, the dictionary completes the definition by observing that "today there is more information about the Indies than in ancient times." Far from being an isolated contradiction, Covarrubias' diachronic definition of the term *India* is seen in the large corpus of *relaciones*, general histories of the Indies and chronicles written during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries by Iberian historians.

In addition to the flexible and contradictory meaning of the word *India*, historians also applied the term New World (*Novus Orbis*, *Nuevo Mundo*, or *Nuevo Orbe*) to a supple and large

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<sup>25</sup> Sebastian de Cobarrubias Orozco. *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana* (Madrid: Luis Sanchez impresor, 1611), "India, región Oriental, termino dela Asia." 502v.

<sup>26</sup> Cobarrubias, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana*. "Oy dia se tiene mas noticia delas Indias q en los tiempos antiguos. Ay Indias Orientales, y Occidentales" 502v.

geography that included the Americas, the western regions of the Pacific Ocean, and even China. In the early modern period, the flexible use of the terms Indies and New World were often determined by political and legal definitions that European historians incorporated into their works. For instance, the inclusion of the Philippines among the territories of the so-called West or Occidental Indies followed the jurisdictional demarcations that had been established in the Treaty of Zaragoza (1529), which defined the areas of Spanish and Portuguese influence in Asia and partially resolved the disputes that had arisen between Spain and Portugal for the jurisdiction of the Moluccas islands. As was the case with the treaty of Tordesillas, the treaty of Zaragoza was signed during a time Asia and the Pacific Ocean remained an unknown world imagined through the writings of ancient and medieval authors. However, the foundation of the colonial cities of Macau (1557) and Manila (1571), and the establishment of transoceanic routes made possible the creation of new modes of producing and circulating texts, sources, and commodities between the Far East, the Americas, and Europe.

Published in 1601, Antonio de Herrera's *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano* [General History of the Deeds of the Castilians on the Islands and Mainland of the Great Ocean] recounts the history of Castilians in the territories donated to the Spanish king by papal authority, and whose boundaries had been established with the repartition between Portugal and Spain. Herrera divides this territory (the Indies, not just America) into three parts: the Indies of the North, the Indies of the South, and the Indies of the West. As Ricardo Padrón has shown, Herrera "himself seems to have expected that the term would strike his readers as unusual, and offers a brief explanation."<sup>27</sup> According to Herrera, the "Indies of the West" includes the territories of Malacca, on the Castilian side of the antemeridian,

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<sup>27</sup> Ricardo Padrón, "The Indies of the West' or, the Tale of How an Imaginary Geography Circumnavigated the Globe." In *Western Visions of the Far East in a Transpacific Age (1522 – 1671)* (New York: Ashgate, 2012), 19-42

and he adds: “although they are part of the Oriental India, they are called the West, relative to Castile.”<sup>28</sup> As Padrón has observed, Herrera’s distinction is based on jurisdictional conventions and on “Castile’s long-standing rivalry with Portugal.”<sup>29</sup> The demarcation was mainly a political convention based on the association of the territories considered as west for Castile, and east for Portugal. In other words, Castile recognized as Indies of the West those territories that extended to the east from the line of the Treaty of Zaragoza signed in 1529, which was 297.5 leagues (1,763 kilometers, 952 nautical miles), or 17° of the Maluku Islands.

As in Herrera's *Historia General*, the legal demarcations and arrangements between Portugal and Spain determined the adoption of terminologies and the narrative structure of official documents, *relaciones*, and general histories of the Indies. However, these legal conventions had entered a completely different period in 1571, when Miguel López de Legazpi found Manila and a regular trade with Acapulco was established in 1573. The so-called Manila Galleon route or *Nao de la China* connected Europe, New World, and Asia, establishing for the first time a regular circulation of people, commodities, and information within the Spanish western hemisphere. Before the arrival of Legazpi’s expedition to the Philippines, the Portuguese had already established their colony in Macau, which was leased to Portugal from Ming China in 1557 as a trading port. From these two cities, the Spanish and Portuguese established contacts with China and other nations in the region, and they introduced an important corpus of Asian books, crafts, and artisanal objects into the Americas and Europe. Beyond the mercantile

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<sup>28</sup> Ricardo Padrón, “The Indies of the West’ or, the Tale of How an Imaginary Geography Circumnavigated the Globe,” 21. "Aunque son parte de la India Oriental, se nombran de Poniente, respecto a Castilla." Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Descripción de las Indias Occidentales* (Madrid: Oficina Real de Nicolás Rodríguez Franco, 1601), 2.

<sup>29</sup> Ricardo Padrón, “The Indies of the West’ or, the Tale of How an Imaginary Geography Circumnavigated the Globe,” 21.

dynamics of the Portuguese Asian world, the transpacific circulation brought to the Far East administrative practices that had been developed within the colonial context of New Spain.

As this chapter shows, the circulation and exchange of sources and artifacts between Asia and New Spain transformed scholarly practices of historians established in New Spain and Spain. This chapter argues that the writings produced in the 1570s and 1580s in New Spain initiated a new historical narrative that explicitly erased the traces of ancient and medieval authors by favoring a Spanish perspective. Moreover, this chapter shows that this new historical narrative made possible and shaped a new art of composing global histories. Instead of combining in their writings references to classical authors with their own production related to the New World, historians began to write histories that compared Asia and the Americas by incorporating a corpus of *relaciones* written by individual travelers and missionaries.

Moreover, as this chapter argues, the “New Spanish” discovery of Asia did more than open the Orient to the West; it also transformed the way in which scholars, missionaries, and historians wrote about the Americas and the world. Since the first printing press was built in Manila in 1593, the missionaries and officials established in the Philippines islands produced manuscripts that were later copied and printed in New Spain and Europe.<sup>30</sup> Signed by missionaries and scholars, these manuscripts circulated and were printed in different supports and books, becoming the main authorial reference for historians before the appearance of the more comprehensive general histories printed in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. As was the case in similar reports dealing with discoveries in the West Indies, these manuscript-reports were

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<sup>30</sup> Father Domingo de Nieva (ca. 1570–?) brought the first printing press in the Philippines with the help of the Chinese printer Keng Yong (?–?). It was a xylographic press (the wood was carved, inked and transferred onto paper) but it meant the first step to the publication of a hundred of books in the Philippines. Rebeca Fernández Rodríguez, Early writing and printing in the Philippines Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro



often entitled with the word *relación*, which implies that the document recounted what the narrator of the *relación* had seen and heard of in a remote islands or region of the far East.

The most influential 16<sup>th</sup> century *relación* dealing with China was the *Relaçion Verdadera de las cosas del Reyno de Taibin* [True Account of the Things of the Kingdom of Taibin], written by Martín de Rada (1533-78) after a trip in China in 1575. Martín de Rada's *Relación* circulated among scholars and historians who incorporated the text into their general and universal histories of China and the Indies. Francisco Hernández de Toledo (1514-87) first copied and translated the text into Latin in 1576 before returning to Spain after a period of seven years of scientific work in New Spain. As he observed in his writings, Martín de Rada's *Relación* was related to his own work dealing with the natural history of the West Indies.<sup>31</sup> Also in New Spain, Juan González de Mendoza (c.1540-1617) included Rada's account in his influential *Historia del Gran Reino de la China* [History of the Great Kingdom of China, 1585].<sup>32</sup> Later, Jerónimo Román y Zamora (1536-97) incorporated Rada's *Relación verdadera* in the *Repúblicas del Mundo* [Republics of the World], a comprehensive history that aimed at describing the republics of the entire world.<sup>33</sup> In addition to the *relación*, Martín de Rada sent to New Spain a collection of 28 Chinese books along with maps and materials that were there described by scholars and incorporated into their writings. Juan González de Mendoza, who spent several years in the convent of Michoacán, described Rada's collection of Chinese books along with other materials in his *Historia del Gran Reino de la China*. As scholars have noted, the writings

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<sup>31</sup> Francisco Hernández, *De provincia chinæ seu Taibin quæ 7 diebus naviga // tione distat a philippicis Liber*. (ca. 1577) Unpublished manuscript. Archive of the Library of the Ministry of Finance, Madrid.

<sup>32</sup> Juan González de Mendoza. *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reyno de la China*, Rome, a costa de Bartholome Grassi, 1585.

<sup>33</sup> Jerónimo Román y Zamora. *Republica del Mundo, Divididas en Tres Partes*, Salamanca: En Casa de Juan Fernández, 1595.

of Juan González de Mendoza contributed to separate the interest in China from the religious sphere, producing a synchronic narrative associated with the Iberian expansion.<sup>34</sup>

Published in 1590, José de Acosta's (1540-1600) *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* [Natural and Moral History of the Indies] is the first history of the Indies that integrated a comparative study of China, Japan, and the New World within a universal narrative that aimed at establishing links and causalities among the different cultural, social, and political elements of nations and societies in Asia and the New World.<sup>35</sup> Unlike the previous general and universal histories of the Indies written by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1478-1557), Francisco López de Gómara (1511-66), and Bernardino de Sahagún (1499-1590), Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral* was the first global history of the Indies that applied systemically methods of enquiry that, developed first in and for the New World, aimed at explaining conjointly the history of nations and people from different and remote continents in the world. By doing so, Acosta was not simply exporting ways of writing history from the Americas to Asia, he was rather transforming the very nature of what scholars have called since antiquity universal history.

As we will see in this dissertation, Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* is at the beginning of a scholarly tradition that transformed ways of enquiry and writing about nations and cultures of remote worlds. In this chapter, I focus on histories about Asia developed in New Spain, defining how the discovery of Asia from the West Indies enabled scholars to compose global histories from a synchronic perspective. The term synchronic history or histories refers to those histories that mainly integrate into their narrative a contemporary corpus of sources about Asia and the New World. As we will see, the Spanish historical genre of *historias* and chronicles

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<sup>34</sup> See: Nancy Vogeley, "China and the American Indies: A Sixteenth-Century "History"" (Colonial Latin American Review), 6.2:165-84.

<sup>35</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, Sevilla: en casa de Juan de León, 1590.

of the Indies were gradually transformed during the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century by creating a comprehensive corpus of histories about Asia and the New World that projected a self-referential narrative dynamic. In addition to this process, the writing and exchange of *relaciones* and the articulation of a synchronic and global historical genre entails new forms of social and ethnic scaling. As I develop in the third part of this chapter, the integration of the Far East in Spanish *historias* and the production of global and synchronic modes of writing transformed categories developed in the West Indies and projected a combined ethnographical narrative. From the experience of the Spanish doctor Francisco Hernández in New Spain to the works of Juan González de Mendoza and José de Acosta, this chapter illuminates how scholars in New Spain discovered in Asia new forms of writing about the Americas and a new art of composing global histories.

### **I. Golden Islands, Western Narratives**

During the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, scholars and historians continued to import ideas and names from ancient and medieval authors into their writings and depictions concerning the Far East. As was the case during the early period of Atlantic exploration, scholars and travelogues that wrote about the regions of Southeast and East Asia quoted and interpreted classical and medieval writings dealing with China and Asia. Among these authors, the name of the Venetian Marco Polo continued to be the main reference for early modern scholars, historians, and travelogues. Early modern scholars knew Marco Polo's *Livres des merveilles du monde*, which, written between 1298 and 1300, continued to be commented and included in accounts and printed books of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Besides the writings dealing with Cathay, which is how medieval travelogues and mapmakers named China, Marco Polo also

projected into the early modern cartographical and historical production the idea of an oceanic imaginary with plenty of rich and colorful islands located in the eastern part of Asia.<sup>36</sup> As scholars have observed, the oceanic areas of the Far East were often represented with marvelous creatures and maritime monsters. These fabulous representations were associated with a maritime system that, as Marco Polo described, contained 12,700 islands.

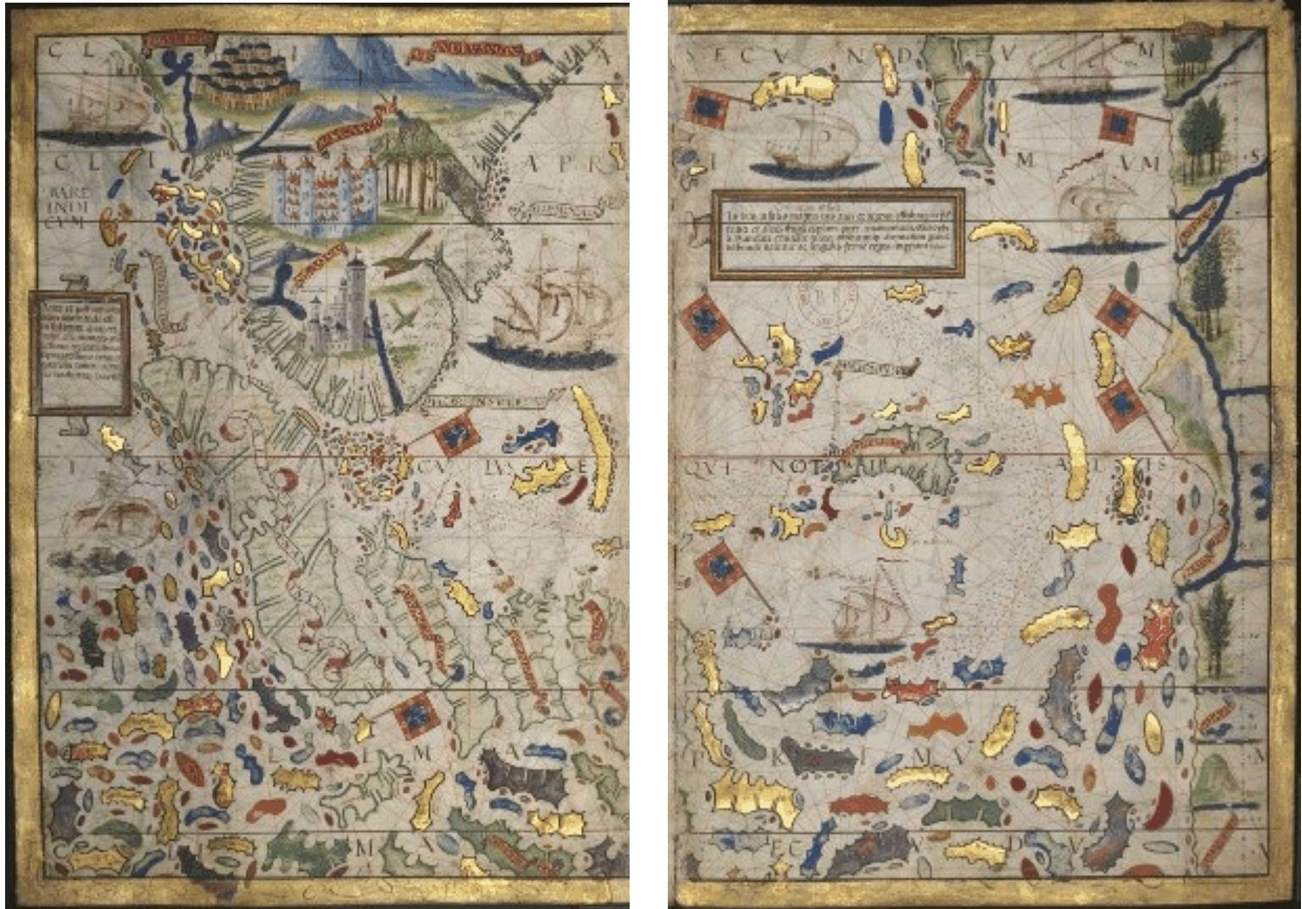


Figure 1. Miller Atlas (1519). Map *Chinarum Insule*, depicting the Malay Archipelago. 41 x 59 cm. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Cartes et Plans, Rés. Ge DD 683.

<sup>36</sup> As European travelers started reaching the Mongol Empire, they described the Mongol-controlled Northern China as Cathay as well. The name occurs in the writings of Giovanni da Pian del Carpine (c. 1180–1252) (as Kitaia), William of Rubruck (c. 1220–c. 1293) (as Cataya or Cathaia).[7] Rashid-al-Din Hamadani, ibn Battuta, Marco Polo all were referring to Northern China as Cathay, while Southern China, ruled by the Song dynasty, was Mangi, Manzi, Chin, or Sin. For the early modern evolution of the name Cathay and China see chapter 3. Part 2. Bento de Goës and the Jesuit Expedition in China.

Late medieval and early modern maps continued to include these colorful representations of islands and seas. The Catalan Atlas (1375) depicted the system of islands and mentioned that there were around 7548 islands in the eastern regions of Asia. The Miller Atlas (1519) also followed this iconographic construction, illustrating colorful islands that suggested an idyllic and very rich environment. As scholars have observed, the multitude of islands of this maritime system appeared as objects of desire that remained out of reach. Moreover, Ricardo Padrón has argued that these islands of the great ocean were depicted as a multitude of riches that incited fantasies of knowledge and possession.<sup>37</sup> In the late 16th century, writers also continued to reproduce this idealization associated with the oriental ocean. This is the case, for instance, in Antonio de Torquemada's *Jardín de Flores Curiosas* [Garden of Curious Flowers, 1570]. The characters of this dialogue observe that the Portuguese explorers who reached the oriental seas never saw the strange and fabulous nature mentioned in the ancients' book:

You are deceived herein, for in the Magellan's voyage, they sailed farther than ever any other Nation did: and if there had been any such miraculous people in the world, they should then have had knowledge of them [...] And besides this, the 4000 Islands which they discovered in the Archipelago, towards the Sun rising, the most part of which are populated (and, according to some opinion, are thought to be another part of the earth) in none of which have any such monstrosities have been found, as you speak of.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ricardo Padrón, "The Indies of the West' or, the Tale of How an Imaginary Geography Circumnavigated the Globe." (New York: Ashgate, 2012), 26.

<sup>38</sup> Translation adapted from *The Spanish Mandeville of Miracles or the Garden of Curious Flowers* (London: by James Roberts for Edmund Mates, 1600) Antonio de Torquemada, *Jardín de Flores curiosas* (Salamanca: en casa de Juan Baptista de Terranova, 1570) LUIS: No tenéis razón; que en sólo el viaje de Magallanes se engolfaron más que nunca otra nación lo hizo, y si algunas monstruosidades de éstas oviera en el mundo, entonces oviera de saber dellas como supo Pigafeta lo de los pigmeos [...] Y, sin esto, en aquellas cuatro mil islas que descubrieron en el archipiélago hacia el Oriente, que las más dellas son pobladas (y, según la opinión de algunos, se pueden contar por otra parte de la Tierra), no se sabe ni entiende que en ellas haya ningunas monstruosidades, a lo menos tan notables.

In Torquemada's dialogue, the oriental archipelago with its thousands of islands represented a deceptive region described only by ancients and medieval authors. As scholars have noted, this fabulous archipelago was progressively banished from the Portuguese and Spanish nautical charts of insular Southeast Asia, favoring an empirical representation of the region. However, references to maritime monsters continued to be included in many maps and visual representations of the East and West Indies. In Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* [Theatre of the World, 1570], the great Oriental Ocean located between the New World and Asia continued to be represented as a colorful space with maritime monsters. Abraham Ortelius's map of the East Indies depicted the *Oceanus Orientalis* with a ship sinking while being attacked by an enormous whale. Under this maritime tragedy, there are two Sirens placed on the left side of the *Ladrones* islands, which represented the stopping place between Asia and the New World.<sup>39</sup>

Some unexplored areas of Ortelius's map of the East Indies are partially identified, such as *Nova Guinea*, which is placed in the Lower-Right corner with a caption indicating "New Guinea, which seems to be called *Piccinaculusland* by Andreas Corsalis. Whether this is an island or part of the South Land is uncertain".<sup>40</sup> Abraham Ortelius is one of the most frequently cited examples of an early modern map colorist. At the age of twenty, Ortelius was listed as an "afsetter van carten" in the Antwerp guild of St Luke and was characterized later as a "paintre de cartes" by Christopher Plantin. As David Woodward observed, the coloring of maps in the early modern period is not just a decorative element, but rather an integral part of the map. In the

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<sup>39</sup> Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp: Officina Plantiniana, 1570)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 58-49. "Nova Gvinea, quam Andreas Corsalis Terram Piccinaculi appellare videtur. An insula sit, an pars continentis Australis incertum est."



Spanish Netherlands, the adoptions of map coloring relied on very precise conventions that make the map acceptable by associating colors with particular geographical and historical meanings.<sup>41</sup>



Figure 2. Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, 1570 (48,49) *India Orientalis Insularvmqve Adiacenti Typus* [A map of the East Indies and surrounding islands] Original source: BPL. Image: archive.org.

Furthermore, even though mythological monsters and creatures can be found in medieval maps, it was during the age of discoveries and the so-called golden age of maritime maps that

<sup>41</sup> See David Woodward, "Techniques of Map Engraving, Printing, and Coloring in the European Renaissance" in cartography in the European renaissance. Edited by David Woodward Volume Three (Part 1), Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007. P. 603.

monsters and sirens were profusely depicted in the spatial representations of maritime charts.<sup>42</sup> However, in the Spanish context and particularly in those writings and cartographies commissioned by the Council of the Indies, the fabulous representations were progressively banished from nautical charts and replaced by actual and individual reports sent to the Council by travelers and missionaries. In the late 16th century, the representation of fabulous worlds and oceans located on the opposite face of the globe converged with an administrative apparatus that promoted new practices of writing and exchanging information. Mapmakers, pilots and scholars began to separate the factual information from the literary circulation of myths and fantasies. The production of factual information was one of the strategic redefinitions promoted by the Council of the Indies. The administrative reports compiled in New Spain and the Philippines were not based on the idea of inciting the desire for knowing and possessing marvelous worlds placed out of reach, but on the compilation of things known and investigated. As it is noted in the royal ordinances published during the 1570s, these things known and investigated reached the status of facts and were permitted to be collected as evidences within the corpus of general histories and descriptions of the Indies. This compilation of sources and facts were supported by statistical and geographical projects that were based on the production and distribution of questionnaires, as was the case of the *Relaciones Geográficas*' project, which provided information regarding customs, cities, routes, geography, and the natural history of the Indies.<sup>43</sup>

Scholars and travelers in Manila worked along with Chinese people and compiled and selected information. As was the case in New Spain, where the Spanish administration compiled indigenous maps and oral reports, scholars traveling to Asia compiled Chinese maps and books

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<sup>42</sup> For this question, see the collective volume coordinated by Anne Manouvrier: *The Golden Age of Maritime Maps, When Europe Discovered the World*, Firefly Books, 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Among the studies concerning the *Relaciones Geográficas* see Barbara Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain: Indigenous Cartography and the Maps of the Relaciones Geográficas*. Chicago: Chicago University, 1996.



and translated the information from sources written in Chinese and Japanese. During the 1560s and 1570s, innovative methodologies regulated and transformed the activity of describing and compiling the information about the Spanish's overseas territories. The creation of new strategies for exchanging knowledge on a global scale transformed the methodological approaches of all disciplines dedicated to the description of nature, geography and customs of people in the Indies. Juan de Ovando y Godoy, the president of the Council of the Indies between 1571-77, led several of these projects that aimed at systematizing mechanisms for compiling and organizing information from overseas territories. Known as the *Recopilaciones de leyes de Indias* [*Compilation of laws of the Indies*], these projects included instructions explaining how to gather and organize information. These rules and mechanisms defined the nature of the *relaciones* and reports of the Indies, and it represented the first legal attempt to systematize mechanisms for transcribing local knowledge on a global scale.<sup>44</sup>

In 1571, Juan de Ovando wrote *Las Ordenanzas del Consejo de Indias* [Ordinances of the Royal Council], a set of laws regulating the office of the cosmographer-chronicler major of the Council of Indies, and the *Título de las descripciones* [*Title of the Descriptions or Instructions*], a document that defined mechanisms for compiling information. As Maria Portuondo has pointed out, the Instructions were "designed so as to construct this body of knowledge upon a basis of "facts," or as the law states, "known and investigated things." ( *cosas sabidas y averiguadas* ).<sup>45</sup> These narratives of "known and investigated things" became the structural body

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<sup>44</sup> Scholars consider Ovando's project a foundational work in the legal history of Spain and the Indies. See José de la Peña Camara, "La copulata de leyes de Indias y las ordenanzas Ovandinas" (Revista de Indias 6, 1941) and Juan Manzano Manzano, *Historia de las recopilaciones de Indias*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1950). For a recent comprehensive work concerning Ovando's reform, see: Maria M. Portuondo, *Secret Science, Spanish Cosmography and the New World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), chapter 3: Cosmography Codified.

<sup>45</sup> Articles 63, 82, and 83 of the Instructions. Maria Portuondo, *Secret Science*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 135.

of those general histories of the Indies that were no longer integrating ancient and medieval texts and references, but reports of groups and individuals scattered all over the regions and cities of the Spanish western hemisphere. Besides the definition of techniques for compiling known and investigated things, the last five articles of the Ordinances also listed the responsibilities of the cosmographer-chronicler, which consisted of organizing cosmographical tables and maps of the Indies (article 117), collecting geographical coordinates for general descriptions (article 118), describing the customs, rites and antiquities of the Indies (article 119), gathering the natural history of the herbs, plants, animals, birds, and fish and any other natural thing (article 120), and compiling navigations routes to and among the Indies (article 121). These distinctive areas defined the structural narrative body of *relaciones*, reports and histories written by travelers and officials who wrote for the Council of the Indies from the New World and the Philippines.

Unlike the early modern historiographical approaches of French, Italian, and Dutch historians, who mainly incorporated travel narratives into their works, Iberian scholars started to include foreign sources from many different regions in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. As Sanjay Subrahmanyam has noted, Joao de Barros and other Portuguese historians and scholars incorporated into their works many more non-European sources than their European counterparts.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, Subrahmanyam signals that the Portuguese and Spanish universal histories privileged a "global and cumulative history built around connections."<sup>47</sup> The Portuguese historians first adopted an approach that consisted of enlarging the corpus by including sources from different traditions. For example, Joao de Barros used for writing the *Decades* (1552-63) chronicles and works of geography from the Muslim and Persian worlds, an Hindu chronicle,

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<sup>46</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History* (Collège de France, Open Edition Books, 2016)

<sup>47</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History*, p. 20.

and several Chinese treatises on geography that were translated by a slave in Lisbon.<sup>48</sup> As factor of the *Casa da Índia* [House of India] in Lisbon, Barros gathered sources and materials that came from Asia through the Portuguese *Carreira da Índia* [Indian Run] and he translated and incorporated reports and foreign sources into his *Decadas da Asia*.<sup>49</sup>

As Subrahmanyam has observed, “Universal history as it was practiced from Antiquity started to change from the sixteenth century in varied contexts, from East Asia to Spanish America.”<sup>50</sup> According to Subrahmanyam, it is in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that Spanish historians attained their highest production: “In the first half of the century the Spaniards were clearly in the lead, especially with the publication of Fernández de Oviedo’s *Historia General de las Indias*, followed by that of López de Gómara in 1552, and several others.”<sup>51</sup> Subrahmanyam’s assumption is based on the idea that historians in the New World developed only local narratives of the Americas: “Spaniards relied either on oral information, or on hybrid texts produced by “natives”, often under the supervision of missionaries.”<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, as this chapter shows, it is in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and in dialogue with sources and material dealing with Asia that Spanish historians produced a new historical narrative by incorporating into their work sources written by individuals in Manila, Macau, China, and Japan.

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<sup>48</sup> See: Charles Boxer, *João de Barros, Portuguese humanist and historian of Asia* (New Delhi: Concept, 1981, c1980).

<sup>49</sup> João de Barros, *Primeira Década da Ásia, dos feitos que os portugueses fizeram no descobrimento dos mares e terras do Oriente*, Lisbon: Germão Galherde, 1552. João de Barros, *Segunda Década da Ásia &c.* Lisbon: Germão Galherde, 1553. João de Barros, *Terceira Década da Ásia &c.*, Lisbon: João da Barreira, 1563.

<sup>50</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History* (Collège de France, 2016), abstract.

<sup>51</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History*, p. 21.

<sup>52</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History*, p. 21.

During the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, historians such as Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1478-1557) and Francisco López de Gómara (1511-66) put into dialogue their description with ancient and medieval references into their works. For instance, Oviedo explicitly observes that he followed the universal model of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*: "But, because in a certain way I want to follow or imitate the very Pliny himself, not by saying what he said, so that in some places his authority may be alleged, as something that is in the style of this universal and natural history."<sup>53</sup> The Spanish historiographical production concerning the Indies continued to be attached to the prism of ancient until the 1570s, when scholars and historians in New Spain began to develop synchronic and global narratives that explicitly questioned the authority of ancients. Unlike Fernández de Oviedo and López de Gómara, Francisco Hernández, Juan González de Mendoza, and José de Acosta began to produce cumulative approaches that integrated a delocalized body of knowledge constructed upon a basis of "facts" and "known and investigated things" from Asia and the New World.

The western discovery of the Far East or the "Indies of the West" is first announced and narrated in the accounts and *relaciones* of the expedition commanded by Miguel López de Legazpi to the Philippines in 1565. The itinerary written by the pilots Jaymes Martinez and Diego Martín Written in the Philippines in April 1565 is one of the manuscripts that announced the successful expedition of Miguel López de Legazpi from New Spain to the Philippines. Even though the Philippines had previously been discovered in the expedition of Ferdinand Magellan, the manuscript is presented as an account of discovery. Titled *Del viaje y descubrimiento de las islas del Poniente* [About the travel and discoveries of the islands of the West], the itinerary

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<sup>53</sup> Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, *Historia General y Natural de las Indias*, 1535. P. 11. De indias libro I "Mas porque en alguna manera yo entiendo seguir, ó ymitar al mismo Plinio, no en decir lo que él dixo (puesto que en algunos lugares sean alegadas sus auctoridades, como cosa deste jaez universal de historia natural)."

locates these islands in the West and includes the territories within the Spanish jurisdictional lands.<sup>54</sup> The *relación* combines information about degrees and practical observations for navigating with descriptions of natural resources and of the Indians of the *Ladrones* islands.



<sup>54</sup> *Derrotero de los Pilotos Jaymes Martinez y Diego Martin, Del viaje y descubrimiento de las islas del Poniente* [Itineraries by Jaymes Martines and Diego Martin, About the travel and discoveries of the islands of the West]. Archivo de Indias. ES.41091.AGI/27.11//MP-FILIPINAS,2

Figure 3. *Derrotero de los Pilotos Jaymes Martínez y Diego Martín, Del viaje y descubrimiento de las islas del Poniente*. Folio 23r. (April, 1565, Philippines, AGI)

The folios of the manuscript contain drawings of islands and an Indian boat of the people of the *Ladrones* near a drawing of one of the *Ladrones* islands. The island and the boat are depicted with different tones, emphasizing the details of the boat, the undulations of the water around the boat, and the reefs surrounding the island. There are captions referring to the illustrations that are written from different angles, varying the position of the handwriting and the type of ink. In the left side, there is a marginal note with the word *gengibre* [ginger], written also with different ink and placed near a text describing the natural resources of the *Ladrones* islands, observing that there are coconuts, rice, sugar cane, and a lot of ginger.

The main text of the manuscript has the same handwriting and ink, but the ink used for drawing the boat and islands is different. As the manuscript announced in the title, this is not just a travel account or a maritime rutter, it is first a manuscript announcing the discovery of the islands of the west. This is the main reason why the manuscript incorporates sophisticated techniques of handwriting and drawing. In the folio depicting the boat of the Chamorro, there is a description providing information about the encounter: “people in this good land are naked and walk without covering their intimate parts [...] This people tend to do evil, their weapons are slings and throwing sticks.”<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, in the drawing, the manuscript refers to a spring of water in thirteen grades and a fifth that provided fresh water.<sup>56</sup> Considered as an essential

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<sup>55</sup> *Derrotero de los Pilotos Jaymes Martínez y Diego Martín*, Archive general de Indias “La gente de esta tierra bien dispuesta anda desnuda sin cubrir la parte vergonzosa [...] Es gente inclinada a hacer el mal, son sus armas hondas y varas arrojadas: (6r).

<sup>56</sup> *Derrotero de los Pilotos Jaymes Martínez y Diego Martín*, 6r. Archive general de Indias. “Surgidero de agua -Está el surgidero en treze grados y un quinto” (f. 6r).

stopping place in the long travel from New Spain to the Philippines, this source of water was carefully described, noting the degrees and specific location of the source on the island. The stay in the *Ladrones* islands represents a visual rupture in the narrative of the manuscript.

In the folio, the island is only partially described, leaving the upper section as an undiscovered place: “This part was not discovered.”<sup>57</sup> Beyond conveying the desire of possession, the manuscript emphasizes the necessity of stocking up on food and water during the journey and provides an ethnographical report about the people of the islands. The *relación* reflects the necessity of making visible an encounter in the Pacific Ocean through a visual rupture that brings the reader closer to the experiential dimension of the travel. This travel does not reproduce narratives of monsters and mythological creatures that were commonly expected by European readers who associated the Far East with ancient mythologies. On the contrary, the *relación* accurately describes a community of naked people, *gente* in Spanish, that welcomed the Spanish ships in the middle of the Ocean. Besides the depiction of the boat, the visual break in the manuscript is also expressed through the textual narrative, which continuously refers to the observer and/or narrator (the *relator* of the *relación*). Instead of integrating references to ancient authors and notions, the scribe of the manuscript develops an experiential narrative that brought to the reader the observational and technique experience of an individual.

Similar approaches are seen in the itinerary written by Estevan Rodríguez, who was also part of Miguel López de Legazpi’s expedition and discoveries. The drawings of this *relación* depict different islands and reefs that are located in the middle of the page. The text also contains ethnographical references, as it is the case in the folio describing the islands of the *Barburdos*: “These people are bearded and this is why the Lord gave it the name of the island of the

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<sup>57</sup> *Derrotero de los Pilotos Jaymes Martínez y Diego Martín*, 6r. Archive general de Indias. "Esta parte no se descubrió" (f. 6r).

Barbudos, they deal with fish, take many fishes and do not have weapons.”<sup>58</sup> Titled *Del descubrimiento de las yslas del proniente* [*About the Discovery of the Islands of the West*], the golden islands of this manuscript represents a visual break that incites the reader to possess these new lands that are in the west. As reports to the Council of the Indies, these manuscripts projected a historical narrative of discoveries of new worlds developed in a transatlantic context to the Pacific Ocean and the Far East.

## II. Rediscovering the East, Universalizing the West

In the 1570s, scholars began to write and exchange reports about the Far East between Manila and New Spain. In the first period of transpacific exchanges, these narratives aimed at contrasting and differentiating ancient and modern sources and references as well as between East and West Indies. This is the case in Francisco Hernández's work analyzed in this section, and also in Juan González de Mendoza and José de Acosta's *Historias*, which are analyzed in the third part of this chapter. As mentioned previously, the arrival of Spaniards to the Philippines extended the geographical and political boundaries of the West towards the Far East. The discoveries of new worlds were then displaced to the eastern regions of Asia. This extension had crucial implications into the constitution of a historiographical corpus related to the Spanish West. In this second section, I examine the work of two scholars who began to write about the Far East and China during the first period of transpacific interactions. First, I study the work of Martín de Rada, who wrote one of the most influential *relaciones* about China of the 16<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Esteban Rodríguez, *Relacion y Derrotero de Esteban Rodríguez, piloto, Del descubrimiento de las yslas del Poniente*, Archivo general de Indias, ca 1565. “Son gente barbada y por eso el señor le puso el nombre de la ysla de los Barbudos, su trato es pesqueria, matan mucho pescado, no tienen armas” (f. 5r).



century. And second, I examine the corpus of Francisco Hernández, the first scholar who studied Asia from New Spain by incorporating objects and reports received directly from Manila.

Among the crew of Miguel López de Legazpi's expedition was also the friar Martín de Rada (1533-78). Born in the city of Pamplona, Martín de Rada studied in Salamanca, where he joined the Augustinians. Before embarking for the Philippines, Martín de Rada worked as a missionary in New Spain between 1560 and 1564. Subsequently, from 1565 to 1575, Rada stayed mainly on the Philippine island of Cebu, traveling to some adjacent islands before departing for China on June 26, 1575. During this expedition, Martín de Rada and Jerónimo Marin accompanied a delegation of officials to China, reaching the port of Amoy (Xiamen) in Hokkien province, and visiting a number of cities. The group returned to Manila on October 28, 1575.<sup>59</sup>

After this trip, Martín de Rada wrote the *Relaçion Verdadera de las cosas del Reyno de Taibin* [True Account of the Things of the Kingdom of Taibin]. Martín de Rada begins the account by referring to Marco Polo and to the name of Cathay used by the Venetian traveler: “The country we typically call China was called the kingdom of Cathay by the Venetian Marco Polo, perhaps because this was the name in the Tatar language at that time, for when he went there, in approximately 1312, the Tatars were in power.”<sup>60</sup> By suggesting that the names of China and Cathay referred to the same kingdom, Martín de Rada clarified for the first time a

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<sup>59</sup> For a biography of Martín de Rada, see Pedro García Galende, *Fray Martín de Rada, Científico y misionero n Filipinas y China (siglo XVI)* (Pamplona, Gobierno de Navarra, 2015)

<sup>60</sup> For the English translation and transcription of Martín Rada's Account, I am using the version included in the modern edition of the Boxer codex. George Bryan Souza and Jeffery S. Turley, *The Boxer Codex, Transcription and Translation of an Illustrated Late Sixteenth-Century Spanish Manuscript Concerning the Geography, Ethnography and History of the Pacific, South-East Asia and East Asia* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), p.559. Spanish: “La tierra que comunmente llamamos China la llamo Marco Polo beneciano el rreyno de Catay quisa que en lenga tartaresca se devia llamar ansi entonces” (Souza and Turley, 224).

confusion that consisted of considering China and Cathay as two different worlds, as it was represented in maps and accounts during the 16th century. As Charles R. Boxer pointed out, Rada was the first who identified this confusion, and not the Jesuits Matteo Ricci and Bento de Goës, as many historians have often argued.<sup>61</sup>

Martín de Rada's opening shows how the rupture with an ancient way of describing China and the Orient implied a process that is mainly linked to the interpretation of ancient and modern histories and words. Unlike Christopher Columbus, who looked for the China of the Great Khan in the Caribbean Sea, Martín de Rada knew that he was in China and that the China of Marco Polo was a different and historically remote kingdom. Rada had more information about China than medieval authors. However, he continued to think and write about the Middle Kingdom by referring to Marco Polo, adapting medieval words to modern experiences with a somehow hesitating voice: "perhaps because this was the name in the Tatar language at that time."<sup>62</sup> In order to describe China, Rada had still in mind the Cathay of Marco Polo, but he knew that he had to produce a report about the Middle Kingdom based on modern sources and experiences.

Describing the China of the founder of the Yuan dynasty Kublai Kan (1271-1294), Marco Polo's work continued to be perceived as a modern work in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the writings of Spanish scholars. For instance, Antonio de Torquemada includes Marco Polo's work among the modern narratives that described the Orient: "and among the moderns, Marco Polo wrote not long ago, and similarly other contemporaneous authors to him; and the last is Olao [Magno], who published his work less than twelve or thirteen years ago."<sup>63</sup> Instead of

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<sup>61</sup> In Charles R. Boxer, *South China in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1953)

<sup>62</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 559.

<sup>63</sup> Antonio de Torquemada. *Jardín de Flores curiosas, en que se tratan algunas materias de humanidad, philosophia, theologia y geographia, con otras curiosas y apacibles* (Salamanca: en casa de Juan Baptista de Terranova, 1570), p.797. "Y entre los modernos, Marco Paulo ha poco tiempo que escribió, y asimesmo otros

separating their own modernity from an ancient and medieval world, late 16<sup>th</sup> century scholars differentiated between the sources of ancients and the medieval writings, which were still modern and were read as such. Nonetheless, unlike the writings of Antonio de Torquemada, which mainly looked at reproducing a marvelous Orient, Martín de Rada had to write to the Council of the Indies and the king a true and factual report about the contemporary China of the Ming dynasty.

After the expedition, Martín de Rada returned to Manila with a collection of Chinese books dealing with different disciplines and topics: “There came into our possession printed books on all sciences, not only regarding astrology and astronomy, but also physiognomy, chiromancy, arithmetic and of their laws, and medicine, fencing, and all of their games and their gods.”<sup>64</sup> As scholars have observed, Rada’s collection of books represented the most important Western library of Chinese books of the period. Before sending these materials to New Spain, the friar used these books and other materials for completing his work, taking into account only factual and reliable information: “I shall be reporting here for the size of the land and distances will be much reduced from what is found in their books, but, my estimation, more accurate. And I leave the truth to future writers when the entire country is further explored; in all else I shall follow what is written in their books.”<sup>65</sup> Even though Rada considered the majority of Chinese knowledge useless, he mentions that the most part of the information in his account came from Chinese books, particularly from disciplines that produced their knowledge from experience:

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contemporáneos suyos; y el último, que es Olao, no ha doce o trece años que manifestó su obra, aunque va muy corto en lo que toca a estas provincias, por el poco trato y conversación que se puede tener con ellas.”

<sup>64</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 560.

<sup>65</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 590.

From all of these disciplines, we took things from medicine, because as botanists who know from experience the properties of herbs [...]. In every other field they are useless, for they contain only the merest whiff or name of things. For example, they know nothing of geometry, nor do they have compasses or know how to use them, nor do they know more arithmetic than addition, subtraction, and multiplication. And they believe that the sun and the moon are men, and that the heaven is flat and the earth not round.<sup>66</sup>

As one of Rada's main goals was to map China and the regions of Southeast and East Asia, he also brought back Chinese maps that were translated and interpreted in reports that were sent to New Spain and to the Council of the Indies. The Chinese maps brought to Manila were interpreted and translated into the reports by explaining their iconographic elements and nomenclatures. This is the case for the *relación* describing a painting on mold that the Chinese brought in 1576 to Manila.<sup>67</sup> Included in a codex along with the *True Account of the Kingdom of Taibin* and letters written by Martín de Rada, the anonymous writer of this *relación* explains that the Chinese interpreted the map to the Spaniards; the map is described in the *relación* with a series of iconographic elements and letters. The account explains the map by listing each region, sea, and island with an alphabetic letter. For instance, one of the letters explains that "there are some colorful lines that the Chinese say that are rivers leaving a lake, the water in this lake is red."<sup>68</sup> Another account sent from Manila to Spain the same year and written by an anonymous Augustinian describes "what is contained in the mold letter of the Chinese that is sent to your

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<sup>66</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 589-90.

<sup>67</sup> Relacion de una pintura ympresa de molde que truxeron los Chinos este año de 1576 la cual tenía muchas letras en diversas partes della e por ynterpretacion delos Chinos sevino s saber y entender lo que contenian e para uelos que viesen lapintura entiendesen lo que dezian las letras sepuso cada una de las visiones de las letras que avia en la pintura. Una letra Del. A.b. c. La manera siguiente. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits, Espagnol 325.

<sup>68</sup> Relacion de una pintura ympresa de molde que truxeron los Chinos este año de 1576, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits, Espagnol (325).

Majesty.”<sup>69</sup> In this map, we also see similar alphabetic annotations that refer each section of the map to the explanations included in the *relación*. These manuscripts and maps show that the foreign sources sent to Spain were often accompanied by *relaciones* that facilitated the interpretation for the cosmographer-chronicles and historians of the Indies.



Figure 4. Map of China sent to Spain along with a *relación* explaining the map, ca. 1570.

<sup>69</sup> Relación de lo que se contiene [en] la carta de molde de los chinos que se enbía a Su Magestad" [s.f.], realizada a través de intérpretes chinos y de un fraile agustino. Mapa y "Relación" FILIPINAS,6,R.2,N.21 with the letter of Guido de Lavezaris, governor of the Philippines, to the king Felipe II (Manila, July, 30 1574) with which it seems to be sent the map.

As seen in these examples, the *relaciones* sometimes interpreted particular and foreign objects and sources, representing an artifact that combined the personal experience of travelers with collaborative translations of foreign sources. In all these cases, the *relacion* is the artifact that made it possible to translate and interpret objects that were part of the experience of exchanging materials in Manila and New Spain. Collected first in New Spain, scholars and officials compiled these *relaciones*, which represented the main source for completing their general histories of the Indies. From this perspective, the *relaciones* were not only associated with a particular regions or political community, but also with maps, objects, exotic plants, animals, and crafts. These materials were commonly sent to New Spain along with accounts that presented to the readers an actual and exotic world that was attached first to the material circulation of commodities and information established in the 1570s.

In New Spain, the Spanish doctor Francisco Hernández was one of the first to read and translate Martín de Rada's *relacion* into Latin. Before returning to Madrid in 1577, Hernández received Rada' account via the Manila Galleon that arrived in Acapulco in 1576.<sup>70</sup> He translated from Spanish into Latin the text because, as he observed at the beginning of his translation, it was related to his own work compiled in New Spain between 1571 and 1577. Although among modern scholars Hernández's work have mainly been associated to the so-called Mexican Treasury and the natural history of New Spain, Francisco Hernández began to study and write about Asia since the 1560 until the end of the expedition in 1577.<sup>71</sup> Unlike Martín de Rada,

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<sup>70</sup> Unpublished manuscript, *De provincia chinæ seu Taibin quæ diu{m} naviga // tione distat a philippicis Liber*. Listed in Somolinos, volume 1, 489. (n. 22, f. 17 r. a 49 v.) Archivo de la Biblioteca del Ministerio de Hacienda de Madrid.

<sup>71</sup> Published by the members of the *Accademia Dei Lincei*, the so-called Mexican Treasury made partially public some of the materials compiled by Hernández in New Spain. *Francisco Hernández, Rerum medicarum Novae Hispaniae thesaurus, seu, Plantarum animalium mineralium Mexicanorum historia* (Roma: Ex typographeio Vitalis Mascardi, 1651)

Francisco Hernández did not focus on writing about China, but he rather wanted to compose an entire history about the western Spanish hemisphere. To do so, Hernández had to know well the geographical and historical boundaries that still separated Asia from the New World. In Hernández's work, the separation of East and West Indies represented an essential step into the constitution and redefinition of the western hemisphere. Although connected to the framework of ancient universal history through the figure of Pliny the Elder, Hernández's historiographical corpus represented the first attempt to differentiate a modern and western world from an ancient narrative universal model.

In addition to the translation of Rada's account, the references to Asia appear in Francisco Hernández's writings and comments added to the Spanish translation of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*, in letters addressed to King Philip II, and in the descriptions of the natural history of the West Indies. As he observed in his letters addressed to the king, Hernández divided his work in two manuscript corpuses with the purpose of delineating the boundaries between the ancient and modern worlds as well as between the East and West Indies. On the one hand, he produced a natural history of the West Indies that included the natural history, the history of antiquities, as well as charts and maps of New Spain. On the other hand, he wrote the first Spanish translation of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*, which he commented and actualized by redefining in Spanish ancient terms that were outdated or confusing for modern scholars.

Hernández began to translate, illustrate, and interpret Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia* when he was living in the city of Toledo during the 1560s, and he kept working on this annotated translation during the years of the expedition to New Spain (1571-77). This manuscript corpus comprises ten volumes with a total of 2,996 folios.<sup>72</sup> As in Covarrubias' definition of the term

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<sup>72</sup> The corpus of 10 volumes and 25 books is housed in the BNE in Madrid under the signatures 2862 to 2871. The three last volumes correspond to an earlier translation with errors and corrections. In these three volumes, books are

*India*, Hernández perceived his work as a diachronic redefinition of terms and concepts that begins with the ancient terms enclosed in Pliny's work. However, as he observed in his comments on Pliny's work, he did not actualize all the terms of Pliny's work to the modern literature, but he only explained ancient terms when the terminologies could motivate a confusing reading:

So, we will go with Pliny speaking and assigning the terms using the doctrine of Ptolemy, particularly in the most required elements, as we have done in the past. We have left in this book, for the most part, the ancient names of cities, because it is necessary for us to spend our lives in other studies and this industry [the one of adapting ancient terms to modern observations] occupies more work than inventiveness, and the learned reader or the one who would be interested in help us in this task will easily remediate this by consulting the moderns. With all this, we will not forget to correct those mistaken places, either in the text or in the commentaries, and comment on the difficult ones.<sup>73</sup>

As he observes in this passage, Hernández's interest in Pliny was not linked to the necessity of finding the true meaning of ancient words, as the humanists of the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the preface of this work, Hernández even criticizes the Italian translations of Pliny's work that had been published by Cristoforo Landino (1425-1498) in 1476. Contrary to the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> humanists, who focused on philological restoration and held that Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* represented an extemporaneous and universal history that provided the true

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not place in order. The 7 first volumes contain in order the translation of the first 25 books of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*. The rest of books of Hernández's translation (from 26 to 37) are today lost.

<sup>73</sup> Francisco Hernández, Obras Completas, Tomo IV, *Historia Natural de Cayo Plinio*, Prefacio. (México: UNAM 1976), Book VI, De Asia la mayor, II. De la gente de los paphlagones y de los de Capadocia: Así que éstas iremos con Plinio hablando y asignando los términos ayudándonos de la doctrina de Ptolomeo, principalmente en lo que pidiere mayor declaración, como lo havemos hecho algunas vezes en lo pasado, dexando en este libro, por la mayor parte, el cuidado que en los demás que geographía tocan havemos tomado de dar a los nombres antiguos de ciudades los modernos, así porque nos es necesario ocupar la vida que queda en otros estudios y este negocio es de mayor trabajo que ingenio, como porque el lector estudioso o el que quisiere ayudarnos en esta parte lo podrá muy fácilmente remediar consultando los modernos. Con todo esto no nos olvidaremos de castigar los lugares depravados, o en el texto o en los comentarios, y declarar los dificultosos.



science of the world, Hernández perceived Pliny's work as a partial compilation of natural and geographical descriptions. According to him, Landino's work "is not a translation, but a confusion," and when Landino translated Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* (1476) "there were only some ruins, traces, and shadows of Pliny's work."<sup>74</sup>

According to Hernández, Pliny the Elder's *Historia Naturalis* represented an attempt to write a universal history, which implied that he wanted to describe everything in the world: "because Pliny's attempt in this big volume was to write a universal history that covers all of nature, starting with the heavens and elements, and animals and plants that are produced on them, and finishing with the stones and minerals that the earth covers in her insides. Among the animals, the man was the first."<sup>75</sup> The thirty-seven books of Pliny's body of knowledge covers several arts and sub-disciplines, such as cosmography, geography, medicine, geology, and the arts, and they had represented an accomplished universal history until the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. In his translation published in 1476, Cristoforo Landino started the preface referring to the universal desire to know everything in the world, because the goal of any human was "to penetrate by all parts this universal machine", since the greatest thing that could happen to someone was to "have the true science of all things".<sup>76</sup> Landino's perception of Pliny's work continued to be attached to

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<sup>74</sup> Francisco Hernández, *Obras Completas*, Tomo IV, *Historia Natural de Cayo Plinio*, Prefacio. p. 9. "que la de Landino no es traslación sino confusión, porque aliende que quando le hizo italiano no tenía Plinio piedra sobre piedra, ni havia de él más que ciertas ruinas, rastros y sombra, ¿qué traslación puede hazerse no entendiéndose lo que se traslada? O ¿qué pudo entender un puro humanista de tan raras y ocultas doctrinas?"

<sup>75</sup> Francisco Hernández, *Obras Completas*, Tomo IV, *Historia Natural de Cayo Plinio*, Prefacio. Book 7. Figuras admirables de gentes. Como el intento de Plinio en este su grande volumen sea escribir una historia universal de toda la naturaleza, discurriendo por los cielos y elementos, animales y plantas, que enellos se producen, hasta las piedras y minerales, que la tierra encubre en sus entrañas. Entre los animales comença el hombre y porque ando dello la razón, afirma haverse por su causa criados otros, toma por el contrario ocasion de acordarse de sus miserias y trabajos de que entre los mas Job.

<sup>76</sup> Cristoforo Landino, *Historia natural di Caio Plinio Secondo di lingua latina in Fiorentina* (Venice: Nicolaus Jenson, 1476), preface "che di potere con sua cognition et con summa liberta penetrare per tutte le parte (pte) di questa universale machine: laquale per ladmirable suo ornamento da greci cosmos: da latini mondo e nominata. Perche essendo gli animi nostri per loro natura di tanta celerita quanta (qta) ne mia ne altra lingua exprimere non poterebe:

the idea that antiquity provided the true and complete science of all things, and that the philological recovery of ancient knowledge enclosed in ancient words was the main path for approaching and penetrating by all parts the "universal machine."

In the late 16th century, the reasons why scholars translated classical sources such as Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia* were different than during the late 15th century. For instance, Hernández did not want to know the world through the eyes of Pliny the Elder, he rather used Pliny's work as a point of departure from where he wanted to start a different type of universal narrative. As Anthony Grafton has observed, "between 1550 and 1650 Western thinkers ceased to believe that they would find all important truths in ancient books."<sup>77</sup> This idea is also seen in the work of Hernández, who did not believe that he could investigate everything in the world through the writings of Pliny the Elder. However, in order to accomplish the universal history of the Western hemisphere recently discovered by the Spaniards, Hernández used Pliny's universal narrative as a framework and reference that supported his own universal construction.

The idea that antiquity was a repository of knowledge that did not allow scholars to understand the modern world is also seen in Johannes Stradanus' *Nova Reperta* [New Discoveries].<sup>78</sup> In the title-page illustration included below, we see America, the printing press, the magnetic compass, gunpowder and the cannon, and medicinal plants from the New World. On the top left, a naked woman points to a roundel with the map of America. On the right, there

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ne essendo altro cibo che gli pasca et nutrisca: se non la cognitione. Chi non uede che nessuna piu grata cosa puo alloro adiuenire: chi havere vera scientia di tutte le cose."

<sup>77</sup> Anthony Grafton with April Shelford and Nancy Sirasi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1992, 10.

<sup>78</sup> *Nova Reperta* is the title-page from a series of twenty prints illustrating new inventions and discoveries after Jan van der Straet, also known as Stradanus. The illustrations were commissioned by the Alamanni family and originally published by Philips Galle. The illustrations were later published by Theodor Galle (ca. 1600).

is an old man seen from behind and next to a roundel with a compass. Both figures carry a snake biting its own tail: the *oroborus*, which indicates the circularity of time. Below the cartouche with the inscription *Nova Reperta*, there is a printing press with sheets of printed text hanging on a cord. In the foreground, there are objects relating to new discoveries such as a mechanical clock, a cannon and a tree with silk worms. This engraving develops the notion of expansion from three correlated perspectives: Christianity, geography, and technology. The three inventions also symbolize the closure of the ancient world and announced a modern age. The symbol of the Southern Cross, which recalls the maritime explorations and the central symbol of Christianity, is placed in the frontispiece between the two words of the title: “Nova” and “Reperta”.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> There are many books and articles examining Johannes Stradanus’s engravings. For a large study in relation to technology and printing press see: Eisenstein, Elizabeth L. *Divine Art, Infernal Machine*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2011.

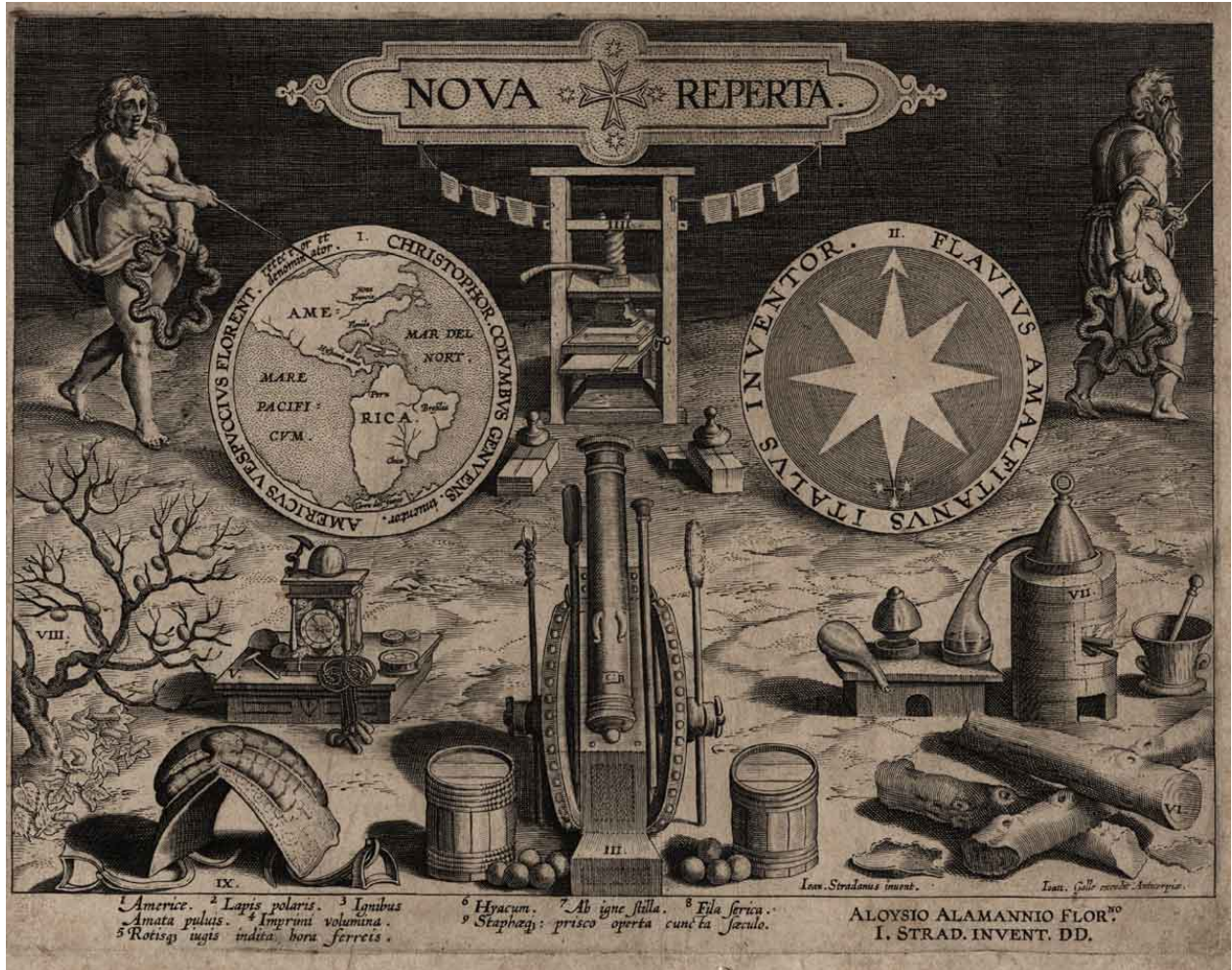


Figure 5. *Nova Reperta*. Phillippe Galle for the expanded 1600 edition of Galle's *Americae Retectio*. Antwerp. The British Museum. Prints & Drawings Collection.

The three discoveries included in Stradanus's *Nova Reperta* [America, the printing press and the compass] are represented as the main inventions that made antiquity outdated. In Stradanus's *Nova Reperta*, the Orient or Asia is not included among modern discoveries, mainly because the Orient and Asia were already known through a large plethora of ancient and medieval authors. As Juan Pimentel has noted, "the Orient plays a geographical role for humanism analogous to that played by Antiquity – a remote fascination finally recovered from

the past”.<sup>80</sup> According to Pimentel, "the Renaissance searches for the Orient and even creates it. The East continues to be created and recreated through the whole early modern down to the Enlightenment and the age of Romanticism, by which time it is consecrated as one of the great cultural artifacts generated by the West in its entire history." However, the idea that the Orient is a cultural artifact generated by the West is just a product of modern scholarship. For scholars and historians of the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is rather the West that had to be invented or created from the Orient. In the case of Hernández's work, we can say that the West is a cultural artifact generated from the Orient.

As Serge Gruzinski has observed, the necessity of importing foreign sources from Asia and the Americas into the Iberian corpus did not imply that scholars transformed their way of structuring universal narratives, rather they conserved and exported to the world a classical and Aristotelian framework acquired in European universities.<sup>81</sup> This was also the case for Francisco Hernández, who attempted to put into dialogue his natural history of the West Indies with Pliny's classical work. In his writings, Hernández often noted the parallelism between the natural history of the West and the activity of translating and interpreting Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*: “because the natural history of this world [West Indies or New World] had to be joined to the history of the other [the *Orbis Terrarum* that covered Asia, Africa, and Europe, described in Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*], I have finished the work of translating and commenting on the thirty-seven books of Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia*.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Juan Pimentel, *The Rhinoceros and The Megatherium, An Essay in Natural History* (Harvard U Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, 2017), 22.

<sup>81</sup> See Serge Gruzinski, *Las Cuatro Partes del Mundo, Historia de una mundialización* (Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010), XVI. Al borde del acantilado. Los linderos de la globalización.

<sup>82</sup> Memorial addressed to the King, December 1577 or January 1578]. Ed. Medina (1898-1907), vol II, p. 292. “porque la historia natural deste orbe se juntase con la del otro, traje acabados de traducir y comentar los treinta y siete libros de la Historia Natural de Plinio”.

As Jesús Bustamante has identified, Hernández's expedition initially followed the methodological principles of Dioscorides' *Materia Medica*, which is an encyclopedia about herbal medicine and medicinal substances (a pharmacopeia).<sup>83</sup> However, Hernández progressively adopted a universal perspective, putting in dialogue the natural history of the West Indies with Pliny's universal narrative. However, as Hernández observes, instead of imitating Pliny the Elder's model (as was the case in Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's work), he translated and commented Pliny's work with the purpose of joining the ancient history to his own modern narrative. In order to join these two forms of universal history, Hernández combined the philological work related to Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* with a methodological perspective that consisted of observing nature in the recently discovered western hemisphere by himself and “according to the report of the Indians, experiences that they have from many hundreds of years here, and of other curious persons and of the physicians of these lands and mine.”<sup>84</sup> Instead of adapting Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* to the New World, Hernández's work aimed at joining two ways of writing a universal history. From this perspective, although Hernández perceived Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia* as a useful repository of knowledge, he differentiated between two forms of enquiry that aimed both at presenting the natural history as a coherent and complete unit.

Several months before departing for New Spain, when he was preparing the expedition in Madrid, Hernández wrote a treatise on the geography of Asia: *Compendio breve de la división y*

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<sup>83</sup> Jesús Bustamante, “Plinio y Dioscórides frente al Nuevo Mundo: Problemas de método y sus consecuencias en los resultados de la primera expedición a suelo America (siglo XVI)”. In *Connaissances et Pouvoirs. Les espaces impériaux (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles) France, Espagne, Portugal*, vol. 1. (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, Pessac).

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, Letter to the king, April, 1573. “Y escriptas en borradores sacadas casi la mitad en limpio las descripciones, naturaleza, temple de los lugares donde nacen, la voz, las virtudes, según relación de los Indios “experiencias que ellos tienen de muchos centenarios de años acá, y de otras personas curiosas, y de los médicos de esta tierra y mías”. (Carta al rey del 31-4-73).

*partes de Asia según lo antiguo y lo moderno* [Brief compendium of the division and parts of Asia according to the Ancient and Modern].<sup>85</sup> The Spanish doctor and geographer wrote this text in order to understand better the differences between Pliny the Elder's geographical description of Asia and the modern discoveries that the explorers made in the West Indies. In this treatise, Hernández mentions Pliny's work as well as João de Barros' *Décadas da Ásia*, which was the most important Iberian work dealing with Asia at that time. Hernández observes that Portuguese explorers had not navigated through the northeastern seas of China and that Barros had drawn on a Chinese book of cosmography to describe these remote regions.<sup>86</sup> Additionally, he notes that the northern regions of the Pacific Ocean were still unknown, and that it was not yet clear whether the New World was an island or a continent.<sup>87</sup>

During the late 16th century, most cosmographers and mapmakers considered the New World to be a continent, but there was no evidence to demonstrate this theory. The separation of America from the Asian continent would not be proven until 1728, when the narrow waterway between Siberia and Alaska, later named the Bering Strait, was traversed for the first time.<sup>88</sup> Nonetheless, mapmakers and geographers had incorporated the continental separation between Asia and the New World since the 1560s, as was the case in Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis*

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<sup>85</sup> This text is included among the volume housed in Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid (BNE), signature ms. 2871.

<sup>86</sup> Joao de Barros mentions these books in *Decada I* and *III*.

<sup>87</sup> Somolinos. Tomo VI, Escritos Varios, *Compendio breve de la división y partes de Asia según lo antiguo y lo moderno*: "Y todo lo restante de la costa de aqueste grande reino, el cual corre casi al septentrion, quedará en esta escriptura con nombre de la novena parte, puesto caso que aún no se haya de los nuestros navegado, aunque pasamos más adelante por el oriente, hasta las islas de los lequios y saponos y a la gran provincia de Lacón, que hasta agora no sabemos por su grandeza si es isla o tierra firme, continuada con la otra costa de la China, las cuales partes ya pasan por antípodas del meridiano de Lisboa. Desta costa, no sabida de los que navegan, da Barros (según él dize) clara demostración, y juntamente de toda la parte mediterránea de la China en sus tablas de geographía que cuenta haber sacado de un libro de cosmographía de los chinos, que apromete".

<sup>88</sup> Glyn Williams, *Arctic Labyrinth: The Quest for the Northwest Passage*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2010)

*Terrarum*.<sup>89</sup> At the end of the *Compendio breve*, Hernández observes that one of the goals of the expedition that he was about to begin that same year of 1571 was to explore the oriental and northern regions of China and the Pacific Ocean: “Regarding the West Indies, southern lands, and even other oriental and northern parts that the present time, with new daring and curious navigations, has revealed to us, I will not treat them here, because neither the ancients reached these lands nor it is the function of this author to interpret it, because we will do that when we will go there to describe the natural things of the West Indies, where it will be more appropriate”<sup>90</sup>. As this passage shows, Hernández directly associated his expedition with the exploration of the oriental and northern regions of Asia. This idea is also mentioned on his comments on Pliny the Elder’s work, where he associated the ends of Pliny’s Asia with the beginnings of his own work:

This sixth book on Asia brings to an end what Plinio knew about Asia and, with that, everything that deals with geography. Because it is known that, in our time, as with the three parts of the World that the ancients knew in a certain way, as with the New World, which, by the mercy of God and glory of the kings of Spain was penetrated only few years ago. Many things have been discovered, of which, at some point in time, a very diligent man with the favor of some great prince, joining the ancient to the modern, will make a very precise and complete description and geographical history.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Before Ortelius map, Gerard Mercator’s planisphere (1569) shows a similar division of Asia and the New World.

<sup>90</sup> Francisco Hernández, *Obras Completas*, Tomo VI, p. 267: “Lo que toca a las Indias occidentales, tierras australes y aun otras partes orientales y septentrionales que el tiempo presente, con tan curiosas y osadas navegaciones, nos ha descubierto, no tocamos aquí, así porque ni los antiguos lo alcanzaron ni haze a la interpretación deste author como porque pensamos hazerlo cuando fuéremos a describir las cosas naturales de las Indias occidentales, donde vendrá muy a propósito”.

<sup>91</sup> Francisco Hernández, *Obras Completas*, Tomo IV, *Historia Natural de Cayo Plinio*, Prefacio. (México: UNAM 1976), Book VI : En este libro sexto acaba lo de Asia de que él [Plinio] tuvo noticia y, con ello, todo lo que toca a geographía. Porque sabida cosa es haverse en nuestros tiempos descubierto, así las tres partes del Mundo que los antiguos en alguna manera conocieron, como del Nuevo, que por la misericordia de Dios y felicidad de los reyes de Hespaña se ha de pocos años acá penetrado, muchas cosas dignas de que algún hombre muy diligente [y] con favor de algún grandísimo príncipe, en algún tiempo haga con los demás, juntando lo antiguo con lo moderno, muy particular y cumplida descripción e historia geográfica.



As Hernández observes in this passage, he implicitly conceived his work as an ideal juncture between ancient and modern histories: “joining the ancient to the modern” [*juntando lo antiguo con lo moderno*]. Hernández did not consider Asia and New Spain as separated entities, but as something correlated that he had to put together by combining ancient and modern ways of enquiry and writing histories. In addition to Hernández’s manuscripts, this idea of completing the description of the ancients is also seen in the writings of Francisco Domínguez, who was the geographer of Hernández’s expedition.<sup>92</sup> The mission of Francisco Domínguez in New Spain was to determine distances and patterns of latitude in New Spain.<sup>93</sup> Dominguez sent instructions to Manila for observing the eclipse of the moon and the sun to the different regions of the New World and East Asia in order to measure the latitude and distances between several cities of the Spanish kingdoms. Unlike Francisco Hernandez, who came back to Spain in 1577, Domínguez stayed in New Spain in order to finish his geographical project. In a letter addressed to the king, Domínguez mentioned that he had finished the geographical descriptions that were part of the expedition commanded by Francisco Hernandez:

As I well know, C. R. M., that it will be clear in your royal memory the trip that your physician Francisco Hernández did in these parts following your royal order, and, in addition to the Hernández mission, which consisted of describing the properties and virtues of herbs and plants, in both a theoretical and practical way, your royal majesty also commanded the description of this New Spain, through

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<sup>92</sup> Domínguez was probably appointed as cosmographer of Hernandez’s expedition because the viceroys answered to the royal request that there was not a competent geographer in the Indies who could accomplish the responsibilities required for the position (Somolinos, Tomo 1, 254). Francisco Hernández mentions the work of Domínguez, who was under his command, in his correspondence with Philippe II during his journey in New Spain. During the expedition, Dominguez’s geographical work was only interrupted during several months, when the viceroy Martín Enriquez de Almanza tried to discredit Hernandez.

<sup>93</sup> Domínguez used a quadrant or astrolabe to measure the angle of elevation of the Pole Star, determining distances and patterns of latitude. For ground distances, he used goniometers to measure angles and to establish distances by covering areas that correspond to the angular calibration. For Domínguez, see Barbara Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain*, p. 20

which it would be consigned and regulated under the account of the sphere, as Ptolemy did in his time with all the oriental parts of this globe according to his own account; and being elected from your royal decree to this position, I have served five years, in which I concluded with all the description that is related to the jurisdiction of the Royal Audience of México [...] and so, as Ptolemy was the first who described the geographical tables of the Oriental parts, your Royal Majesty (V. R. M) will be the second on the imitation of his work, but also the first in these parts.<sup>94</sup>

As Francisco Hernández did with Pliny's work, Domínguez was completing what Ptolemy did in his time with all the oriental parts. In both cases, the work developed in New Spain integrated a double perspective that included the dialogue with ancient authors and the reports and materials received from Asia and the New World. Unlike Martín de Rada, Francisco Hernández never crossed the Pacific Ocean; he had to imagine Asia by combining the writings of ancients with the accounts and materials that began to arrive from Manila. However, Hernández considered the interaction with Manila indispensable for completing his work. As we mentioned previously Hernández observed at the end of the expedition that the work of Martín de Rada was in relation to the history for which he was compiling information in New Spain. In addition to this reference, Hernández's interest in receiving materials and information from the Philippines and China is explicitly mentioned in the letters addressed to the king during the expedition. The repeated references to the necessity of incorporating materials from the Far East as well as from

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<sup>94</sup> AGI, Legajo 39, Cartas de Indias. Carta del geógrafo Francisco Domínguez a Felipe II desde México a 30 de Diciembre de 1581 sobre que S. M mande al Virrey D. Martín Enríquez remita la descripción de Nueva España que trabajó mejorando lo hecho por el Dr. Francisco Hernández: "Bien tengo entendido, C. R. M., que estará patente en vuestra real memoria el viaje que hizo en estas partes por vuestro real mandado el Dr. Francisco Hernandez, vuestro protomedico; y aliende lo que a su cargo traía, que era describir las propiedades y virtudes de las yerbas y plantas, así por theorica como por practica, truxo fuera de su facultad commission de v. r. m para que se hiciese la descripción de esta Nueva Espana, mediante la cual fuese puesta y regulada esta tierra debaxo de cuenta de esfera, como ha hecho Ptolomeo en su tiempo a todas las partes orientales deste orbe según su cuenta; y siendo electo por vuestra real cédula para este efecto, he servido cinco años, en los cuales concluí con todo el descripto tocante a la jurisdicción de esta Real Audiencia de México. [...] y así como Ptolomeo fue el primero descriptor de tablas geográficas de las partes orientales, V. R. M, sera el Segundo en la imitación mandándome, pero tambien el primero en estas."

other Atlantic islands attest to the desire to understand the West by making possible a direct and connected narrative that integrate factual descriptions and images.

In a letter addressed to the king, he refers to the necessity of receiving materials from different regions in Asia and the Atlantic world: "It is also crucial for the perfection of this work that your Majesty order that the Canary Islands, Santo Domingo, and China be described in writing, which I am drawing up, and that pictures in miniature of everything natural be sent, which can be done easily, with an account of their virtues and qualities, supplied by native and Spanish doctors."<sup>95</sup> In the same letter, Hernández also observes that by receiving paintings and materials from the Canary Islands, Santo Domingo and China, he would complete and illustrate a history that would make visible the entire world: "Your Majesty will have a model, which the world will admire. I dare to say this because all of this extraordinary evidence of the works of God and of the secrete treasure of these lands and of their benefit will be in Your Majesty's hands."<sup>96</sup>

In his work, Hernández privileged a connected approach based on the exchange with other scholars and painters established in East Asia. As we know, Hernández even incorporated objects and natural specimens that he received from the Philippines and commented on descriptions drawn from Garcia da Orta's *Colóquios dos simples*.<sup>9798</sup> Among the descriptions of

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<sup>95</sup> Francisco Hernández, *The Mexican Treasury, The Writings of Dr. Francisco Hernández*, edited by Simon Varey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), Letters to the King, Letter 6, December 12, 1572. p. 51.

<sup>96</sup> Francisco Hernández, *The Mexican Treasury, The Writings of Dr. Francisco Hernández*, 51.

<sup>97</sup> Garcia de Orta. *Colóquios dos simples e drogas he cousas medicinais da Índia e assi dalgũas frutas achadas nella onde se tratam algũas cousas tocantes a medicina, pratica, e outras cousas boas pera saber*, (Goa: Ioannes de Endem, 1563)

<sup>98</sup> Among the three thousand descriptions of Hernández included plants, birds, animals, and minerals that come from other regions: Plants, Book III chap. CXCVIII a CCIII (Philippines); book XXI chaps. LXXI to LXXIII (Peru) ; Book XXII chaps. XXXV (Peru), Book XXIII caps. XX and XXI (Peru), Quadrupeds, chaps. XXXIV and XXXV (Philippines and Peru); Birds, chaps. CCXIX-CCXXI and CCXXII (Philippines and birds seen in the garden of Philip II); Reptiles, L (Philippines); Insects chaps. XXVIII and XXX (Philippines); Minerals chap. XXXIII (Philippines).

plants and animals of Asia, Hernández included a description of a strange stone in which he mentions the objects received from the Philippines:

People send us finally from the Philippines marvelous works of their artists and other things worthy of being seen that nature produces there spontaneously, and to speak with propriety about it, it would be necessary [to write] a special book. But among many other gems of all genres, a naval captain showed us one gem that I believe was found by chance: crystal-shaped, white and transparent, and at the center one can see, as a wonder of nature, a blue lamb with the cross on his shoulder. Perhaps, this is a sign that the divine evangelism will enlighten those lands, and that maybe in that circumstance that enormous region of the world will be under the rule of our undefeated King Philip II, by whose command we write these things.<sup>99</sup>

Unlike the majority of descriptions of the natural history of the Indies, which reproduced either information observed by Hernández or provided by native doctors and officials, the description of this gem contains an allegorical interpretation and a prophecy that announces the conquest of China. The stone is described as a “wonder of nature” and it is more than just a factual source, it is an omen or *presagio*, as Hernández named it. Hernández also mentions in the description that he would have need another book to describe the marvelous things of their artists and things drawn from nature, implying that his encyclopedia is finally leaving Asia and the Far East outside of the corpus *novohispano*. Although he initially conceived his *Historia* as a diachronic juncture that put simultaneously in dialogue the writings and descriptions of ancients and moderns, the lack of time limited the universal scope of his narrative to New Spain.

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<sup>99</sup> Hernández, Francisco, *Obras completas*, v. II, Book XXIV, Ch. XXIII. “Nos envían ya de las islas Filipinas admirables obras de sus artífices y otras cosas dignas de verse que espontáneamente produce allí la naturaleza, y para hablar debidamente de las cuales sería necesario un libro especial. Pero entre otras muchas gemas de todos géneros, un capitán de navío nos mostró una encontrada por azar, según creo, con forma de cristal, blanca y transparente, y en cuyo centro se veía, por una maravilla de la naturaleza, un cordero azul con la cruz al hombro. Acaso sea eso un presagio de que la divina predicación del evangelio alumbrará aquellas tierras, y de que quizás en tal coyuntura esa inmensa región del mundo quedará bajo el imperio de nuestro invicto rey Felipe II, por cuyo mandato escribimos estas cosas”

### III. The Art of Composing Global Histories

The most complete work on China published in the 16th century in Spanish is the *Historia de las cosas mas notables, ritos y costumbres del gran Reyno de la China*, by Juan González de Mendoza (1545-1618). Mendoza's work was the most influential and widely read book about China in Europe, being published in 38 editions in seven languages in the next fifteen years after its original publication in 1585. As early modern scholars working on European views of China have noted, González de Mendoza's work marks "the beginnings of the first great age of Western Sinology."<sup>100</sup> Born in Torrecilla en Cameros (La Rioja) in 1545, Mendoza arrived in Mexico when he was only 17. In New Spain, he lived in the convent of Michoacán, which was a regular stopping place for missionaries and travelers who went to Asia or returned through the Manila route to New Spain, Peru, or Europe. Like Andrés de Urdaneta and Martín de Rada, Mendoza was also member of the Order of Saint Augustine, which was the order that initiated the discoveries and missions in the Philippines. In 1580, Mendoza was supposed to travel to China with a group of missionaries, but in the end, he remained in Mexico and never satisfied his dream of visiting the Middle Kingdom. Instead, Mendoza moved back and forth between New Spain and Europe and ended his career as bishop of Chiapas.

According to Donald Lach, *Mendoza's Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China* is "the point of departure and the basis of comparisons for all subsequent European works on China written before the 18th century."<sup>101</sup> Despite recognition that Mendoza drew on many sources that

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<sup>100</sup> Colin Mackerras, *Sinohpiles and Sinophobes: Western Views of China*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 16.

<sup>101</sup> Donald Lach, *Asia and the Making of Europe*, 3 vols, vol. 1.2. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965, p. 744.

he received and compiled in Mexico, few historians and literary scholars concerned with Spanish America have explored Mendoza's *Historia* in relation to the Spanish historiography dealing with the Americas. Donald Lach and Nancy Vogeley have however examined Mendoza's work as part of the historiographies produced in the New World. According to Vogeley, Mendoza's work "concentrates less on time and historicity, and more on synchronicism, offering a cross-section of contemporaneous, global phenomena."<sup>102</sup> This chapter argues that Mendoza's work along with other historical writings produced in the 1580's in New Spain initiated a new historical genre that explicitly erased the traces of Portuguese production as well as ancient and medieval authors by favoring Spanish sources sent from Manila to New Spain. As this chapter shows, the possibility of writing about Asia and China from New Spain transformed decisively historical genres developed in the Americas, such as the general and universal histories. Based on the possibility of integrating *relaciones* and reports from Asia in their general histories, these historical genres that had its roots into the American laboratory transformed their scope by developing a synchronic and global perspective into their activity of writing histories.

Moreover, as Robert Richmond Ellis observed, "Mendoza elucidates a proto-Orientalism, not simply, as Edward Said has noted of the Catholic missionaries of the period, for having opened up the new study of China and with it the field of sinology, but also by reading and at times even fabricating Chinese discourses in ways that privilege the West over China."<sup>103</sup> From this perspective, Mendoza's work was not just actualizing the history and knowledge of China in Europe and the Americas, he was also promoting a new way of incorporating China and Asia

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<sup>102</sup> Nancy Vogeley, "China and the American Indies: A Sixteenth-Century "History" (Colonial Latin American Review, 1997)

<sup>103</sup> Robert Richmond Ellis, "The Middle Kingdom through Spanish Eyes: Depictions of China in the Writings of Juan González de Mendoza and Domingo Fernández Navarrete," Bulletin of Hispanic Studies; Liverpool Vol. 83, Iss. 6, (2006): 469-483.

into a narrative and historical model developed in the West. As Richmond Ellis has shown, Mendoza's printed book opened to the European world a new way of integrating China in a comparative and western perspective. Based on the contemporary writings of Martín de Rada, Miguel de Loarca, fray Martín Ignacio, and other accounts and oral sources compiled in New Spain, the *Historia del gran Reyno de la China* was the first book dealing with China to reach a large Western audience since Marco Polo's *Livre des Merveilles du Monde*. In the *Historia*, Mendoza intentionally avoids any reference to ancient and medieval authors, privileging the *relaciones* that circulated throughout the recently established western transpacific route. Mendoza presents his work as an original history dissociated from the dependence on both ancient and Portuguese authors. Even though Mendoza continued to import old ideas concerning China and knew Portuguese accounts and histories, he strategically advanced the idea that Martín de Rada and his companions were the first to discover China.

Commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII in 1583, the *Historia del gran Reyno de la China* projects a prophetic vision of the future evangelization of China. However, as scholars have noted, the missionary perspective of the book also projects a secular perspective that emanates from its western point of view. According to Nancy Vogeley, "although written by a priest and sprinkled with comments about evangelization, the text shows a movement toward the secularization of historical writing."<sup>104</sup> Even though Mendoza "hypothesizes the previous presence among those Oriental peoples of St. Thomas the Apostle [...] he does not deduce from that hypothesis a providential plan of history that might have spread the Gospel to that part of the

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<sup>104</sup> Nancy Vogeley, "China and the American Indies: A Sixteenth-Century "History", web.

world.”<sup>105</sup> Vogeley argues that Mendoza’s work is part of a broader history of the movement of Roman Catholicism from the Americas to Asia.

Besides this displacement of Roman Catholicism towards Asia, this chapter argues that Mendoza's *Historia del gran Reyno de la China* emancipated universal history from its dependence with antiquity. As argued previously, universal history as it was practiced from Antiquity began to change in the late 16<sup>th</sup> through the writings of scholars who incorporated into their universal histories of the Indies sources and reports dealing with Asia. Instead of being the product of a gradual integration of America with Eurasia and Africa, as Sanjay Subrahmanyam has argued, the origins of global history sank its roots in the extension of narratives of the New World towards Asia.<sup>106</sup> Unlike Francisco Hernández, who wanted to put in dialogue and demarcate China and the East Indies from his own western history, Mendoza's main object was China and his main purpose was to create a new narrative about the Middle Kingdom. In Mendoza's writings, it is China that is first incorporated into the historical genres developed in the New World. To put it better through the words of Nancy Vogeley, in Juan González de Mendoza's *Historia*, the "Nuevo Mundo" is now the Orient."<sup>107</sup>

Before reaching the press in Rome in 1585, the *Historia del gran Reyno de la China* was the product of a transpacific circulation of people, materials, and sources. Instead of considering that China was an ancient kingdom already known in Europe, Mendoza presents his book as an exceptional history with no previous equivalent. In the preface to the reader, he criticizes those modern writers who “applied ancient histories to new subjects with the purpose of preserving

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<sup>105</sup> Nancy Vogeley, "China and the American Indies: A Sixteenth-Century "History", web.

<sup>106</sup> See comments on Subrahmanyam in second part of this chapter. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *On the Origins of Global History* (Collège de France, Open Edition Books, 2016)

<sup>107</sup> Nancy Vogeley, "China and the American Indies: A Sixteenth-Century "History", web.



their name in perpetuity.”<sup>108</sup> This opening marks one of the main promotional features of the history, which consisted of defending the idea that the book deals with a “new world”: “my history does not deal with the brief history of the Athenian Republic that Plutarch mentions profusely, nor with the triumph of the ancient Rome, a very worthy topic of his famous chronicler Tito Livio. Nor does it usurp the glory of his works to the curious and elegant writers of the German Empire.”<sup>109</sup> After this brief genealogy of classical authors who wrote about Empires, Mendoza moves to his own subject, which, also dealing with the history of another Empires, is presented as new for the European audience: “I deal with another discipline less used and more remote than the common literatures, and because this topic is absent from the writings and the inestimable production of bright authors, it has been neglected by the industry of writing about it, forcing me (because I have a little knowledge of this) to present to the curious the value, greatness, power, majesty, and richness of the Kings of China.”<sup>110</sup>

After defining the *Historia* as an original work, Mendoza introduces the name of Marco Polo: “although it seems that Marco Polo, in the long trip he made through Asia, wanted to announce to the world this sort of people, people do not clarify well if the incredible things that he narrates about that region deal with the Chinese or the Tatars.”<sup>111</sup> Mendoza presents Marco

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<sup>108</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*, (Rome, a costa de Bartholome Grassi 1585). Al lector, “No medexo llebar tanto (discrete lector) de la Ambicion gloriosa Con que los Escritores modernos (aplicando historias antiguas a nuebos sugetos, para alcanzar perpetuo nombre) procuran inmortalizarse.”

<sup>109</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*. “No celebra los triunfos y monarquia de la antigua Roma, sugetto dignissimo de su famosa coronista Tito Livio. No usurpa su gloria de sus trabajos a los curiosos y elegantes escritores del aleman Imperio.”

<sup>110</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*. Preface to the reader. “En otra materia menos trillada y mas Remota dela comun noticia le empleo, que por faltar esta a infinitos ingenios fertilissimos, has desamparado la empresa de su escritura y casi obligandome a que (por tener de ella un poco) haga presentes alos Curiosos el valor, grandeza, Poder, magestad, y Riqueza de los Reyes dela China.”

<sup>111</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*, Preface to the reader. “Y aunque Marco Polo en el largo viaje que hizo por Asia, parece que quiere dar a conozer al mundo esta suerte de gente, ay quien no se certifica, si las cossas increybles que della quenta sean de los Chinoas, o Tartaros.”

Polo's *Livre des Merveilles du Monde* as a confusing work that describes a different kingdom. Moreover, Mendoza also plants the idea that China was a new world in the title and chapters of the last book, the "Itinerary of the New World." This book describes the travel all around the world that Martin Ignacio started in 1581. Mendoza suggests that Ignacio's travel in Asia took place in a new world in several sections, such as "chapter xvii about other kingdoms that there are in this new world, about its names and properties, and specially about the famous city of Malacca."<sup>112</sup> Even though the term "new world" was not always referring to America during the early modern period, the formulas *mundus novus* and *novus orbis* were commonly used to describe the lands newly discovered by the Spaniards in the Americas, the Pacific Ocean and even some regions of East Asia, but not China and Japan.

Although the *Historia del gran Reyno de la China* was by far the most influential and widely read book about China in Europe, Mendoza's work was not the first printed book on China to be published in Europe in the sixteenth century. In order to prepare his work, Mendoza consulted previous Iberian books, such as the works published previously by João de Barros, Gaspar da Cruz, and Bernardino de Escalante. In addition to these Iberian writings, Mendoza also consulted Herodotus and the Ptolemaic historiography. Mendoza presents these ancient and Portuguese sources as an outdated or false reference, emphasizing the value of Spanish accounts since the preface and beginnings of the book. In the first sentences of the *Historia*, Mendoza supports the idea that the Spaniards from the Philippines, and not the Portuguese from Macau and India, discovered the Great China:

This Great Kingdom of China, which is the main topic of this history, has been discovered from clear and true accounts for ten years now by the Spaniards of the Philippines islands [...] Nevertheless, we had received news much earlier from

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<sup>112</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*. p. 417. Also in the table of contents.

the India of Portugal and by accounts of the Portuguese, who trade with Canton, city of the same Kingdom of China, and also from the inhabitants of Macau, but these news were drawn from reports, and so, neither the one or the other could satisfy the truth because they were there. But in the year 1575, the Father fray Martin de Rada chief of the Augustinians (who were the ones who discovered the said Philippine Islands and baptized its inhabitants) with his companion Fray Hieronymus Marin [...] entered the said Kingdom of China, led and guided by a Captain, of the king of there, called Omoncon.<sup>113</sup>

In these opening lines, Mendoza supports the main purpose of the book, which consisted of defending the idea that Spaniards discovered first the Great kingdom of China. In the preface to the reader, Mendoza mentions that he mainly draws from the writings of Martín de Rada, Miguel de Loarca, Geronimo Marin, Pedro de Alfaro, and the final account of the journey that Father Martin Ignacio and his companions did in 1581. In addition, Mendoza mentions that in Mexico he combined the *relaciones* with translations from Chinese books and oral sources learned from “persons who had been in China and who had partially translated the books and histories of that kingdom, and with some papers and *relaciones* that I could obtain in my hands that are properly certified, I did a brief compendium from where I could take out some news and descriptions of that kingdom.”<sup>114</sup> In this passage, Mendoza places the Spanish perspective as a multiple authoritative voice. In the same preface and after mentioning the materials used in the book,

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<sup>113</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*. p 1. "Este gran Reyno de la China, de quien esta historia hemos de tratar, se ha descubierto por clara noticia y verdadera, de diez año a esta parte, por los Españoles habitantes en las Islas Philippinas [...] No obstante que mucho antes se avia tenido por la via de la India de Portugal, por relacion de los Portugueses, que tratavan en Canton, ciudad del mesmo Reyno de la China, y moradores de Macan, pero esta era por relaciones, y assi la una ni otra, podia bien satisfazer por hallarse en ellas, en lo que era verdad, variedad: hasta que el año de 1575, el padre fray Martin de herrada Provincial de los Agustinos (que fueron los que descubrieron las dichas islas Philippinas, y baptizaron a los moradores dellas) con su compañero fray Hiernonymo Marin [...] entraron en el dicho Reyno de la China, llevados y guiados por un Capitan, del rey della, llamado Omoncon."

<sup>114</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*. preface to the reader "Y entendí de personas que avian estado en la China y hecho traducir algunas cosas de los libros y historias de aquel Reyno, y de algunos papeles y relaciones que pude haver alas manos bien comprovados, hize un breve compendio."

Mendoza criticizes even the Italians printers who unfortunately made many mistakes, because “they do not know the appropriate meaning of the Spanish words, they divide syllables that should be together and put together those that should be separated. And also, because they do not have accents and other requirements of our pronunciation.”<sup>115</sup> From this perspective, Mendoza emphasizes the authorial value of manuscripts written in Manila or New Spain over ancient, medieval and, above all, Portuguese sources.

Published in Rome, the multiple authors of Mendoza’s book aimed to promote in Europe the Spanish expansion from the Americas to the East Indies. As Roger Chartier has pointed out, “authors do not write books, not even their own books. Books, be they manuscript or printed, are always the result of multiple operations that suppose a broad variety of decisions, techniques, and skills.”<sup>116</sup> In Mendoza’s work, in addition to the variety of skills and techniques that made the book possible, the writers of *relaciones* represent the main authorial voice. As Mendoza suggests in the preface to the reader, the most important steps of the multiple operations behind the *Historia* happened before the arrival of the manuscript to the printing press in Rome, when he compiled those “true and clear” sources in New Spain. For Mendoza, the veracity of sources legitimizes the idea of discovery that he articulates in the book.<sup>117</sup> Even though it is his name that appears as the author of the entire book, the sections of the book refer to the different authors of the *relaciones*. Mendoza divided the *Historia* into two parts. The first part contains three books covering the geography, history, religion, and political characteristics of China. The second book

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<sup>115</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*, preface to the reader. "Se disculpa con la poca intelligencia de los impressores italianos en nuestra lengua Española, que por ignorar la significación de los vocablos, dividen silabas, qu debrian juntarse, y juntan las que fuera razón distinguirse."

<sup>116</sup> Chartier, Roger, (translate by Lydia G. Cochrane), *The Author's Hand and the Printer's Mind*. Polity press, 2014. Part I. The Past in the PResent. 1. Listen to the Dead With Your Eyes. p. 17.

<sup>117</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*. Preface to the reader. "De algunos papeles y relaciones que pude haver alas manos bien comprobados, hize un breve compendio."

is divided into three books and narrates the expeditions to China, including those of Martín de Rada, Marin, Loarca, Sarmiento, and Pedro Alfaro.

Finally, the last book includes the first worldly itinerary of two travels made by the grandnephew of Ignatius of Loyola, Martin Ignacio, who traveled around the world in 1580–1584 and 1585–1589, being the first person to complete the world circumnavigation twice. Included in the last part of Mendoza's book, Martin Ignacio's *Itinerario del Nuevo Mundo* [*Itinerary in the New World*] covers the travel from the Canary Islands to Mexico, the Philippines, China, and the return to Lisbon through the Portuguese Indian run. Similarly, the first sections of the book also offer comparisons between China, New Spain, Peru, and Europe. From this perspective, Mendoza's work not only covers descriptions and histories concerning China and Asia, but also includes the regions of the New World; it produces a comparative perspective that continuously contrasts Asia and the New World. This fluidity of descriptions contrast with the repeated references to things that have been seen by people: "It is declared some notable things that are and have been seen in the Philippines," or "They go from the Luzon island to China, and it is narrated what they saw there"<sup>118</sup> Often included in the title of chapters, these terms emphasizes the experiential character associated with the nature of *relaciones* as well as with the idea that Mendoza only presented true sources of things known and investigated. As mentioned previously, these narratives and reports of things known and investigated were part of the Spanish administrative and historiographical production related to the Western Hemisphere. In the *Historia del Gran Reyno de la China*, these narratives of things known and investigated become the instrument of a political and historiographical operation that aimed at placing China into the narrative dominions of the Spanish West.

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<sup>118</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China. Itinerario del Nuevo Mundo*, chapters 9 and 10.

As was the case in the maritime itineraries of discoveries analyzed previously, these forms of narrating travels and discoveries in the Spanish *relaciones* had a political component: they reflected the need to include the space of discovery into the legal and political arena of the Spanish West. More than the tension between truth and false information, there is first a legal and political dimension that defined the experiential character of narratives written by explorers and compiled in Mendoza's work. Among the number of passages referring to the factual and experiential dimension of history, the story of Abada shows an interesting and curious example of how the book legitimates itself by referring to a "rhetoric of experience" that structured the legitimacy of these western voices that penetrated the most powerful kingdom in the Orient. As Juan González de Mendoza recounts, Abada was a rhinoceros offered by the king of Portugal to Philip II, who kept the animal in the menagerie of El Escorial. The visitors to the menagerie were impressed by the horn of the animal and discussed whether the animal could be the legendary unicorn or another kind of strange creature:

And there are many elephants, and Abadas (Rhinoceros) in those regions (Cochinchina). I saw one of these animals [Abada or Rhinoceros] in Lisbon, brought from the Indies to your Majesty, and now it is in Madrid, where it is seen as something very strange and never seen in our Europe. The skin is so harsh that no man can pierce with a stab. Some say that this animal is the unicorn, but I think that this is false, and the most part of people who have visited those remote parts and seen the true unicorn share my opinion.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reyno de la China*. "Y ay en ella muchos Elephantes, y Abadas, que son unos animals de grandes de dos grandes toros, y tienen sobre el hozico un cuerno pequeño: delos quales vi yo uno en Lisboa, que fue traydo de la India a sy Magestad, y esta agora en Madrid, donde lo van a ver por cosa muy estraña, y nunca vista en nuestra Europa, cuyo cuero es tan duro, que ningun hombre por de grandes fuerças que sea lo podra passer de una estocada. Han querido dezir algunos que es Unicornio, pero yo lo tengo por falso, y son de mi opinión casi todos los que han estado en aqueillas partes, y visto el verdadero Unicornio (481) (Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reyno de la China*, Rome, 1585) Cap. XVI. Prosigue las cosas de los Reynos comarcanos al de Cochinchina.. (Barcelona, Pablo Manescal, 1586)

Included in the *Itinerario* of Martin Ignacio at the end of Mendoza's book, this episode shows that, more than for recovering the truth, Mendoza used the experience and factuality of authors as an instrument of legitimation that allowed him to insert in the Orient a western authorial voice. In Mendoza's book, the repeated references to experiential and reliable sources of travelers are instrumental to legitimate the western "discovery" of China. Neither the strange ideas of ancients, nor the modern accounts of Portuguese could define the authentic nature of unicorns, but only the people who have visited those remote regions and seen the true creature with his own eyes. The necessity of constructing an authorial voice that does not refer to ancient authors or to Portuguese accounts in Mendoza's work manifests an interest in promoting a political agenda concerning the Spanish expansion in Asia. Through this lens, Mendoza's book can be considered the first western history of China.

Moreover, Mendoza's *Historia* develops a comparative perspective between the East and the West in which the people of China and Asia are compared with nations of Europe and the Americas. As Richmond Ellis has observed, even though Mendoza's references to physical characteristics of the Chinese implicitly affirm European superiority, he also compares the physical features of some of the inhabitants of China with those of Europeans and Spaniards. Unlike the nations of Southeast and South Asians, as well as Africans and Amerindians, the Chinese and Japanese were typically described in Iberian and European writings as white people. The Japanese and Chinese were also considered more highly civilized than other non-Europeans, and some Iberian historians even considered the Chinese the most advanced civilization in the world, as is seen in the writings of Joao de Barros's *Decades of Asia* and in Cristóbal de Acosta's *Tractado de las drogas y medicinas de las Indias orientales*.<sup>120</sup> Only few years before

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<sup>120</sup> João de Barros, *Década da Ásia*, 1552-63. Cristóbal de Acosta, *Tractado de las drogas y medicinas de las Indias Orientales*, Burgos: por Martín de Victoria impresor de su Magestad, 1578.

Mendoza's writings, Cristóbal de Acosta advanced the idea that "China is a great Kingdom in the large size of the populations and the excellence of its public order. It exceeds all other Kingdoms in the world, in its possession, riches, and government."<sup>121</sup>

However, João de Barros and Cristóbal de Acosta did not write from a Spanish perspective, they rather developed an approach inscribed into the huge corpus of Portuguese sources devoted to Asia. In Juan González de Mendoza, the narrative entails an imperialistic endeavor that projects a new form of racial scaling. For Mendoza, China is always one of the most advanced kingdoms in the world, but it is subordinated to his own western perspective. This racial and political perspective is developed in Mendoza's descriptions of the customs, laws, and physical characteristics of societies in China, the Far East, and Europe. During the late 16th century, even though the color remained a fluid marker of physical and cultural difference, whiteness was associated with advanced civilizations. In the Hispanic context, Christopher Columbus had associated the color yellow with the color of native people from the Canary Islands and the Hispaniola. It was not until the 18th century, when the European rhetoric of Orientalism began to emerge that scholars started to represent the Chinese and East Asian people as non-white or also a "yellow race." In the writings of Spanish and Portuguese, scholars either described the people of China as white, as is the case in Martín de Rada's *Relaçion Verdadera de las cosas del Reyno de Taibin*, or they described the people of China as a diversity of communities that differed in their appearance and customs. Unlike Martín de Rada, who provided description of physical appearances but did not offer comparisons with other groups,

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<sup>121</sup> Cristóbal de Acosta, *Tractado de las drogas y medicinas de las Indias Orientales*, ed. José Manuel Rodríguez (León: Universidad de León, 1995), 250. Translation from Christina H. Lee, Introduction, Europe's Encounter of Asia in Early Modernity, in *Western Visions of the Far East in a Transpacific Age*, 1522-1657.



Mendoza describes the colors of the people of China and he compares it with the diversity of nations in the Mediterranean world:

This is very obvious, in the great difference that there is in color among the inhabitants of this kingdom. Those who are born in the city of Canton and along that entire coast are dark, like the people of Fez or Barbary, because it (the coast) runs along the parallel of Barbary. Those of the other interior provinces are White, some more than others, as they approach the cold lands. There are some that are like Spaniards, and others that are fairer, until they become like the blond and ruddy Germans<sup>122</sup>

Included in the chapter devoted to the great diversity of temperatures of China, the different colors of people are associated with the climate and with China's large extension from north to southern regions. These parallelisms situate Mendoza's work among those texts of the so-called theory of climates. Attributed to Montesquieu, this theory argues that the climate could determine the nature of people and societies. In the early modern period, Jean Bodin is one of the most cited scholars associated with this theory. Published only 9 years before Mendoza's work, Bodin mentions in book V of the *Six Livres de la République* the impact of climate on the strength of people.<sup>123</sup> In the *Historia del gran Reyno de la China*, Mendoza also develops this theory by associating the diversity of colors of people with the climate as well as with the fertility, wealth, industry, and behavior of the Chinese. In the first section of chapters of the first book, Mendoza continuously presents China as a superior and even paradisiacal world with

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<sup>122</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia del gran reyno de la China*, Libro I, Chapter 2. Del Temperamento del Reyno de la China. English translation drawn from Richmond Ellis, *They Need Nothing, Hispanic-Asian Encounters of the Colonial Period*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012, p. 83. "Hechase esto muy de ver, en la diferencia grande que ay, de colores entre los moradores deste Reyno [...] Los que nascen en la ciudad de Canton, y en toda aquella costa, son morenos, como los de Fez, o berberia, porque discurre toda ella, por el paralelo, que Berberia: los de las mas provincias de la tierra a dentro, son blancos, unos mas que otros, segun se van metiendo mas en la tierra fria: ay unos que son como los de España, y otros más rubios, hasta que llegan a ser como unos Alemanes rubios y colorados."

<sup>123</sup> Jean Bodin, *Six Livres de la République* (Paris: Jacques Du Puys 1576) Book V, chap. I.

plenty of everything. He considers China “without any doubt” the most fertile kingdom in the world, comparing this superior fertility with Peru and New Spain, which are also among the most fertile kingdoms in the world.<sup>124</sup> Mendoza associates the fertility of the land with the work ethic, industry, government, and laws of China, arguing that it is a good and peaceful kingdom:

The fertility of the land is improved by the continuous effort and industry of native people from there, which is so much that they do not leave any valley, range and shore without farming [...] and the great infinity of people facilitate this for professions as well as for cultivating the land. And [they facilitate this] by not permitting to being seriously punished are considered infamous. Nor do they allow people to leave their kingdom for other foreign lands, nor to have wars, which is what tends to consume people, being the king satisfied with only his own Kingdom as one of the Good ones that are known in the world.<sup>125</sup>

In these passages, the great industry, government and laws of China are contrasted with physical and moral characteristics that are commonly associated with the opposite of an orientalist modern construction, such as the whiteness, hardworking character and peaceful behavior of the people and the king. Moreover, Mendoza's descriptions and comparisons of physical appearance, behaviors, and laws is also a narrative production that emerge from the information provided by the *relaciones*. Unlike Martín de Rada, who described the Chinese as being all white, Mendoza proposes a more diverse culture: "in the great difference that there is in color among the

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<sup>124</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia del gran reyno de la China*, 5. "Y porque discurre por semejante clima, al que esta italia y Francia, y otras tierras templadas, e donde se puede entender la fertilidad que en el ay, que es sin duda la mayor que se sabe de todo el Mundo, aunque metamos en el el Piru y Nueva España, que son dos reynos celebrados por fertilissimos."

<sup>125</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia del gran reyno de la China*, Chapter III, De la fertilidad del Reyno y de las cosas que produce. p. 6. "Ayuda a la bondad de la tierra, para la fertilidad, el continuo trabajo, e industria de los naturales de ella, que es tanta, que ni perdonan a valles ni a sierras, ni riberas donde no planten [...] y la gran infinidad que ay de gente, assi para los officios como para cultivar la tierra facilita esto: y el no consentir, en todo el Reyno Vagabundos, ni gente ociosa, sino que los tales (demas de ser gravemente castigados) son tenidos por infames, ni permitir a los naturales la salidad del Reyno, para otros estraños, ni tener guerras, que es lo que suele consumer la gente, contentandose el Rey, cono solo su Reyno, como uno de los Buenos que se saben en el mundo."

inhabitants of this kingdom."<sup>126</sup> We cannot know why Mendoza, who read and included Rada's *relación* in his book, changed the appreciation of the Navarrese missionary. However, there is an important distinction concerning the question of physical appearances and races between the writing of *relaciones* and Mendoza's comprehensive work. Whereas Rada simply report his own observation and perceptions, Mendoza creates a broader narrative in which these individual perceptions are compared with other distinctions and general assumptions concerning the color of people in Asia and Europe. Through these lens, the circulation of *relaciones* and its inclusion in more general histories motivated new forms of thinking in the skin color, the physical appearances and the government, laws, and customs of people.<sup>127</sup>

Besides the similarities between Europe and China, Mendoza also advances a prophecy of the future superiority of Christians over China: "May God in his mercy bring them the knowledge of his holy law, and may he fulfill a prophecy they have, according to which they are told that they will have as lords men with big eyes and long beards, and that these will come to rule them from very distant and far away kingdoms, all of which seems to indicate the Christians."<sup>128</sup> According to Pascale Girard, this prophecy, which resembles the legend associated with the conquest of the Aztecs, is a conqueror prophecy that erases the singularity of Chinese history in the European world and subordinates China to the West.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia del gran reyno de la China*, Libro I, Chapter 2. Del Temperamento del Reyno de la China.

<sup>127</sup> This question is also developed in chapter 2 and 3.

<sup>128</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia del gran reyno de la China*, p. 56. "Dios por su misericordia, los trayga al conocimiento de su Santa Ley, y cumpla un prontostico que ellos tienen, con el qual son avisados, que han de ser señoreados, de hombres de ojos grandes, y de barbas largas, y que vendran a mandar los, de reynos muy remotos, y apartados, que parece señala a los Christianos."

<sup>129</sup> Pascale Girard, "La Chine de Mendoza d'après son *Historia del gran reyno de la China*: Entité géographique ou motif prophétique?." In *Échanges culturels et religieux entre la Chine et l'Occident*, dited by Edward J Malatesta, Yves Raguin, and Adrianus C. Dudink (Taipei-Paris: Ricci Institute, 1995), pp. 163-73. Also Ellis, 2006.

Moreover, this prophecy suggests a particular way of incorporating China into the writings of scholars in New Spain and Europe, as seen in Francisco Hernández's prophecy mentioned at the end of the previous section. According to Nancy Vogeley, Mendoza does not propose a providential plan that might have spread the Gospel to that part of the world, but "the historical sense of Mendoza's book is rather future-orientated, open to the possibility of these peoples' conversion to Christianity. As mentioned previously, Vogeley signals that for Mendoza the "Nuevo Mundo" is now the Orient."<sup>130</sup> The idea that China is now the New World implies much more than the application of a new narrative model to Asia, but it also indicates that the integration of China into the narratives of Spanish historians made possible to produce a new method of political and racial scaling that also transformed the descriptions of regions and communities in the New World, Europe, and the Mediterranean world. Instead of the description of the entire globe, it is in this comparative and synchronic method of writing that the art of composing global histories emerged as an authoritative model that shaped new interrelated historical constructions.

In the years in which Mendoza wrote his book, there were competing historical narratives concerning China and Asia. Similarly, as Manel Ollé has examined, the project of conquering China became one of the crucial questions in New Spain and the Philippines in the 1580s.<sup>131</sup> After been approved by officials and missionaries in the Philippines, an embassy was sent from Manila to Spain in 1587 to promote the conquest of China. Completely opposed to the project, the Jesuit José de Acosta wrote two treatises refuting the four arguments that the Jesuit Alonso

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<sup>130</sup> Nancy Vogeley, "China and the American Indies: A Sixteenth-Century "History," web.

<sup>131</sup> Manel Ollé, *La empresa de china, de la Armada Invencible al Galeón de Manila* (Barcelona: Acantilado, 2002)

Sánchez used for supporting the project of conquest.<sup>132</sup> Inspired by Francisco de Vitoria's thought, Alonso's arguments were based on the idea that the Chinese did not respect the right of commerce and the right to enter the kingdom [*liberum commercium* and *ius peregrinandi*]. Acosta disarticulated these arguments by arguing that the Chinese and the people of the East Indies were more civilized and superior to the nations of the New World and that missionaries should promote a peaceful evangelization in China.<sup>133</sup>

After writing these two treatises, Acosta published in 1590 the *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* [*Natural and Moral History of the Indies*]. In this major work of the Spanish historiography, Acosta compares the government, customs and science of nations in East Asia from those of the New World. Acosta established a distinction between the East and West Indies. According to him, the nations of the New World were all barbarians: "This was the case of the New Kingdom of Granada, and that of *Guatemala* and the Islands, and all of Florida and Brazil, and Luzon, and other very large lands, except that in many of them, barbarism is even greater."<sup>134</sup> Mainly devoted to the study of New Spain and Peru, Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* included however chapters entirely devoted to China and Asia, developing a synchronic and connected perspective. As was the case in previous histories of the Indies, the term *Indias* covered a large geographical landscape and was also associated with a diversity of

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<sup>132</sup> Both treatises in *Obras del P. José de Acosta de la Compañía de Jesús*, ed. Francisco Mateos (Madrid: atlas, 1954), pp 231-45. The first treatise was written in Mexico on 15, March 1587, and addressed to the king: *Parecer sobre la Guerra de China breve y conciso*. The second was written on 23, March 1587 and addressed to the superior of the Jesuit company, Claudio Acquaviva: *Respuesta a los fundamentos que justifican la Guerra contra China*.

<sup>133</sup> Manel Ollé, *La empresa de china, de la Armada Invencible al Galeón de Manila*, Tormentas en tierra, José de Acosta y la empresa de China (1587-88), p. 183-193.

<sup>134</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* (Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 2006), p. 328. "Así fue todo lo del Nuevo Reino de Granada, y lo de Guatemala y las Islas, y toda la Florida y Brasil, y Luzón, y otras tierras grandísimas, excepto que en muchas de ellas es aun mayor el barbarismo".

worlds in the Oriental and Western regions of the world. Acosta describes Asia and the New World by contrasting sources and letters that the Jesuits received from Japan and China with his own observations in Peru and New Spain. However, unlike Francisco Hernández, who used the framework provided by Pliny the Elder to enlarge and add more descriptions to Pliny's universal history, Acosta's main goal was to explain "the causes and reasons for those new things and natural wonders" recently discovered in the New World.<sup>135</sup> According to Acosta, who had written about the superiority of China over the most advanced civilizations in the Americas, Indians had a superior knowledge when they learned to read and write in the colonial context:

Among all their sciences, an Indian from Peru or Mexico who has learned to read and write know more than the wisest Mandarin among them, because the Indian, with forty-four letters, knows how to write and compose, and he will be able to write and read all the sounds that are in the world, and the mandarin with his hundreds of thousand letters will be doubtful when writing any name such as Martin or Alonso, and much less will he be able to write the names of things that he does not know, because practically the writing of China is a genre of painting and naming.<sup>136</sup>

As this passage shows, Acosta comparisons also includes a category of Indian that has already been assimilated into the Spanish colonization of the Americas.<sup>137</sup> Unlike the historians of previous generations, José de Acosta did not worry about the redefinition of modern versus

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<sup>135</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Naatural y Moral de las Indias*, Preface to the Reader, p. 13. "Mas hasta agora no he visto autor que trate de declarar las causas y razón de tales novedades y extrañezas de naturaleza."

<sup>136</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Naatural y Moral de las Indias*, p. 322, "De toda su ciencia, sabe mas un Indio del Piru o de Mexico, que ha aprendido a leer y escribir, que el mas sabio mandarin de ellos; pues el Indio, con veinte y cuatro letras que sabe escrebir y juntar, escrebirá y leerá todos cuantos vocablos hay en el mundo, y el mandarin, con sus cien mil letras, estara muy dodoso con escrebir cualquier nombre de Martin o Alonso, y mucho menos podra escrebir los nombres de cosas ue no conoce, porque en resolucion, el escrebir de la China es un género de pintar o cifrar."

<sup>137</sup> For the question of Jesuits, and the study of foreign writing systems in Asia and the New World see chapter 4, Part III. Athanasius Kircher, *China, and the Museum*.

ancients. More than that, Acosta develops a more synchronic narrative that aimed at interrelating societies that are part of his contemporary world. In other words, instead of looking at the present through the eyes of ancients, Acosta wanted to measure and narrate the globe with the words of moderns in order to overcome the illusory ideas of ancient philosophers:

Who can claim that the ship *Victoria*, surely worthy of eternal memory, did not win victory and triumph over the roundness of the world, and still more over that illusory void and infinite chaos that the ancient philosophers placed under the earth, since she circumnavigated the globe and encompassed the great ocean's immensity? Who could not accept that by this deed she demonstrated that all the vastness of the earth, no matter how great it is painted, is subject to a man and under his feet, since he has succeeded in measuring it? Thus, there is no doubt that the heavens are of a round and perfect shape and that they and the earth, clasping the water, make a perfect globe or ball formed by the two elements, and that it has its boundaries and limits, its roundness and its vastness<sup>138</sup>

It is first in Acosta's writings that the disdain for ancient philosophers and authorities appeared explicitly connected to the reformulation of a universalism that aimed at projecting a new historical narrative. This new historical writing did not consist of adding new descriptions to the already known world, but it was rather based on the idea of measuring the entire world. Unlike the general histories written by Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1535-57), Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia general de las Indias* (1553) and Francisco Hernández (1571-77), Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* (1590) emancipated the Spanish genre of *Historias de*

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<sup>138</sup> English translation from Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). Book 1, chapter 2. José de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, 19, 20. "¿Quién dirá que la nao Victoria, digna cierto de perpetua memoria, no ganó la victoria y triunfo de la redondez del mundo – y, no menos, de aquel tan vano vacío y caos infinito que ponían los otros filósofos debajo de la tierra – pues dio la vuelta al mundo y rodeó la inmensidad del gran Océano? ¿A quién no le parecerá que, con este hecho, mostró que toda la grandeza de la tierra – por mayor que se pinte – está sujeta a los pies de un hombre, pues la pudo medir? Así que, sin duda, es el cielo de redonda y perfecta figura; y la tierra, abrazándose con el agua, hacen un globo o bola cabal que resulta de los dos elementos y tiene sus términos y límites, su redondez y grandeza."

*Indias* by producing not only a symbolic form of globalism, but also a historical narrative in which the New World is no longer the continuation of antiquity, but also the beginnings from where the rest of regions and worlds can be thought and narrated.

In the writings of Juan González de Mendoza and José de Acosta, universal history is no longer enclosed in the imitation and reformulation of ancient sources, it is rather attached to experiential forms of narrating the Orient. It is from this modern experience that emerged a new form of composing global histories. These writings were testing the limits of the Iberian expansion and globalization by introducing China and the Far East into their narrative dynamics and historical production. By doing so, these new modes of writing were contributing to the composition of global histories that, emancipated from the dependence on ancient models of universal history, projected new ways of establishing political hierarchies. From the 1580s, it was no longer the tension between the New World and Antiquity that defined the scope and goals of universal history, but the dynamics that enlarged the histories produced in the Americas towards the Orient. Instead of investigating ancient sources, the production and circulation of *relaciones*, printed books, and sources provided new modes of investigating and narrating the Americas, Asia, and the world. This transformation initiated the basis of a historical genre that articulated a narrative in which it is the New World that appeared at the beginnings of the narrative, and not as a naked space written from a European and exterior world.



## CHAPTER II

### **Visual Reports: Depicting Deities, Monsters, and Social Types in Manila**

In the previous chapter, I have analyzed how historical writings produced in the 1570s and 1580s exported and applied modes of writing developed in the New World to the Far East. Similarly, I have argued that the incorporation of sources from Manila transformed the historical genre of universal and general histories developed in the Americas. Having its roots into the American laboratory, the narratives of Martín de Rada, Francisco Hernández, Juan González de Mendoza, and José de Acosta transformed their scope by developing a synchronic perspective that privileged the West Indies over the Orient. Moreover, I have observed that these narratives integrated the Orient into a new perspective by developing social and racial distinctions that were inscribed into the proto-history of the so-called theory of climates. In this second chapter, I continue to explore these questions and narrative displacements by analyzing a different artifact also developed in the Americas during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the codex. To do so, I focus on a late 16<sup>th</sup> century illustrated codex compiled in Manila that contains *relaciones* written between 1575 and 1590. As in Francisco Hernández and Juan González de Mendoza's works, the Boxer codex incorporates Martín de Rada's *Relaçion Verdadera de las cosas del Reyno de Taibin* [True Account of the Things of the Kingdom of Taibin], which is the largest literary account of the manuscript. However, as I argue in this chapter, more than a textual *relación*, the anonymous author of the Boxer codex conceived the manuscript as a visual report.

The name of the Boxer Codex derives from Charles Ralph Boxer, who was a historian of the Dutch and Portuguese empires. In 1947, Boxer acquired a late 16<sup>th</sup> century illustrated manuscript with accounts of the ethnography and geography of regions in the western Pacific,

Southeast and East Asia. Written in Spanish, the collection of narratives and illustrations of the Boxer codex were produced between 1574 and 1590 and compiled soon afterwards in Manila.<sup>139</sup> Bound in the form of a codex in Madrid in the early 17th century, the BC was never copied or published thereafter, no source indicates why or by whom the codex was compiled in Manila.<sup>140</sup>

George Souza and Jeffrey Turley's recent edition and study has provided a comprehensive evaluation of the codex, advancing new hypotheses related to its authorship and reasons that could have motivated the production of the illustrated manuscript.<sup>141</sup> Charles R. Boxer signaled that the materials of the codex may have been compiled by the governor of the Philippines, Gómez Perez Dasmariñas (1539-1593), and probably after his death by his son, Luis Perez Dasmariñas. Boxer and subsequent scholars have also suggested that the work was probably a gift to the King, either Philip II (1556-1598) or Philip III (r. 1598-1621). Similarly, Souza and Turley have indicated other potential candidates as the probable authors of the codex, such as Miguel de Loarca, the Spanish soldier who accompanied Martín de Rada to China in 1575, and Antonio de Morga (1559-1636), who according to the authors is the most likely candidate to have compiled the BC. It is not the main purpose of this chapter to elucidate this question. However, this chapter provides some relevant and previously overlooked evidence that in fact reiterates Boxer's original hypothesis that Gómez Dasmariñas and his son authored of codex.

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<sup>139</sup> I will use the abbreviation BC for Boxer codex from here.

<sup>140</sup> For the binding of the codex, see: John N. Crossley, "The Early History of the BC" (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Volume 24 / Issue 01 / January 2014), pp 115-124.

<sup>141</sup> With few modifications, I am using the transcription and English translation of the facsimile edition organized by Souza and Turley. George Souza and Jeffrey Turley, *The Boxer Codex, Transcription and Translation of an Illustrated Late Sixteenth-Century Spanish Manuscript Concerning the Geography, Ethnography and history of the Pacific, South-East Asia and East Asia*. (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016)

Souza and Turley suggest that the Boxer codex is one of "two forms or formats in which this type of written information was transmitted from the New World to the Old."<sup>142</sup> The first form of support is the codex, which is an artifact that reproduces pictorial and textual representations of indigenous people. The second form is the *Relaciones Geográficas*, which were the questionnaires sent to New Spain for compiling information about the people, geography, and natural history of the region. According to Souza and Turley, the patron and compiler of the BC "were probably aware of the Crown's interest in reports and information concerning Spain's new holdings and neighbors in Asia. And they possibly also knew of the questionnaires"<sup>143</sup> of the *Relaciones Geográficas*.

In this chapter, I analyze the BC mainly as an artifact related to the production of codices in New Spain and Peru. The sophisticated decorative elements (visual and textual) and the absence of maps indicate clearly that the codex was first a sumptuary artifact conceived by an important figure in Manila and later probably collected by another political figure in Spain. The BC was certainly made to satisfy a request by the Spanish administration. However, rather than providing new information through literary reports, this chapter argues that the BC primarily offers visual proofs of social types, deities, and animals of South-east and East Asia. In the Boxer codex, the text has a secondary role; it often describes images that appear earlier, at the beginning of each section. These visual depictions were made by Chinese painters, most probably by one of the Chinese artists who settled in Manila, in a place called the *Parían* near *Intramuros*.

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<sup>142</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 10.

<sup>143</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 12.

From this perspective, this chapter examines how and why images were utilized to articulate forms of reporting and presenting knowledge concerning the remote regions of East Asia. To do so, the chapter puts the BC into dialogue with similar artifacts made in New Spain and Peru, analyzing the codex as a specific object associated with the Spanish expansion in the Americas and the Philippines. Of course, there is not space in this chapter to explore differences and similarities surrounding the over 500 post-conquest codices produced in Asia, New Spain, and Peru. Nonetheless, this chapter aims to analyze the BC to identify patterns that articulate the political and scientific dynamics surrounding the culture of codices in the Spanish territories in the Americas and Asia.

Scholars and historians have often studied the codices produced in New Spain, Peru, and the Philippines in relation to their local colonial and/or pre-Hispanic culture. Made to be an instrument of evangelization, expansion, and conquest for the Spanish and Portuguese administrations, these codices started to be studied in the late 19th and 20th centuries by scholars interested either in European colonial history or in the indigenous cultures of the Americas and Asia. These two scholarly narratives used the codices mainly as sources that provided information about indigenous societies and the colonial period, neglecting to analyze them as narrative artifacts that articulate modes of circulating and organizing knowledge. From this perspective, the main goal of this chapter is to explore the ethnographical and visual production of the codex as a narrative artifact that, following the modes of producing and circulating information in the Spanish West, projects the western narratives of the New World to the Orient.

Since 1947, the BC has mainly aroused the interest of scholars interested in East Asian cultures, as was the case for the first owner of the codex, Charles R. Boxer (1904-2000). Boxer was a historian of the Dutch and Portuguese maritime history and the chief spy of the British

army intelligence in Hong Kong during the turbulent years leading up to World War II. On 10 July 1947, he acquired a codex at an auction in London by Hodgson's house. The codex was classified as "item 60: Oriental ms," and re-baptized by Boxer as "Manila Manuscript." Boxer described the codex in an article originally published in 1950 in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, whose readership was mainly of scholars and historians interested in European interactions in Asia.<sup>144</sup> Beginning with this publication, the early scholarly history of the BC tended to examine the manuscript in relation to origins of the Filipino colonial culture.<sup>145</sup>

Moreover, several elements of the codex indicate that it was mainly a political artifact. Based on the objectivity of descriptions and the lack of missionary zeal, Charles R. Boxer and subsequent examiners have observed that the author was probably not a member of a religious order, but most likely a layman. Furthermore, Souza and Turley signal that "the compiler was a secular official, because a person in such a position would have had the time to dedicate himself or others to the translation of original reports in Portuguese to Spanish, or to manage a group of translators" as well as Chinese painters.<sup>146</sup> Boxer's hypothesis that the BC is an illustrated manuscript conceived by non-religious officials had a previous model in the collection of manuscripts elaborated by the doctor Francisco Hernández in New Spain between 1571 and 1577. Compiled by Hernández and housed in the library of El Escorial, Hernández's codices also included ethnographical illustrations concerning the natives of New Spain, as fray José de Sigüenza observed in the description of Hernández's manuscripts in the library: "colors and

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<sup>144</sup> Charles R. Boxer, "A Late 16<sup>th</sup> Century Manila MS" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. ½, Apr., 1950), pp. 37-49.

<sup>145</sup> This is for instance the case in the section devoted to the codex in volume 4 of *Filipino Heritage: the making of a nation* (edited by Alfredo R. Roces, Manila: Lahing Pilipino Pub, 1977)

<sup>146</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 13.

costumes of men, and ornaments of their galas and parties, and the manner of their dances and sacrifices."<sup>147</sup>

Hernández's codices and the BC share several key features: a secularized perspective, a observational and factual character to descriptions, a predominance of images over text, and a political purpose. Moreover, both Francisco Hernández's corpus of manuscript and the BC contains a transcription of Martín de Rada's *Relación Verdadera de las cosas del Reyno de Taibin* [True Account of the Things of the Kingdom of Taibin], which was one of the authorial texts dealing with China of the period.<sup>148</sup> I am not suggesting that the BC is directly linked to Hernández's work, but rather signaling that the BC is a narrative artifact that emerged into a particular manuscript culture of the Spanish expansion towards the West (the Americas and East Asia). As I argue in this chapter, the author of the codex reproduces a narrative that privileged a perspective that emanated from the Spanish connections with the Americas. This is seen in the visual and textual opening of the codex, which describes a ship that traveled from Acapulco to Manila in 1590, and in the ethnographical writings and reports, in which the author projected a comparative corpus of images and texts that establishes hierarchical distinctions among groups from the Philippines, China, Japan, and other islands of the Far East.

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<sup>147</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo (Madrid: En la Imprenta Real, 1605), 589. "Y aun los mismos talles, colores y vestidos de los hombres, y los ornatos de sus galas, y de sus fiestas, y la manera de sus corros y bayles y sacrificios"

<sup>148</sup> After his death, Rada's materials were housed in the monastery where he lived in Manila and they passed into the hands of Francisco Sande, second governor of Manila. Francisco de Sande sent to the king some of the materials compiled by Rada, such as "a book with an account of the lands, rents, and tributaries of China, that is also summarized in the Chinese map, and another small book as itinerary, and some papers with illustrations of officials of the legal system. *Petición de escritos de historia natural de Martín de Rada*. Archivo General de Indias: FILIPINAS,339, L.1,F.181R-181V. Real Cédula a Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa, provisto gobernador de Filipinas. Para que se averigüea e informe sobre qué papeles ha dejado a su muerte fray Martín de Rada, agustino [...] Interesa que estos papeles sean recopilados y enviados al Consejo de Indias.

Furthermore, the compilers of the BC conceived the codex not only as an artifact for providing information, but as an object that aimed to make visible the nations and social types of the Far East by providing visual reports. This is clearly seen in the number of illustrations, the textual references to the images and the predominant place that illustrations have in the narrative construction of the manuscript. On the contrary, words have a generic and flexible function and do not allow to produce a true and complete categorization of the distinct social types and objects described in the BC. Applied to the categorization of social types, this visual factuality inscribed the narrative of the codex into the scientific genre of early modern visual atlases. According to Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, these early modern atlases are "systematic compilations of working objects" and they can be defined as "dictionaries of the science of the eye."<sup>149</sup> Inscribed in what Daston and Gallison have called collective empiricism, the production of atlases is linked to the necessity of identifying essential characteristics that structured a natural diversity of species in botany and zoology. The BC can also be defined as a dictionary of the eye. However, the visual narrative of the codex is applied to the categorization of social types in the Philippines, the Malaysian archipelago, China, and Japan. From this perspective, this chapter examines the BC as a visual narrative artifact that displays an encyclopedic classification of social types, customs, kingdoms, religions, and animals of the Southeast and East Asia worlds.

## **I. Black Ships Crossing the Ocean**

In the BC, images play an essential role in defining the distinctions and similarities among social types. Unlike codices made in New Spain and Peru, the BC does not focus on narrating the origins and antiquities of a particular group or community, but rather proposes an

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<sup>149</sup> Lorraine Daston and Peter Gallison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 22.

interrelated corpus of descriptions in which each group is described in relation to other groups included in the manuscript. The codex describes Indians from the *Ladrones* and the Philippines islands, *Moros* of the southern islands of the Philippines (who are defined not as Muslims, but rather Indians), Muslims in the Brunei and the Maluku islands, Japanese people, China, Chinese officials and tributary neighbors. This comparative perspective was already developed in general histories written during the 1580s. As we saw in the previous chapter, José de Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* had already established distinctions between people from the Americas (West Indies) and East Asia. Similarly, the BC is an artifact adapting modes of producing manuscript narratives in the west to the cultures of East Asia. This chapter shows that the culture of codices developed in the Americas is however reformulated in the BC by favoring a comparative narrative model over the tendency of writing about antiquities in similar artefacts made in the Americas.

The BC begins with an oblong folding illustration depicting the Manila Galleon in the *Ladrones* Islands (called the Marianas since 1668). The folding plate is followed by a double page painting the natives of the *Ladrones*, known since the second half of the 17th century as the Chamorro, and two leaves containing an account of the inhabitants of these islands entitled *Relaçion de las islas de las ladrones* [*Account of the islands of the Ladrones*].<sup>150</sup> The text and the fold-out illustration of the Manila Galleon describe a maritime encounter that took place in the year 1590: “Ships usually take on water in one of the ports of these islands – many of these ports

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<sup>150</sup> *Relacion de las yslas de los Ladrones*. It was not until the early or mid-17th century that Spaniards began to control the Marianas islands and they began to call these Indians the Chamorro. The Chamorro probably called themselves *Tao Tao Tano*. For the Chamorro and the Marianas islands, see David Atienza, “La evangelización de las ‘pobres’ islas Marianas y su uso simbólico en Occidente.” In *La violencia del amor*, edited by Desiderio Parrilla, (Madrid: Asociación Bendita María, 2012), 191-216. Also in Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 304.



are excellent. And if the ships fail to do so, as happened during this voyage in the year 1590.”<sup>151</sup> Instead of starting the narrative in Manila, where the codex was composed, the anonymous compiler places at the beginning of the manuscript a maritime encounter in the *Ladrones* islands. The opening of the codex explicitly refers to the travel from Acapulco to Manila: “This type of people called *Ladrones* live on some islands located 400 leagues from Cape Espiritu Santo, the first islands sighted by ships hailing from Acapulco en route to these Philippines islands.”<sup>152</sup> As Charles R. Boxer pointed out, the author of the account - which is unsigned but narrated in the first person by somebody who was on board of the ship - was likely a layman, and not a missionary, because he carried a sword: “We wanted to know if they were acquainted with our weaponry, so I took a naked sword and made as if to throw it, and as soon as they saw it they let out a great shriek at the top of their lungs.”<sup>153</sup>

The first sentence of the chapter and the manuscript opens with the sentence this “type” of people [*Este genero de gente* in Spanish].<sup>154</sup> The deictic *este* in this first sentence seems to refer to the illustrations that depict a couple of *Ladrones* placed just before the text.<sup>155</sup> Used often in the BC, the term *genero* means “type,” and it represents one of the more representative words

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<sup>151</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 304-305. [ms. 3r] "Suelen hazer aguada en algún puerto dellas ue ay muchos y buenos. Y quando no se haze como en te ujaje que se hizo el año de 90."

<sup>152</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 303. [ms. 3r] "Este género de gente llaman los ladrones. Abitan en ñas yslas que ay quatrocientas leguas antes de llegar l cauo de Spiritu Santo y son las primeras que descubren los nauios que bienen de Acapulco a estas yslas las Philipinas."

<sup>153</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 309. [ms. 4v] "Deseabamos saver si tenian algun conocimiento de las armas que usamos. Y para esto tome una espada desnuda y hize que se la quería arrojar."

<sup>154</sup> Souza and Turley translate “genero de gente” as “race of people,” which I have changed into “type of people,” that I consider closer to the meaning of the word *genero* in the codex and in the Spanish of the period.

<sup>155</sup> As scholars have pointed out, it was not until the early or mid-17th century that Spaniards began to control the Marianas islands and they began to call these Indians the Chamorro. The Chamorro probably called themselves Tao Tao Tano. For the Chamorro and the Marianas islands, see David Atienza, “La evangelización de las ‘pobres’ islas Marianas y su uso simbólico en Occidente” In *La violencia del amor*, edited by Desiderio Parrilla (Madrid: Asociación Bendita María, 2012), 191-216. See also Souza & Turley 304.

of the codex. In the codex, we find a similar use of the term *genero* when the author describes the people from Brunei: "Thus there are two kinds of people on the island. The first are the old natives, whom we call Visayans."<sup>156</sup> As we see in this sentence, the author differentiates between two types of people that inhabited the same islands, the old natives [*antiguos naturales*] and the foreign Muslims [*advenedisos*]. The author of the manuscript also uses the term *genero* in a very generic way, referring to "type of animals," "type of iron," "type of palms," "type of music," and "type of mourning."<sup>157</sup> In the Covarrubias dictionary, the Spanish term *genero* is associated with the masculine and feminine gender as well as with animal and human species.<sup>158</sup> The use of the term *genero*, which appears in the manuscript in 38 entries, enables the author to develop typological descriptions of people, animals, objects, and instruments and to flexibly categorize them within general groups and sub-categories.

Besides the use of the word *genero*, the codex adopts other terms to refer to the different social types of Asia. This is the case with the word Indian (*Yndio* in the manuscript), which is used for people from the *Ladrones* islands and the Philippines. The author of the first account classifies the *Ladrones* as Indians in three entries: "if a boat does happen to take on water, an Indian dives into the water and bails it out with half a coconut that he uses like a bowl."<sup>159</sup> The term *Yndio*, which implied a legal definition, is a category referring to the people of the Spanish

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<sup>156</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 400. [ms. 74r] "Y asi ay dos generos de gente en la ysla la que son los antiguos naturales a los quales llamamos bisayans aunque no usan pintarse como los de Zebu."

<sup>157</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 93. "Ningún genero de animal," 42, "género de hierro," 69, "género de palmas," 72, "género de música" 73, "los géneros de luto" 62.

<sup>158</sup> Sebastian de Covarrubias Orozco. *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana* (Madrid: Luis Sanchez impresor, 1611), 433v. "Género: Genero comunmente en castellano se toma por el sexo como genero Masculino o Femenino, o por lo que en rigor se llama especie, como ay un genero de carneros que tiene seys cuernos."

<sup>159</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 305. [ms. 3r] "Son de la forma que ay ban pintados. A los lados tienen un contrapeso de cañas con que están seguros de sobrar cossa que a ellos se les da bien poco porque son como peces en el agua. Y si acaso se ynche de agua el yndio se arroja en ella y la saca con medio coco que le sirue de escudilla."

Western dominions. In addition to the category of *Yndios*, the manuscript identifies Moors, *Negritos*, Japanese, Chinese, and Tatars. This religious and ethnic diversity is integrated into a more generic and flexible terminology that in some cases renegotiates common social markers adopted in Spain or the Americas. In the codex, the author does not use the words *casta* or *linaje*, which were commonly used in medieval and early modern Spain and the Americas.

The use of the words *casta* or *linaje* is seen in manuscripts and relaciones describing the complexity of societies in New Spain and Peru. For instance, in Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala's *Nueva Coronica i Buen Gobierno*,<sup>160</sup> the words *casta* and *linaje* are repeatedly used and applied to different groups: Christians, Jews, *Negros*, and those of Indians lineages. In the first section of the manuscript book, Ayala begins by defining the different ages and generation of the world after Noah, applying the term lineage and cast to both the Indians and the Christians: "it is the cast and lineage and descendants of Jesus Christ."<sup>161</sup> As David Nirenberg points out, the Spanish terms *raza*, *casta*, and *linaje* and their cognates in the various Iberian romance languages "were already embedded in identifiably biological ideas about animal breeding and reproduction in the first half of the fifteenth century."<sup>162</sup> This is also the case in Ayala's *Nueva Coronica*, which integrates the Biblical narrative of origins with ideas and terms that refer to reproduction and animal breeding: "they soon lasted and proliferated because they were the first generation of Indians, and they don't die and didn't kill each other. People say that that they calved by twos,

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<sup>160</sup> Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, *Primer nueva coronica y buen gobierno* (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 2006)

<sup>161</sup> Ibid, 21. *Como Dios Ordenó la dicha historia. Tercera edad del mundo, desde Abrahán.*

<sup>162</sup> David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and today* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2014), p. 182.

male and female.”<sup>163</sup> However, unlike Guamán Poma's *Coronica*, the BC projects a typological narrative that deploys an interrelated corpus of groups that the reader organize within a large and generic comparative construction. In other words, the author favors a synchronic comparative approach among the groups described in the codex, instead of exploring the origins of a particular community.

Besides the word *genero* and the Spanish term *Yndio*, the author also uses the term *natural* or *naturales*. The word *natural* means native and is used as an antonym of foreign or alien in the codex. This is clear in the reference to the Moors of Brunei mentioned above: “It should be made clear that the kingdom of Brunei is not native [natural], but rather foreign [*advenedizo*]. Thus there are two kinds [*generos*] of people on the island. The first are the old natives [*antiguos naturales*], whom we call Visayans, although it is not their custom to tattoo their bodies like in the island of Cebu.”<sup>164</sup> The authors also applied the term to a particular group of the Philippines that Boxer identified as the Tagalogs. Moreover, we find the word in the chapter about the Cagayans: “Description of the Land of the Province of Cagayan and its State, the Manner of Dress of the Natives [Naturales], their customs and their Rivers and Streams is as follows.”<sup>165</sup> In the codex, the adoption of the term *natural* typifies the social constructions and defines the relation that each group maintains with the island and regions described in each chapter. From this perspective, it is first the land or the island, and not their religion, that

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<sup>163</sup> Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, *Primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, p. 49. “duraron y multiplicaron muy presto por ser primer generación de yndios. Y no murieron y no se matauan. Dizen que parían de dos en dos, macho y hembra.

<sup>164</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 400. [ms. 74r] “El reyno de Borney para que major se entienda no es natural sino advenediso. Y asi ay dos géneros de gente en la ysla la que son los antiguos naturales a los quales llamamos uisayas aunque no usan pin-tarse como los de Zebú. Lllamanles en su lengua bagangan.”

<sup>165</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, p. 320. [ms. 10v] “Descrpcion de la tierra de la prouingia de Cagayan y estado della traje y usos de los naturales y sus constumbres rrios y esteros della es como se sigue.”

provides an identity to the group that is defined as the legitimate and original native of a particular territory [*antiguo natural*]. Nonetheless, the use of the term native [*natural*] as well as the structure of chapters based on islands, regions, and social types implies that the cultural distinctions are always structured in relation to the reconstruction of the history and antiquity of a particular territory.



Figure 6. Source, The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*, *Ladrones*, [folio 1v and 2r]

However, as we saw in the previous chapter, rather than being a notion that depended on geographical coordinates, the term Indian (*Yndio* in the manuscript) was mainly a political and legal category applied to the heterogeneous communities of the Americas as well as to the people

of the *Ladrones* and the Philippines islands, which are defined in the manuscript as islands of the west [*islas del poniente*]. At the end of the first account, the Indians called *Ladrones* are physically described, including an episode orally reported to the author in which the Spaniards captured one of the *Ladrones* for the sole purpose of measuring his size: "It is also reported that while they are trading with Spaniards on land, one of these Indians stepped away from or got ahead of the rest, and three men wrapped their arms around him in order to seize him and take him away with them."<sup>166</sup> In the description, the author observes that these Indians are very stocky and bigger than "us," have very well shaped bodies, but are very dark skinned, opposing through the use of the conjunction "pero" the positive physical attributes and the "pleasant appearance" of the *Ladrones* to the bad connotation of their dark skin:

As I have said, they are much larger in stature than we are. They are men with very well-shaped bodies, and even better legs; all of Indians of this land have been favored in this way. Their faces are wide and flat, though of pleasant appearance, but these people are very dark. Their mouths are quite large, and their file their teeth down so they are as sharp as dog teeth, if not sharper, tinting them with a permanent red stain so that none of them will fall out, even in old age. Others color their teeth black, the stain having the same property as the red. The *Moros* of this land do the same thing. They wear their hair very long. Some wear it loose, while other knot it in the back. Neither the men nor the women wear a stitch of clothing, or anything else. They go about exactly how they came into the world.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 309- 310. [ms. 4v] "Tambien dizen que un dia estando rrescatando en tierra con los españoles uno de estos yndios se aparto u adelanto de los demas y tres hom- btes se abracaron con el para cojello y tenello para traello consigo."

<sup>167</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 310. [ms. 4v] "Su talle como digo es muncho mas grande que el n<uestr>o hombres muy bien echos de todo el cuerpo y mejor de piernas que esto es gragia general en ellos. Los yndios de esta tierra la cara ancha y chata aunque bien agestados pero todos muy morenos la boca muy grande y los dientes los labran agusandolos como de perro y mas y los tiñen con un barniz colorado que no se quita que es para consemar la dentadura sin que jamas se cayga diente por viejo q<ue> sea. Otros los tiñen de negro que tiene la misma propiedad que el colorado. Y esto hazen tambien los moros desta tierra. El cauello tienen muy largo unos suelto otros le dan una

The physical description of the *Ladrones*, with their well-shaped bodies, dark skin and nakedness is visually represented in both the illustrations included above the text and in the foldout illustration. In this passage, the author also refers to the *Moros* of the Philippines, who also tinted their teeth black. As in the remaining chapters of the codex, the author here describes physical appearances and mores by introducing elements of comparison with other people of the Philippines who are also described in the codex. The illustrations of the two *Ladrones* show two naked bodies holding weapons with long hair; their sexual attributes are hidden. In the text, the author refers to the nakedness of women and men: "Neither the men nor the women wear a stitch of clothing, or anything else. They go about exactly how they came into the world"<sup>168</sup> However, this opening is represented differently in the illustrations of the two figures and the foldout image of the encounter. Whereas the two naked figures are depicted with darker tones and holding weapons (arch, arrows, and a spear), the *Ladrones* illustrated in the foldout drawing are whiter and are seen offering fishes and coconuts to the Spaniards on board of the ship. Moreover, even though the population of the Iberian ships in Asia was very heterogeneous and was described as such in other paintings and texts of the period, the Spaniards described in the foldout illustration of the ship are all white.

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lasada detras. No bisten asi hombres como mugeres genero de rropa ni otra cosa alguna ni cubren parte ninguna de su cuerpo sino como nacen andan."

<sup>168</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 310. [ms. 4v] No bisten asi hombres como mugeres genero de rropa ni otra cosa alguna ni cubren parte ninguna de su cuerpo sino como nacen andan" (p. 42).



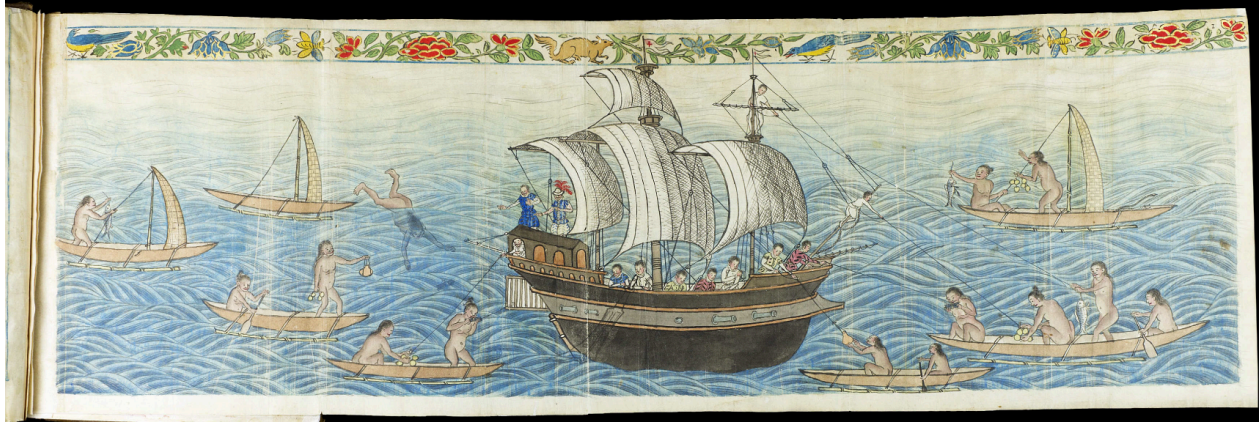


Figure 7. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex* Fold-out drawing showing a Manila Galleon arriving to the Ladrones Islands (ca. BC, 1590)

In the account, the author observes that the foldout illustration offers a description of the Ladrones' boats, which are also described in the text: "The accompanying drawing contains accurate depictions of these boats, with bamboo counterweights on both sides to prevent them from capsizing, but capsizing does not bother them because these people are like fish in the water: if a boat does happen to take on water, an Indian dives into the water and bails it out with half a coconut that he uses like a bowl."<sup>169</sup> As was the case in one of the accounts of Miguel López de Legazpi's expedition to the Philippines, the *Ladrones* and their boats represents an important narrative element of the long trip between Acapulco and the Philippines. In the illustration, two figures are depicted on the poop deck of the ship dressed in breeches and ruffs. These two figures are differentiated from the rest of the crew as they look at one of the Indians, who is diving into the sea. This particular scene is also narrated in the account when the author observes that they wanted to prove that these Indians lust after iron by throwing a chunk of iron

<sup>169</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 305. [ms. 3r] "Son de la forma que ay ban pintados. A los lados tienen un contrapeso de cañas con que están seguros de sobrar cosa q<ue> a ellos se les da bien poco porque son como peces en el agua. Y si acaso se ynche de agua el yndio se arroja en ella y la saca con medio coco q<ue> le sirue de escudilla."



into the sea: “this was proven out during our encounter. And if a chunk of iron is tossed into the sea, they are such great divers and swimmers that before it sinks too far, they retrieve it and return into their boat.”<sup>170</sup> As we see in the illustration, the two figures are pointing out at the Indian, who is diving towards a small piece of something that has been drawn under the sea. From this perspective, the depiction of the foldout illustration and the account seem to be recounting the same anecdote, so that the author of the text probably reported to the painter the specific scene that represents the encounter in the *Ladrones* islands after their transpacific travel reached Manila in 1590.

As Charles R. Boxer suggested, the codex was probably compiled or commanded by the new Governor Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas and his son Luis. Two ships left Acapulco for Manila on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1590, which is the year noted by the author of the account, but only the flagship or *Capitana* reached Manila safely on the 31<sup>st</sup> May with the new Governor Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas and his son Don Luis. Boxer’s hypothesis that Dasmariñas authored the codex aligns perfectly with this visual and textual opening. Since the only ship that arrived to Manila in 1590 was the one of the new governor, the foldout image can only be a representation of this important political event for the colonial city. Among the eclectic collection of illustrations included in the codex, the foldout drawing depicting the Manila Galleon includes Chinese techniques, which indicates that the illustration was probably depicted by a *Sangley*.<sup>171</sup> In the drawing, the ship is surrounded by transparent undulations that match a technique adopted by Chinese and Japanese

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<sup>170</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 308. [ms. 4r]. "Y esto se prouo alli con ellos y si les echan un pedaco a la mar son tan grandes bucos y nadadores que antes que lleguen muy abajo lo cojen y se bueluen a su nauio. Y asi lo hizo alli uno que echándoselo amayno la bela y la echo [4r] al agua y luego el se arrojó tras ella y cojió su hierro y entro en el nauio."

<sup>171</sup> The term *Sangley* was used by Spaniards to describe and classify a person of Chinese ancestry. In the codex and other documents of the period, the term is used as a synonym of Chinese and it referred commonly to the specific community of Chinese people who migrated or moved from China, mainly Fujian, to other islands.

painters for depicting the sea, as is seen in other paintings and maps of the period.<sup>172</sup> The foldout image also includes European iconographic elements, such as the upper frame, which Charles Boxer associated with the frames of the book of hours made in the Low Countries during the 16th century.<sup>173</sup> Spanish officials and missionaries in Manila highly esteemed Chinese artists for their perfection in copying and adopting European techniques. As Domingo de Salazar observed, in the *Parián*, which was the neighborhood of *Sangleyes* who settled near Manila, there were artists who worked for Spaniards producing admirable works:

They [the Sangleyes] do marvelous works, and they are so skillful and witty that, when seeing a work made by a Spanish official, they do properly the same, and the most admirable thing is that [...] they have improved so much in this art that in painting and sculpting they have done marvelous works. I have seen in ivory several children Jesus and I think that it is not possible to do such a perfect thing, and everyone who has seen it says the same. [...] And because of the ability that they show in imitating images that come from Spain, I think that soon we will not need those that are made in Flanders.<sup>174</sup>

Written only one month after the arrival of Gómez Dasmariñas to Manila, the letter of Domingo de Salazar describes a context of cultural exchange that we can easily identify in the first image

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<sup>172</sup> See for instance the map included in the previous chapter and also is seen in the waves of some Japanese folding screens, which also represent the arrival of Iberians to Japan in the so-called Black Ships or *Kurofune*.

<sup>173</sup> Charles R. Boxer, "A Late 16th Century Manila MS", p. 43.

<sup>174</sup> Domingo de Salazar, *Carta-Relación de las cosas de la China y de los chinos del Parián de Manila, enviada al Rey Felipe II* (Manila, á 24 de junio, de 1590) (Published first in 1897 and included in the digital corpus of Escola d'Estudis de l'Asia Oriental. Universitat Pompeu Fabra). "Haçen obras maravillosas, y son tan hábiles é ingeniosos, que en viendo alguna pieça hecha de oficial de España, la sacan muy al propio; y lo que más me admira es, que con no aber quando yo aquí llegué hombre dellos que supiese pintar cosa que algo fuese, se an perfeçionado tanto en este arte, que así en lo de pinçel como en lo de bulto, an sacado maravillosas pieças, y algunos niños Jesús que yo e visto en marfil, me pareçe que no se puede haçer cosa más perfeta; y así lo afirman todos los que los an bisto. Banse proveyendo las yglesias de la ymágenes que éstos haçen, de que antes abía mucha falta, y según la habilidad que muestran al retratar las ymágenes que bienen de España, entiendo que antes de mucho no nos harán falta las que se haçen en Flandes; y lo que dixen de los pintores, digo también de los bordadores, que ban ya haçiendo obras bordadas muy perfetas y se van cada día perfeccionando."

of the codex, which combines Asian techniques with European decorative elements. As Salazar observed, the Chinese painters and artists established in Manila and working with and for Spanish officials and missionaries played an important role in the development of arts in the city of Manila. This community of artists created sculptures and artistries for the missionaries in Manila, as is the case of the objects mentioned by Salazar, and for patrons in Spain and Europe, as is the case of the BC and similar artifacts that, instead of imitating Christian images and the style of Flemish artists, adapted an exotic production that depicted cultural artifacts of the Far East for a European audience. As we will see in the next chapter, the Chinese painters established in Manila also worked for manuscript projects that aimed at depicting factually and in detail cultural features of the Chinese culture. Instead of looking for an exotic image that impacted more the European audience, missionaries and scholars considered the exotic paintings of Sangleyes as a more accurate and factual image.<sup>175</sup>

In the BC, the anonymous Chinese painter or painters were not depicting Christian images for the Churches in Manila, they were producing images about the Orient for people in Spain. Similarly, as is seen in the foldout illustration, the anonymous painter also narrated an important political event in the city of Manila, the arrival of the new governor to the Philippines in 1590. This transitional event took place 19 years after the foundation of Manila, when the new governors brought to Manila and the Philippines a new political agenda. However, the narrative opening of the codex that includes this symbolic transitional year of 1590 indicates an unusual choice. It is not the arrival to Manila and the Philippines that is placed at the beginning, but just an encounter with Indians in the middle of the Ocean.

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<sup>175</sup> For this question, see chapter 3, Part III. Adriano de las Cortes' Captivity and the Chinese Painter.

As one of the main symbols of the Iberian expansion, the image of the ship arriving to the New World is often included in codices as a transitional element in histories written by scholars and missionaries in New Spain and Peru.<sup>176</sup> In some codices, the ship symbolizes the arrival of the Spaniards and the beginning of a new temporality in the New World. Only a few years before the painters of the BC depicted the Spanish ship in the *Ladrones* islands, the painters of the illustrated codex made by the Dominican Diego Durán (1537-88) illustrated the arrival of the ship of Hernán Cortés to the coasts of Mexico. As in the case of the BC, this image shows a sort of idyllic and peaceful scene in which one unarmed Spaniard sits alone in a small launch near the ship, pulling a fish out of the water with a pole. Three other Spaniards, also unarmed, watch from the decks above. In this image, we can also see an indigenous scout looking down upon the water from a treetop. As Alessandra Russo has identified, this indigenous scout pointing with his arm to the arrival of the Ship is based on the biblical passage of the arrival of Christ to Jerusalem, when Zacchaeus climbed up a sycamore fig tree to announce the arrival of Jesus to Jerusalem.<sup>177</sup> In the Durán codex, the Spanish ship symbolizes the arrival of the conquerors as well as the beginnings of evangelization in the New World.

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<sup>176</sup> We also mentioned in the previous chapter Acosta's description of the nao Victoria, which represented the victory of the men over the globe Acosta, 17. ¿Quién dirá que la nao Victoria, digna cierto de perpetua memoria, no ganó la victoria y triunfo de la redondez del mundo – y, no menos, de aquel tan vano vacío y caos infinito que ponían los otros filósofos debajo de la tierra – pues dio la vuelta al mundo y rodeó la inmensidad del gran Océano?

<sup>177</sup> See Alessandra Russo, *The Untranslatable Image: A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500-1600* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2014), Introduction.



Figure 8. Codex Durán, ca. 1580. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. (f 197v).

The image of the Durán codex is not located at the beginning of the manuscript, but just before the last book, which is devoted to the Spanish conquest of Mexico. Unlike the composite narrative structure of the BC, the Durán codex recounts an entire history that begins with the question of origins of the Indian nations in New Spain and follows with the arrival of Spaniards. Titled *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de la tierra firme*, the history recounted in the Durán codex does not develop a comparative narrative perspective that begins with the problem of defining each type of people in relation to other groups. Rather than that, Diego Durán begins the *Historia de las Indias* by asking about the origins and beginnings of this nation: "To examine the true and authentic *relación* of the origin and beginning of these Indian nations."<sup>178</sup> Besides the different perspectives of both the Durán and Boxer codices, it is the reliability of *relaciones* that made possible to develop a narrative about the origins and customs of Indians.

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<sup>178</sup> Durán, Diego. *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de la tierra firme*, (Madrid: Digital version, BNE, 1579), 2r.

A similar narrative structure is seen in the last and twelfth book of the Florentine codex, which narrate the conquest of Mexico. At the beginning of this book, the painters also depicted an illustration that reproduces an idyllic encounter observed by an indigenous scout who is pointing with his arm to the Spanish ships. In both the Florentine and Durán codices, the Indian painters or *tlacuilos* represent the arrival of Spaniards to New Spain, articulating a visual narrative transition between the ancient world of Indians and the arrival of Spaniards and Christianity. Following the image of the codex Durán included above, Durán placed another representation of the arrival of Spaniards to the New World. In this illustration, the Indian painter depicts two key moments of the arrival of Spaniards to New Spain. On the left, three ships reach the coast. On the right, Hernán Cortés, seated on a Spanish chair, speaks with Malinche, who is identified in the gloss as Marina. As Alessandra Russo has identified, the painter decided to depict this Indian woman of Maya origins with some "subtle physical transformation. Not only her clothing and gestures give her the appearance of a European woman, but the color of her hair undergoes a visible metamorphosis: on the arrival shore, it is colored the same yellow as Cortes's beard. Malinche was not blonde, but she becomes so in this interpretation of the reality of the conquest made by the *tlacuilo* painter"<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Alessandra Russo, *The Untranslatable Image: A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500-1600* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2014), p. 3.



Y como por lian llegar, a la tierra, en el que  
des. el arribado. torno. a Acuitlan y  
Temer. lo que el suceso. Como en el  
pitullo. que viene. Diremos.



**C**apitulo. Lxxj de como el  
felicisimo don hernando cortez. Llego. al puer-  
to. de Acuitlan. que agora se llama.  
Y como se vino. nueva. A montecuma dellos  
y le mando que les. de todo lo necesario.

**E**stando montecuma. con el desuydo que  
Aho tempo croyendo. que en su tiempo y aho  
espantee. no boluerian. A esta tierra de  
la nue baespaña y que para siempre haian  
y ay dias y buelvan. acuitlan. Aclaro de  
Años. cumplidos que se haian. Fue lo to  
naron. a boluer y asuay. en el puerto de  
el. seña y gobernada de cue tlaxtla que  
contodo ciudado. siempre ma. sus. dyas.  
y a talas y puestas. La obra de la mar  
Ver si parecia en ella alguna cosa como su  
rey de yavia mandado. vieron. aomar.  
las. naos. que Andauan barto Centeando  
por. la mar. para tomar. puerto. de lo qual  
fue avisado de las. atalayas y bimoto.  
El. en persona. A lo ber. satisfago de lo  
Dad. en bio. sus. mensajero. A montecuma  
A lo de acuitlan como de la mar haian avisado

A parecer los nauis. de los chasos. y que se  
haian. por la mar. de aqui para. Allí. para  
tomar puerto. Los mensajeros. Llegaron tan  
a breue. no dejando de caminar. de no ser  
decia. que en quatro dias. Llegaron a me-  
xico. y le dieron la nueva. la qual como  
montecuma la oyo. dice la historia que  
quattro. como muerto. sin poder responder  
palabra y que acuso de muero. rra lo  
estubo. sin poder. haclar. dixo al men-  
sajero. diwas. al gouernador. que yo se-  
do. agora dezo. que este con. Acuitlan. para  
que en surgiendo en el puerto. que fue de  
meauis. con los mensajeros. y poniendo por  
tas. por todo el camino. avisado breue  
meses. boluendo. este mensajero. acue  
tlaxtla fue avisado por todos los  
blor que llegaua. se aparejaron los  
para estando. apunto. tomando el cauis  
de lo que se haian. fue el. rey.  
montecuma. Avisado de lo que su  
venido. y aparejado de la mar. y como  
llego acue tlaxtlan y dixo a su  
lo que montecuma le haian mandado.

CC, I.

Figure 9. Marina and Hernán Cortés, and Tlillancalqui, Codex Durán, ca. 1580. Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid (MS 202r)

In Ayala's *Primer nueva coronica y buen gobierno* (ca. 1615), the chapter devoted to the conquest of Peru also includes a drawing representing the arrival of Europeans to the New World: Christopher Columbus, Juan Díaz de Solís, Diego de Almagro, Francisco Pizarro, Vasco Núñez de Balboa, and Martín Fernández de Enciso are depicted on board in an improbable maritime journey.<sup>180</sup> In Ayala's drawing, it is the departure to the Indies of these historical figures that symbolizes the beginnings of a new temporality in the New World. However, as is the case in the Durán and Florentine codices, Ayala's manuscript also recounts the history and antiquities of Incas. Unlike these codices from New Spain and Peru, the texts and images of the BC does not recount the history and antiquities of a particular group, but rather describes and narrates histories and characteristics of different groups and communities in Southeast and East Asia. Instead of reproducing the genre of *historias generales* and Chronicles of the Indies, as in Diego Durán, Bernardino de Sahagún, and Guamán Poma de Ayala's manuscripts, the BC was conceived as a narrative artifact that is closer to the factual narrative of *relaciones*. However, in the codices made in New Spain and Peru, the author gives to the images made by native painters a leading role place in the constitution of the narrative.

As Alessandra Russo has pointed out, "we have the habit of considering that the arrival of Cortés and his followers in 1519 *interrupted* the production of Mesoamerican arts due to the impact of the images brought by conquerors."<sup>181</sup> However, if we examine the images in the Durán codex and other similar artifacts as also "being part of the "Western" history of art, "we will simultaneously recognize forms of interruption –even the exceeding- of artistic filiation

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<sup>180</sup> Chapter 19. El capítulo de la conquista española y las guerras civiles (370-437). Drawing 149 «Nueva Corónica i Buen Gobierno» por Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, facsimil digital de la Biblioteca Real de Dinamarca, Copenhagen.

<sup>181</sup> Alessandra Russo, *The Untranslatable Image*, p. 2.



(stylistic, iconographic, material) coming from the Old World. In this sense, we might say that the "European artistic configuration: was also interrupted by contact with radically different visual practices."<sup>182</sup>

The idea of an "interruption of artistic filiations" that also impacted the iconographic and material genealogy of the Old World can also be applied to the narrative of *relaciones* and their role in the transformation of writing practices. As mentioned previously, González de Mendoza's *Historia del Gran Reyno de la China* and the Boxer codex develop a synchronic narrative that is emancipated from the filiation with forms of writing developed in the ancient and medieval world. Similarly, the term synchronic history implies in the Boxer codex an idea of an interruption with a genealogical mode of writing in two senses. One the hand, the codex privileged a composite narrative of visual and textual reports that are interrelated and that privileged the synchronic dialogue among the elements described over a narrative of origins. On the other hand, the textual and visual narrative exceeds the material and iconographical filiation with both the New and Old World. The narrative of the BC also emerged from the experience of the simultaneous encounter and from the narrative of the *relación*, which narrates an event that refers directly to a "simultaneous occurrence of events which appear significantly related but have no discernible causal connection."<sup>183</sup>

Yet, by placing an image of a ship crossing the Pacific Ocean and going further away, towards the West Islands [*Islas de Poniente*], the author of the codex does not aim to depict a moment of interruption in the history of the New World, he rather represents a continuity with its writing practices. More attached to the practices of New Spain than to a European way of writing

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<sup>182</sup> Alessandra Russo, *The Untranslatable Image*, p. 2.

<sup>183</sup> New Oxford American Dictionary. Definition of the word synchronicity.

and composing books, this western continuity has nonetheless its own ruptures and complex dynamics that emanate from the regional particularities of the Far East. The painters of the BC were not native to the city of Manila, which was founded by Miguel López de Legazpi in 1571. As it has been commonly suggested, the painters were most probably part of the Chinese community of *Sangleyes* who worked in the Spanish city and traded with their original land in the southern region of Fujian. From this perspective, the western continuity emphasized in the arrival of the Spanish ship at the beginning of the codex defines the transpacific encounter as a transitional and moveable representation. Instead of representing the discovery of the Far East, the author underlines the Western or New World origin of the manuscript and the moveable dimension of the Oceanic encounter.

## **II. Making Visible Social Distinctions**

The first ten chapters of the codex describe islands and people from the Pacific Ocean and the Malaysian archipelago. After the fold-out illustration and the chapter about the *Ladrones*, there is a series of anonymous *relaciones* describing the Cagayans, Sambal, Visayans, Moros, Tagalogs, people from Brunei, the Maluku islands, and Java. These ten chapters are followed by itineraries written by João Ribeiro Gaio, which were originally written in Portuguese during the 1580s, and Miguel Roxo de Brito's account of his travel to New Guinea and the Raja Ampat archipelago (1581-82). These two sections with rutters differ from the first set of ten chapters. Instead of focusing on ethnographical descriptions of people, it is the travel narrative of discoveries and the route that is mainly described in the *relaciones* of Roxo de Brito and Ribeiro Gaio. Similarly, unlike the first set of ten chapters, the itineraries does not include images of social types or maps describing the routes.

Written by an anonymous author or authors, the first ten chapters and the chapter devoted to Japan, which is placed after the itineraries (chapter 15), were produced later than the accounts signed by Ribeiro Gaio, Roxo de Brito, and Martín de Rada. Unlike these authorial *relaciones*, these are original sources produced only for the Boxer codex. Probably, the author wrote these original chapters and he added some *relaciones* as authorial references dealing with the Far East. This approach is similar to Juan González de Mendoza's instrumental adoptions of Spanish *relaciones*, which also combines authorial texts written by Spanish authors with his own narrative voice. From this perspective, the author of the BC conceived also a composite book that aimed at projecting a comprehensive visual and literary narrative of the Far East that was based on the production of Spanish and Portuguese *relaciones*.

As mentioned previously, the BC does not focus on reconstructing the origins of Indian or Chinese nations. Rather, the codex aims at establishing distinctions and similarities among nations, social types, and kingdoms in the Western Pacific Islands, and Southeast Asia. However, the tendency to favor a synchronic narrative based on establishing distinctions among existing nations was also developed in the histories and chronicles written in the Americas. This narrative approach is similar to the work of historians and scholars established in New Spain, who started to write during the 1580s universal histories that favor a comparative western perspective that aimed at contrasting social types of people from Asia and the New World. Published in 1590, José de Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* compares nations Asia and the New World with the purpose of explaining the reasons and origins of Indians in the New World. As we will see in chapter fourth devoted to the work of antiquarians in 17<sup>th</sup> Europe, Acosta's questions and method of enquiry appeared also in the works of scholars and scientists, who also

integrated the question of a global origin into new historical narratives that incorporated the circulation and diffusion of reliable sources.

However, unlike José de Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, the BC is an artifact conceived to make visible the remote Orient by producing and combining visual reports. It is not the necessity of explaining the reasons and causalities among groups and objects, as is the case in Acosta's *Historia*, but to propose a visual catalogue that makes visible distinctions based on physical appearances. In other words, the Spanish textual genre of *relaciones* becomes here a visual *relación*. In the BC, the first set of illustrations and accounts were completely new and had no previous equivalent. Boxer and subsequent scholars have signaled the relative objectivity of these accounts. This objectivity has however an interrelated dimension that is based on the necessity of finding principles and categories that establish distinctions among the large diversity of elements that defined the cultures of the Far East. Aware of this cultural diversity, the author of the first section of chapters describes the most important communities, mixing some of them within the same chapters and contrasting others depending on their cultural or religious characteristics. For instance, in the chapter devoted to the main Philippines islands (Luzon, Panay and Cebu), the author observes that he included a large diversity of social types and linguistic groups in the same chapter because they had similar rites and ceremonies:

“While it is true that on these islands of Luzon, Panay and Cebu there are an infinite number of languages (and therefore also different styles of clothing) each one different from the rest –some extremely barbarous, others moderately understandable, and still others very clear-, so far as their rituals and ceremonies are concerned, almost all of them are in perfect agreement. And if in some places

they differ somewhat, the difference is so minor that it would not to discuss each nation separately, and thus a summary is given of them together.”<sup>184</sup>

As noted in this passage, the compiler of the BC includes into the same group the “infinite” number of languages and cultures because they are in perfect agreement in their gentile rites and ceremonies. Titled *An Account of the Heathen Rites and Ceremonies of the Indians of the Philippines islands*, the chapter is preceded by four illustrations of the Naturales, which Charles Boxer identified as the Tagalogs. Although modern scholars have subsequently identified the chapter about the so-called *Naturales* as devoted to Tagalos, the only entry in the latter chapter that refers to the Tagalos is included in the chapter about Moro Customs. As the author mentions, the Tagalos are included in the group of Indians with their particular language and terminologies. However, the narrative and descriptions do not provide a fundamental principle that distinguish the religions and origin for each group. Although the word Indian represent a major category for defining people in the islands of the west, it is just an imported category that lacks the subtle distinction among group of Indians developed by missionaries and scholars in the Americas.

At the end of the chapter devoted to the *Naturales*, the author signals that “there are also witches like in Spain and nobrazas (probably *nodrizas*, nurses) who commit many misdeeds and are feared and revered. And everyone hastens to give them whatever they want because they fear them.”<sup>185</sup> This reference as well as other comments related to religion and idolatries indicate that

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<sup>184</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 372. [Ms. 59r] "Relación de los rritos y serimonias gentilesas de los yndios de las yslas Philipinas: Aunque es uerdad que en estas yslas de Lucon Panay y Cebu ay ynfinidad de lenguas unas diferentes de otras y por el consiguiente diferentes trages unos barbarísimos y otros de mediano entendimiento y otros de muy mas claro en lo que toca a rritos y serimonias gentileças casi todos concuerdan. Y si en algunas partes difieren en algo es tan poca la diferencia que seria ynconuiniente tratar de cada nación de estos de por sí. Y asi de todas ellas se haze un epiligo."

<sup>185</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 383. [Ms. 64v] "Y ay tambien brujas como en España y nobrazos [si'c] las quales vsan muchas maldades. Y son temi-das y rreuerencpadas. Y acuden todos a darles lo que piden por el miedo q<ue> les tienen. Y pues el oficio de las brujas en todas partes es un onor. Y para que dezir a- qui las cosas que hacen."

the author had little or no previous experience in New Spain or Peru concerning the religion of native people. In the BC, the lack of systematic distinctions concerning the rites and ceremonies is seen in the absence of references to types of idolatries in the New World. The author of the BC does not use words idols and idolatries, which represented one of the main categories in the histories and chronicles of the New World. In New Spain and Peru, the different level of idolatries represented one of the main modes of defining the culture and political organization of Indians. In the Spanish chronicles and general histories of the Indies, the notion of idolatry articulated political and social distinctions in the Americas. In the *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, Acosta also identifies different levels and types of idolatries in the Indies: “But if we reduce idolatry to headings, there are two kinds of it: one has to do with natural things and the other with things imagined or fabricated by human ingenuity.”<sup>186</sup>

In the BC, the author does not structure the different groups according to their particular idolatries, nor does he provides references to contrast the religions of the Indians from the Philippines with other groups in the New World. This absence indicates that the anonymous author of the first ten chapters was probably a layman, as Boxer suggested, and also that he lacked experience and knowledge concerning the religion and societies of New Spain and Peru, which would be the case if the accounts were written by Gómez Dasmariñas and his son. Born in Viveiro, Galicia. Gómez Dasmariñas was governor of León on January 30, 1579. Later, he was promoted to *corregidor* of Murcia, Lorca and Cartagena. Dasmariñas held these positions until January 1, 1587. In 1589, he was named governor and captain general of the Philippines by King Philip II, and he arrived in Manila only one year later.

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<sup>186</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral d las Indias*, Book 5, p. 255. English Translation. *Natural and moral history of the Indies*, José de Acosta; edited by Jane E. Mangan (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002)

The author of the BC provides however some comparisons with Spanish cultural and religious elements. In the chapter 20, which is devoted to the Chinese deities, when describing a Chinese idol called Husin, he associates the Chinese idols with the famous and brave men who were in Spain: “And these idols of the Chinese are much like the famous and valiant men who lived in our Spain and other places whom we commemorate and whom we honor for their valor. In precisely the same way do the Chinese honor the first to invent any art or trade and all those who have achieved fame on the battlefield – these are worshipped and regarded as their advocates with God. The homage we render to our heroes becomes worship for them.”<sup>187</sup> The author introduces a reference concerning idolatry and idols in China from an Euhemerism perspective, which interprets and perceives mythological characters as real historical events or personages. However, the author does not compare these ancient symbolic figures of China with similar associations in New Spain, but he rather identifies this form of idolatry with the famous men of our Spain [*nuestra España*].<sup>188</sup>

In late 16th century New Spain and Peru, missionaries more often associated idols and idolatry with the demon and with something that had to be extirpated from world. According to Acosta, idolatry was “the cause and principle of all kinds of evil,” and it had to be rooted out from Peru.<sup>189</sup> Acosta begins the general description of idolatry in the New World by saying “that

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<sup>187</sup> Souza and Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 272. [Ms. 275r]: “Y esto de sus ydolos es propriamente como nosotros tenemos memoria de hombres famosos y balerosos que ubo en nuestra España y en otras partes y les estimamos por su ualor. Ellos ni mas ni menos a los primeros ynventores de qualquier arte y oficio y a todos aquellos que an sido entre ellos hombres famosos en la guerra los adoran y toman por abogados para con dios conuirtiendo la honra que nosotros hazemos a los nuestros ellos a los suyos en adoración aunque sobre todos rreuerencian a un solo dios porque dizen que este es amo y señor de todos los demas y que ellos son sus criados y que asi lo tiene en el cielo acomodados en oficios según lo que ellos fueron.”

<sup>188</sup> Among other examples in New Spain, Bernardino de Sahagún also associated some gods of the Mexica with ancient human or real figures of their history in the Florentine codex.

<sup>189</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia natural y Moral de las Indias*, 245. “La idolatría, dice el Sabio, y por él el Espíritu Santo, que es causa y principio y fin de todos los males.”

the cause of idolatry has been the pride and envy of the demon.”<sup>190</sup> Similarly, in Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, the idolatries from Peru and new Spain are also compared with idolatries in Japan and China. In Book V, Acosta introduces a description about the idolatries of the Japanese and Chinese by noting that the Mandarins did not pay special attention to idols and that they considered idolatry to be merely an instrument for entertaining the common people:

It is well known, by Letters written by the fathers of our company from Japan, the number and multitude of religious men that are in those Provinces, whom they call Bonzos, and also their superstitions, customs, and lies. [...] These monasteries commonly are outside the towns, and have temples within their close: yet, in China they are not greatly curious of idols, or of temples, for the Mandarins little esteem idols, and do hold it for a vain thing, and worthy to be laughed at; yea, they believe there is no other life, nor Paradise, but to be in the office of the Mandarins, nor any other hell than the prisons they have for offenders. As for the common people (*vulgo* in Spanish), they say it is necessary to entertain them with idolatry.<sup>191</sup>

Acosta's comparative model integrated the idolatries of Asia into a western or New World's perspective. In the passage included above, Acosta observes that he drew his sources from Jesuits letters, which represented an essential narrative artifact that made it possible for the Society of Jesus to develop synchronic and global histories that compared simultaneously observations and experiences in Asia and the New World.<sup>192</sup> Unlike Acosta's perspective, the purpose of the BC's author was not to synchronically connect different reports from all over the

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<sup>190</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia natural y Moral de las Indias*, p. 243.

<sup>191</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia natural y Moral de las Indias* p. 271.

<sup>192</sup> For this question, see chapter 3, *Inverted Exoticism*.



world, but rather to produce a valuable artifact that report about the diversity of cultures and societies in the Far East. However, the author of the BC knows that he was producing an artifact that would allow scholars to produce new comparisons with other objects in the New World and Europe. As he observes in the Chinese bestiary at the end of the codex, he added images of birds for allowing people to compare birds from Spain and the Far East. From this perspective, the visual narrative of the codex is also part of the Spanish administrative circulation of *relaciones*. However, the author refers to the images as the narrative that allows people to compare and establish associations as well as social, cultural, and political hierarchies.

In the BC, the reliability of images is opposed to an often flexible and inaccurate use of words. This perspective situates the codex in relation to those early modern narratives that gives to the image a more reliable and factual character than to words. Often associated with the emergence of empirical practices among naturalists and antiquarians, this predominance and positive value of images is not simply applied to nature in the codex, but to the categorization and distinction of social and political groups. In the early modern world, scholars in different disciplines and areas began to consider that images were a better media than words for describing and classifying objects. According to Sachiyo Kusukawa, Leonhart Fuchs' *De historia stirpium commentarii insignes* (1542) and Andrea Vesalio's *De humanis corporis fabrica* (1543) explicitly mentioned the instrumental function of images to investigate and classify objects in the emergent Renaissance practical disciplines of Botany and Anatomy.<sup>193</sup> The author of the BC clearly incorporated an experiential and visual language in the book with the

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<sup>193</sup> Sachiyo Kusukawa, *Picturing the book of nature: image, text, and argument in sixteenth-century human anatomy and medical botany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), Introduction.

purpose of providing a knowledge that could not be conveyed through words. However, it is not related only to nature, but to the art of categorizing and distinguishing social types.

In addition to the illustration of social types, the BC also provides visual information about Chinese deities, animals, monsters, and mythological creatures. Besides the ethnographical sections, the visual approach of the codex is seen in the chapter devoted to the Chinese deities. In this section, the author does not distinguish among idolatries, he just provides few analogies between Chinese gods and Spanish myths. This is the case with the idol *Husin* (Huangdi), who is “the first to invent the art of sailing and who made the first ships,”<sup>194</sup> and also Quanya (Guan Yu), who is compared with the apostle St James: “Guan Yu was also a great soldier and is to the Chinese as the apostle St. James is to us, for they say that he was seen many times in the sky fighting for them in their wars against the Tatars and that he killed so many of them that this was the cause of one of their great victories.”<sup>195</sup> In this section, the author defines the Chinese deities as gods and idols: “The following figures are the gods and idols that are worshiped in China.”<sup>196</sup> In this section, there is neither associations with the deities of the Greek-Roman pantheon, nor with gods of the Mexicas, but only few references to Spanish saints. Similarly, the author does not characterize the Chinese deities as demon, as was common in the descriptions of idols and gods in New Spain and Peru made by missionaries. On the contrary, the author emphasizes the

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<sup>194</sup> This idol or God is Huangdi, the so-called Yellow Emperor, credited with numerous inventions and innovations, as it is noted in the codex, and today regarded as the initiator of Chinese civilization. Souza and Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 637. [Ms, 275r]. “Este ydolo llamado Husin fue el primero que entre estos chinas ynuento el arte de nauegar y que primero hizo nauios.”

<sup>195</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 642. [Ms. 277r] “Quanya. Quanya tambien fue gran soldado. Y es tenido entre ellos como entre nosotros el apóstol Santiago porque dizen que en las guerras que ellos an tenido y tienen con los tártaros le bieron munchas vezes pelear en el ayre en fauor suyo y daño de los tártaros y que mato tantos que fue causa de una grana uictoria q<ue> entonces tuuieron.”

<sup>196</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 606. [Ms. 241v]. “Estas figuras que siguen son los dioses y ydolos que adoran en China” Note: As Souza and Turley have observed, this folio was placed in a wrong location of the codex.

human character of Deities, describing briefly their social function and illustrating them as human figures.



Figure 10 and 11. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Left Side, Husin [246r] Right Side, Quanya, [260r]

As seen in the section of deities and the Chinese bestiary, the author pays more attention to the aesthetic and material descriptions than to religious beliefs and antiquities. The interest in providing information about physical appearances is seen in several chapters. In the chapter about the Visayans, the author observes that these Indians have no temples or priest and that they are just like the rest of the idolaters in the world. “They have no temples of any kind where they worship and revere their gods, and much less are there any religious who teach or perform their

rituals or lead a life of abstinence and piety, they are like other idolaters in the world.”<sup>197</sup>

Moreover, the author of this text considers the Visayans’ beliefs to be ridiculous: “the beliefs held by the Visayans regarding the origin and beginning of the world are ridiculous, riddled with thousands of absurdities.”<sup>198</sup> Instead of judging severely these exotic and non-Christian beliefs, the author simply observes that these ideas were very funny: *una cosa harto para rreyr*. The observations concerning beliefs sharply contrast the positive estimation of the artistries and physical appearances of Visayans:

It is the custom of the Visayans to tattoo their bodies with very elegant figures. There are made with red-hot-brass irons by highly trained artisans who are masters at their art. The figures are drawn with such order, symmetry and coordination that they elicit admiration from those who see them. They are made in the manner of decorations. The men tattoo their bodies all over, including their chests, stomachs, legs, arms, thighs – some men even tattoo their faces. The women tattoo only their hands, and do so most elegantly. For the men these tattoos function as clothing, giving them an acceptable appearance, even though they are generally naked, wearing nothing more than a cotton cloth two fathoms long<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 344. [Ms. 33v] “No tienen templos ningunos donde adoren y rreberen- [33v] cien a sus dioses ni menos tienen ningunos rrelijiosos que les enseñen ni prediquen sus rritos ni hagan bida de abstinengia ni rrelijion como tienen los demas ydolatras que ay en el mundo. Tan solamente tienen los echizeros o echizeras que emos dicho los quales no hazen otra cosa mas que la supestigiones [sic] de matar el puerco con todo lo demas que sobre ellos diximos ni ay mas horden de rrelijion.”

<sup>198</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 336. [Ms. 28r] "Los bisayas tienen y sienten del origen y principio del mundo una cosa harto para rreyr llena de mill desatinos."

<sup>199</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 334. [Ms 27r] "Acostumbran los Bisayas a pintarse los cuerpos con pinturas muy galanas. Hazenlas con hierros de azofar puestos al fuego y tienen oficiales muy pulidos los saben bien hazer. Hazenlas con tanta horden y concierto y tan a compás que causan admiración a quien las ve. Son a manera de luminaciones. Pintanse los hombres todas las partes del cuerpo como son los pechos, barriga pierna y brazos espaldas manos y muslos y algunos los rostros. Las mugeres se pintan solo las manos muy galanamente. A los hombres sirven estas pinturas como si fuesen bestidos y así parecen bien aunque andan desnudos de hordinario que no traen en el cuerpo sino un paño de algodón de largura de dos brasas poco mas y de anchura de tres cuartas."

Instead of considering the tattoos of Visayans something ridiculous or ugly, the author defines these "elegant figures" as something admirable. He observes the order, symmetry, and coordination of drawings, defining the tattoos as a sort of clothing that give them "an acceptable appearance." Placed at the beginning of the chapter about the Visayans, these visual and artistic element raises the interest and fascination of the author, who provides an illustration with two Visayans facing each other and showing the back and front of their tattooed bodies. In addition to the tattoos, the account includes a description of their sexual behavior: "Finally, they have a custom connected with the sin of the flesh that is the most unusual practice ever; it has never been seen or heard of before and seems the epitome of their vices and bestialities in this regard. It consists of the men placing and wearing on their genital member a sort of hoop or ring with round tips that extend outward, as depicted in the drawing in this margin."<sup>200</sup>

Drawn by an unknown artist, the Visayan penis ring is also depicted with an explanation of its use: "They experience great pleasure in this, especially the women. Some of these hoops or rings are very large, there being more than 30kinds, each with its own name; the general word for them in their language is *sagra*."<sup>201</sup> Unlike the author's description of religious beliefs, which lacks subtle distinctions, the accounts of physical appearance and sexual behaviors are accurate and detailed. Although the author observes that it is an unhuman practice, he provides the

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<sup>200</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 364. [Ms 40v and 41r] "Finalmente aconstumbran en el pecado de la carne una cossa la mas nueba y nunca uista ni oyda jamas en la qual parece el guia del bicio y bestialidad que en este particular tienen. La qual es que los hombres se ponen en el miembro genital y traen de hordinario en el unas rrodajas o sortijas mas puntas a la rredonda que salen de las mismas rrodajas o sortijas como de la fforma de Esta que esta en el margen las quales hazen de plomo o de estaño."

<sup>201</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex* 365. [Ms. 40v – 74] "Y están todo vncliao una noche pegados y asidos el uno con el otro de la manera que quedan los perros quando anuían de hazer semejante acto sintiendo en esto gran delectación mayormente las mugeres. Ay al gunas de estas ay algunas de estas [s/c] rrodajas o sor tijas que son muy grandes. Tienen mas de treynta suertes dellas y de cada suerte tienen su nombre diferente. Y el general de todas [s/c] es en su lengua sacra."



indigenous name of the ring and indicates that is something never seen or heard of before. Located in the left margin of the folio, the drawing also indicates that the illustrations are intended to make visible something that is unusual or unknown in Spain.



Figure 12 and 13. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Left Side Visayans, Tatoed Couple [23v] Right Side, Visayans, penis ring [41v]

After the chapter about the Visayans, the author begins a chapter about the *Moros*. In this chapter, the author repeatedly compares the costumes of the *Moros* and the *Visayans*, placing both groups in a continuous comparative dialogue. In the opening of the chapter, the author observes that “the people known as *Moros* in the Islands of the West are so called not because they are Moors, or because they observe the rites and ceremonies of Muhammad, because they do not, not is there anything Moorish about them besides their name. But because after the Spaniards arrived, we thought that they were Moors and that they followed some of the rites of

Muhammad; they were found to possess numerous indications of it because the natives of the island of Borneo came to these islands to trade.”<sup>202</sup> In this section, the hesitation of the author clearly shows the lack of systematic textual principles for distinguishing among groups in the region, completing the insufficiency and lack of reliability of words with long explanations.

The distinctions between the *Visayans* and the Moros are also developed in the chapters describing the Brunei and Maluku islands, where there was a sultanate. In the chapter about the Brunei, the author makes clear that the Moros were foreign to this region and that there were two “types of people” on the island of Brunei: “It should be made clear that the kingdom of Brunei is not native, but is foreign. Thus there are two kinds of people on the island. The first are the old natives, whom we call *Visayans*, although it is not their custom to tattoo their bodies like in the island of Cebu.”<sup>203</sup> In this chapter, the author begins by referring to the Sultan who ruled the island, Nur Alam, “who while prince went by a different name, Sultan Rijal, is 280 leagues to the south-west of Manila.”<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 357. [Ms 41v-42r] “Los que llaman moros en las yslas del poniente no es sean moros ni guarden los rricotos ni serimonias ^Mahoma porque no lo son ni tienen ninguna cossa müro sino solo el nombre. Sino porque luego que aquí llegamos los españoles nos parecio que eran moros y que tenían algunos rricotos de Mahoma porque hallaron dello muchas muestras entre ellos a causa que benian a estas yslas los naturales de la ysla de Bomey a tratar y contratar” (p. 77)

<sup>203</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 400. [Ms. 74r] “Y asi ay dos géneros de gente en la ysla la que son los antiguos naturales a los quales llamamos uisayas aunque no usan pin-tarse como los de Zebú. Lllamanles en su lengua bagangan.”

<sup>204</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 399. [Ms. 73r] “La ysla de Bomey donde al presente rreyna el rrey sultán Nulaalan que por otro nombre siendo principe se llamo Sultán Lixar esta de la ciudad de Manila duzientas y ochenta leguas a la uanda del sudeste.”





Figures 14 and 15. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Left Side, Bruneian Warrior couple, [72r] Right Side, Sangley couple, [204r]

In the chapter about the Brunei island, the author signals that the Islamic origins of Brunei go back three hundred years, when the sultan Yusso reached the island after a long journey. This sultan later went to China to obtain legitimacy as king: “This Chinese Emperor conferred on him the title of king and authorized his use of his royal insignias and coat-of-arms, which the king of Brunei possesses this day. And seeing that this Sultan Yusuf was a bachelor, he married him to a *Sangley* woman, who, as it is told to this day in this realm, was a relative of the Chinese Emperor.”<sup>205</sup> As in the previous chapter, the Moros of the sultanate of Brunei are also mingled with a Chinese ancestor, a Sangley woman. In the illustration, the painter depicted

<sup>205</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 401. [Ms 74v] "E visto que el dicho sultán Yuso estaua soltero lo caso con una sangleya que segund parece por la rrazon que della a quedado en el dicho rreyno era parienta del rey de China la qual dicha sangleya era señora de una ciudad que se llama Namtay en el rreyno de China."



the woman with a different skin color and clothes. The woman wears clothes and her skin color is whiter than the man, who only wear a white bandage.

Besides the distinctions among particular groups, the physical distinctions in the codex are also applied to differences between men and women within the same groups. This differentiation of masculine and feminine attributes is seen in several illustrations of couples. For instance, the author observes in the chapter about the Maluku islands that “the men are husky and grow handsome beard and moustaches. And their speech is very courteous and polished and they address each other well. They dress in the manner of the Indians from Luzon, except that they wear silk and gauze and other linens from India”<sup>206</sup> In this description, the author emphasizes the physical attributes, comparing them to the Indians of the island of Luzon and adding information about their weapons.

The description of the Maluku woman also emphasizes her physical attributes and appearance, but he underlines their whiteness and physical and desirable qualities: “the clothing of the women consists of short garments that reach mid-thigh and small jackets with very long ruffled sleeves. And the leading women wear velvet jackets with half-sleeves, and on their wrists and arms they wear a lot of bracelets made of gold, silver and pearls, and on their foreheads a tight ribbon with many precious stones and valuable pearls. These women are tall, plump, vigorous and beautiful, and many of them are white.”<sup>207</sup> As seen in the illustrations, the

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<sup>206</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 429. [Ms 89r.] “Maluke islands. Las costumbres modo y manera de vida y secta de la gente del Maluco. Son hombres membrudos y dejan crescer la barua y bigote de buena presencia y en su lengua muy corte-sanos y de presunción y se tratan bien sus personas. Bistense al modo de los yndios de la yslandia de Luzon ecepto que se visten de seda y almayzales y otros liencos finos de la Yndia”.

<sup>207</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 429. [Ms 89r] “El traje de las mugeres es uestido cortos hasta media pierna con sus juboncillos con mangas muy largas que en el brazo hazen munchas arrugas. Y las mugeres principales traen unos juboncillos de terciopelo con media manga y en las muñecas y brazos munchas manillas de oro plata y perlas y en la frente una cintilla vapretador [sí'c] con muncha pedrería y perlas de precio. Son mugeres de buena estatura gordas frescas hermosas y munchas dellas blancas.”

whiteness of the women is emphasized and it contrasted with the dark color of the Maluku warrior. These distinctions are an essential part of the social display developed in the codex. As in the images of the Durán codex, images in the BC adapt and transform physical appearances depending on the elements that the author wanted emphasize in his visual report. Whereas in the depiction of women he emphasizes the whiteness and their desirable qualities, the depictions of men concentrate rather in displaying them as rude and dark-skinned warriors.



Figures 16 and 17. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Right Side, Maluku Woman [87v] Left Side, Maluku Man, [88r ]

### III. Approaching China in the Boxer codex

As mentioned in the previous chapter, even though color remained a fluid marker of social distinction during the early modern period, whiteness was associated with advanced civilizations. In the *Historia del Gran reyno de la China*, Mendoza compares the different colors of people in China with the diversity of nations in the Mediterranean world, observing that the people from China were very different: “it’s very evident the great difference that there is in color among the inhabitants of this kingdom [China]. Those who are born in the city of Canton and along that entire coast are dark, like the people of Fez or Barbary, because the coast runs along parallel to Barbary. Those of the other interior provinces are White, some more than others, as they approach the cold lands.”<sup>208</sup> The author of the BC also developed these distinctions in the visual and textual descriptions. Unlike the flexible and often mingled cultural and religious descriptions, the distinctions developed in the codex show that the author’s approach depicting “social types” followed aesthetic principles. He demarcates differences among groups and between men and women through the description of clothes and physical appearance.

In the BC, the visual inventory of social types is organized by following a progressive narrative in which Japan and China appears always as the ultimate element of the classification. The first section of materials concerning China reproduces a similar organizational pattern than the first series of chapters devoted to the Philippines and the Pacific islands. This pattern is that illustrations precede their accompanying text. The author has gradually placed first the China's

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<sup>208</sup> Juan González de Mendoza. *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran reyno de la China*, (Rome, a costa de Bartholome Grassi, 1585), Book I, Chapter 2. Del Temperamento del Reyno de la China. English translation drawn from Richmond Ellis, *They Need Nothing, Hispanic-Asian Encounters of the Colonial Period*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012, p. 83.

tributary Neighbors and then a series of illustrations depicting Sangleyes, Chinese Commanding Generals, Mandarin Scholars, Chinese Prince, and the Emperor. The illustrations differentiate between the Chinese groups, in which their whiteness is emphasized with a red-colored face tone, and other groups that had humblest clothes and darker skins. After the section of China's tributary Neighbors, China's officials and the Prince and Emperor, the author places Martín de Rada's account, which is included in chapter 17. In Rada's writings, the Chinese are identified as being all white: "All of the people of Tai Ming are without exception white and well-proportioned. The men are very beautiful as children but become ugly as they mature."<sup>209</sup> Unlike Mendoza's writings, which indicate the diversity of colors and appearance in China, Rada's account and the visual depiction of the codex tended to present China (and also Japan) as whiter than the rest of population in the region.

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<sup>209</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 578. Ms. 223v. p. 240. Es la gente de Taybin toda a una mano blanca y bien dispuesta. Y quando niños son muy hermosos pero en siendo grandes se paran feos.





Figures 18 and 19. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Left Side, Kampuchea Couple [186r] Right Side, Mandarin *Letrado* and Consort [208r]

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, it was not until the 18th century, when the European rhetoric of Orientalism began to emerge, that scholars started to represent the Chinese and East Asian people as non-white or also a yellow race. Iberian scholars either described the people of China as white, as is the case in Martín de Rada, or they described them as a diversity of communities that differed in their appearance and customs, as is the case in Mendoza's work. In these Iberian authors, the white color does not refer to Western or Europeans people, but it was rather applied to advanced societies, as is the case in China. In the BC, the description of

physical appearances and the aesthetic and visual representation provides however an instrument of social distinction. Although in the pre-modern world the color remains a fluid social marker and non-white people was not a synonym of non-Western or non-European societies, the visual and accurate physical descriptions are clearly embedded in an explicit narrative that create political and social distinctions. However, as seen in the example of the image depicting the Malinche, the depiction of physical appearances can also present subtle transformations by adding European elements to the visual representation of Indians from the New World.

Like in the rest of the codex, the visual materials of the Chinese sections precede the textual interventions and in the most part of sections the text is produced as a commentary that completes the images. The author includes Martín de Rada's account about China in the codex. Although Rada's text was written twenty years before the codex was created, it continued to represent one of the most important texts dealing with China. However, the main object of the Chinese section is the images, which provide visual reports of the tributary neighbors, the Chinese prince and king, the Chinese deities, and the animals and monsters included in the bestiary. The preeminence of images over text is seen in several elements of the manuscript. For instance, in the series of blank pages placed after some of the illustrations of the codex, which indicate that the compiler organized the codex by selecting and placing first the images. Then, the compiler probably left blank pages in order to write a *relación* associated with the images. From this perspective, the textual *relaciones* in the codex are often the in dialogue with the observation of images and the oral reports provided by informants.

In some sections of the codex, the author probably did not have the time for writing an account, and this is why some illustrations are followed by blank pages. This is seen in the illustration of tributary neighbors, and in some illustrations of Deities, as well as in some animals

and birds depicted in the bestiary. The lack of time is explicitly mentioned by the author in the last section devoted to the Chinese bestiary, where the author observes that “nothing is said about some birds and animals in their frames because of the brevity of time, which prevented us from learning the whole story or what is said and predicted about them.”<sup>210</sup> Moreover, the author adds in the introduction to the Chinese bestiary that some birds “have been included out of curiosity so that the difference between them and the birds from Spain can be appreciated,”<sup>211</sup> implying that the production and compilation of images were made for people in Spain interested in comparing birds from China and Spain.

The production of images that made visible social types, nations, deities, and animals for the authorities in Spain was a common practice promoted by the Spanish administration and the crown. The predominance of images over the text is not only associated with the administrative requirements; it is also intimately related to the inadequacy and lack of reliability of words in the *relaciones*. The use of the Spanish term *genero* (type) and the flexibility and variability of verbal categories denotes an insufficiency of words for describing and classifying the particular and general characters of cultures and societies in China and East Asia. The diversity of languages and cultures as well as the impossibility of describing with words the cultural diversity is directly associated in the codex with the central role of images, which represent a crucial component to think and articulate social, cultural, and political hierarchies.

This idea of visual report is seen in textual sections that refer to illustrations that were not included or were removed from the codex. In two sections, the text makes reference to

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<sup>210</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 280. [Ms 278v] "Y de algunas aues y animales no se dize nada en su quadro porque la breuedad del tiempo no dio lugar para poderse sauer enteramente ni ninguna parte de lo que dellas se pronostica y dize."

<sup>211</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 280. [Ms. 278v] "Otras que son aues las quales ay muncha abundancia en China se pusieron por curiosidad para que se uea la diferençia que hazen a las de España."

illustrations that do not appear in the Codex, the Chinese Imperial Ceremony and the Chinese and Tatar cavalries. Souza and Turley signal that these illustrations were probably not included when the codex was bound.<sup>212</sup> In the section on the Chinese Imperial Ceremony, the text refers to an illustration that depicts the protocol followed when the Emperor leaves the palace: “The manner and order illustrated above depict the procedure that is always followed when the Chinese Emperor takes leave of his palaces, which happens very rarely.”<sup>213</sup> This direct reference to the illustration is followed by a complete description of this protocol, observing that the Emperor lives with so much fear and caution that: “he orders the person he trusts the most with his own person to search out in all of his kingdoms people who look the most like him, the Emperor, both in body and in the physiognomy of the face.”<sup>214</sup>

Similarly, the text of the Chinese and Tatar cavalries also includes a direct reference to illustrations that are missing in the codex: “The Chinese go to battle against the Tatars in the way depicted above.”<sup>215</sup> Although we cannot know if these illustrations were removed or simply not included in the manuscript, the description in the *relación* shows the methodological approach of the compiler. He textually described images that were also explained by a third informant, contextualizing the visual depiction and completing a *relación* that is intimately linked to the

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<sup>212</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, Introduction, 33.

<sup>213</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 603. [Ms. 242r] “El modo y horden que atras queda figurado es el que se tiene siempre en la salida del rrey de China fuera de sus palacios al qual es bien raras rezes porque ay rrey y a auído muchos que en toda su uida no an salido de su casa.”

<sup>214</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 603. [Ms.242r] “Uibe con tanto temor y rrecato que las vezes que sale fuera de su casa o en ella a hazer esto es de la manera y horden que se sigue. Haze que baya por todos sus rreynos la persona de mayor confianza que tiene acerca de la suya y este ua mirando las personas mas parecidas a la del rrey asi en cuerpo como en la fisonomía del rostro. Y de estos escoje doze i los trae a la casa real.”

<sup>215</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 605. [Ms. 244r] “De la forma que queda pintado atras se juntan en sus batallas los chinos con los tartaros los quales tartaros no traen en su exercito mas que solo un estandarte al qual siguen y guardan toda la gente del.”



production of images. From this perspective, although the BC is mainly a visual artifact, the visual reports also needed to be completed and explained with a text.

In the last section of materials, the compilers included a different corpus of images, the Chinese bestiary. The compilers of the BC incorporated in this section a series of pages with four illustrations, each one depicting animals, monsters and birds. The names of the creatures were transcribed from Chinese names which were probably orally reported by the *Sangleyes*. As Souza and Turley have observed, the Chinese bestiary contains mythological animals that were probably copied from the Chinese work *Shan Hai Jing* (The Classic of Mountains and Seas), a Chinese classical work of cosmographical and cultural accounts dating from pre-Qin China (c. 4<sup>th</sup>-c. 1<sup>st</sup> cent. B.C.E).<sup>216</sup> The introduction to the bestiary and the captions written on the reverse of each folio are anonymous. At the beginning of the section, the author refers to the different paintings and reports described in the Chinese bestiary of the BC: "What follows and is shown from this point on are some of the birds and animals and monsters that are seen in China, in some cases only occasionally and in other cases quite commonly, and what is reported regarding the good and bad properties that each one possesses. And they claim great nonsense about these creatures of which the devil himself must have persuaded them, for many of the things they say about them are impossible to believe."<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Souza and Turley suggest that a copy of this work might have been available in Manila when the illustrations of the codex were made and compiled (S&T, 34). The earliest surviving set of woodblock illustrations of this work is from a rare edition dated 1597, during the late Ming dynasty, which reproduced a set of woodblock illustrations containing many of the fabulous creatures and animals that are also depicted in the BC. See also Strassberg, Richard E. *Chinese Bestiary*. Berkeley, US: University of California Press, 2002. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 10 May 2016.

<sup>217</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 646. [Ms. 278v] "Lo que aora de aqui adelante se a de proseguir y uer es algunas aues y animals y moustros que algunas por tiempo y otros muy de hordinario se uen en China y lo que se dize de cada una de las propiedades malas o buenas que tienen. Y acerca de estas dizen grandes dislates que el demonio les deue de persuader por ser muchas de las cosas que se dizen dellas ympusibles de creer. Y de algunas aues y animals no se dize nada en su quadro porque la breuedad del tiempo no dio lugar para poderse sauer enteramente ni ninguna parte de lo dellas se pronostica y dize. Otras que son aues las quales ay mucha abundancia en China se pusieron por curiosidad para que se uea la diferençia que hazen a las de España."

As it was the case in other sections of the manuscript, the author considers nonsense and things “impossible to believe” the different stories provided by the informants in Manila. As we mentioned previously, the author indicates the goal of providing images that would allow people to differentiate between birds in China and Spain. Beside the birds that were depicted for this comparative purpose, at the end of the chapter, the author also included illustrations of monsters and mythological creatures. The section, which has no title, includes two distinctive sets of illustrations. The first section features images of mythological creatures compiled from the *Shan Hai Jing* (The Classic of Mountains and Seas). The second part illustrates a series of naturalistic birds.

Unlike the monsters of the first section, the birds of the latter section have a richer gamut of colors and volume, and they adopt positions that accentuate the idea of movement. Similarly, whereas the feathers of the mythological birds look like fish scales that emphasize the hybridity of creatures, the feathers of the naturalistic birds have a richer range of tones and shadows, giving a true-to-nature effect. Similarly, the actual birds exhibit a more dynamic body than the mythological creatures, combining different positions and movements that give them a more flexible and lively quality. Furthermore, the eyes of the naturalistic birds are depicted with a round yellow circle and a black dot, and the legs have more volume and feathered thighs.



Figures 18 and 19. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex* Left Side. Mythological creatures. [F. 279v]<sup>218</sup> Right Side. Actual birds without captions. [F. 297v]<sup>219</sup>

Moreover, the captions accompanying the drawings of the creatures refer often to the fact that these creatures and monsters were observed in China. For instance, three of four illustrations of folio 286r are accompanied by captions that refer to the experience of having seen the creatures: “This monster has also been said to have been seen sighted in China,” or “This monster has been seen among them like the others.”<sup>220</sup> The organizations of illustrations and

<sup>218</sup> On the reverse of the folio. “When this bird is seen they say there will be many wars” [upper left quadrant]; It is called quiy because this is its song [Lower right quadrant]; When this bird is seen there will be a great dearth of water on the earth [lower left quadrant].

<sup>219</sup> [a] Zhegu [b] Yingwa [c] Luci [d] Yeji

<sup>220</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 658. [Ms. 286v]

captions mingled factual information with allegorical ideas about animals. In folio 293v we find in the upper right quadrant an animal that “has enormous strength and it is made use of as mules are in Spain. And it is said that unless 100 quintals is laid on its back, it refuses to walk.”<sup>221</sup> As in previous sections, the author continues to create analogies with Spain.<sup>222</sup> Furthermore, in the series of mythological creatures (between folio 279v and folio 290r), the frame is decorated as in the rest of the codex, with foxes, birds, bees, and flowers. As Charles Boxer observed, this border is similar to those made by the famous Parisian artist-printer Geoffrey Tory for his printed Books of Hours.<sup>223</sup> From folio 291v to the last folio 302r, the frame is depicted with a tiny arabesque that Boxer identified as a Persian or Indian influence. Within the frame that has arabesques is a section featuring naturalistic birds and four folios which also contain monsters and mythological creatures mixed with actual animals.

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<sup>221</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 668. [Ms. 293v] "Es animal de grandisima fuerça y se sirven del como en Spaña de azemillas. Y dizen que hasta que le echen cien quintales no quiere andar."

<sup>222</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 667. [Ms.293r] Placed at the end, these actual birds were probably elaborated following the techniques of Chinese manuals: the so-called *Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden* [*Jieziyuan Huazhuan*]. Although these manuals were compiled from around the mid-17th c., there were before this period teaching materials that had the same characteristics.

<sup>223</sup> C. R. Boxer. "A Late Sixteenth Century Manila MS." *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge University Press. No. 1/2(Apr., 1950), pp. 37-49.





Figures 20 and 21. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Left side, folio 286r [a] Kaimingshou (Tian Gou) [b] Jiaochong (Quiau Tion) [c] Xiangliu (Sianecsi) [d] Yoc Siu. Right side, folio 293v, [a] Chuibe [b] Pecte [c] Chem [d] chiho in the ms or Xiang (elephant)

As we see in these folios and other sections of the bestiary, the author does not distinguish clearly between mythological creatures and actual birds. Rather he aims at displaying animals, monsters and birds that could be compared with similar creatures in Spain. During the early modern period, naturalists and scholars often mixed descriptions of exotic animals and birds with mythological creatures and monsters. As scholars have often observed, the borders between monsters and actual animals was not clearly demarcated during the early modern period. In the BC, the author also mixes mythologies and actual birds, as it is seen in folio 300v, where he includes a peacock near the Chinese *Fenghuang* or *Tan hon*: “Tan hon, the bird never loses



sight of the sun and its rays, and it is said that it receives its sustenance from it.<sup>224</sup> The Fenghuang or Chinese phoenix, which is a creature that reigns over all other mythological birds, is included in the same folio of actual birds, alongside the *Kongque* or Indian peacock, called in Latin the *Pavo cristatus*. The *Fenghuang* and the peacock share both aesthetic and symbolic characteristics. Both are associated with the sun, beauty and wisdom. The ancient Greeks believed that the flesh of the peacock did not decay after death, so it became a symbol of immortality. According to Ovid, Hera had the hundred eyes of Argus preserved forever in the peacock's tail.<sup>225</sup>



Figures 22 and 23. The Lilly Library Digital Collection, *Boxer Codex*. Left Side: Folio 291v with different borders depicting the Locto and Quirin, Chinese creatures with a single thorn: [a] Locto

<sup>224</sup> Souza & Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, 674. [Ms. 300v] "Este pajaro nunca se aparta de la uista y rayos del sol y dizen se sustenta del."

<sup>225</sup> Ovid, I, 625. The peacock is an Eastern bird, unknown to Greeks before the time of Alexander.

[b] Hu [c] Quirin [d] Y yo. Right Side: Folio 300r with the peacock and the tan hon un the upper section: [a] Kongque [b] Fenghuang [c] Soarty [d] Baihe

In the bestiary, these comparisons show that the author displays a very flexible typology of animals, monsters and birds, mixing them with the purpose of contrasting birds or animals that can share symbolic or aesthetic elements. As in the sections devoted to social types, the absence of specific words and nomenclature for categorizing nature gives to the image a predominant role in the art of contrasting sources and differentiating factual reports from mythological or false information. As we can see in the bestiary, the names of animals and creatures are Spanish transcriptions that often reproduce incorrectly or partially the original Chinese names, which are completed with the textual description in Spanish. In the BC, the flexibility and often inadequacy of words is inscribed into a broader process of visual taxonomy, which was both a response to the requests from the Spanish administration and a manifestation of the emergence of empirical practices that were part of the observational narrative of *relaciones*. However, unlike the approaches of historians who adapted *relaciones* to the general histories of the Indies, the BC is an artifact that adapts the writing of *relaciones* to the visual production. As we will see in the next chapter, the reliability of images and its close relation to the narrative of *relaciones* produced other forms of individual writing. Similarly, as we will see also in Adriano de las Cortes' *relacion* of his travel in China, the pictures of the Chinese were described as more reliable and depicting better the Chinese culture than images made by European painters.

## CHAPTER III

### **Inverted Exoticism: Jesuits and the Idea of a Domestic Globe**

In the first and second chapters of this dissertation, I have focused on the writing of relations and their impact in the transformation of forms of producing and exchanging histories. The *relación* is a narrative artifact that made possible the emergence of a historical narrative that shaped a diversity of compositions related to global history. As we have observed, the *relación* integrates more than a new way of providing information, but also a new form of structuring social, political, and religious distinctions. In this chapter, I follow these questions by analyzing the writing of *relaciones* and letters in the context of the Society of Jesus and their missions and travels in China. Unlike the model of *relaciones* analyzed in the previous chapters, the letters and *relaciones* written by the members of the *Society of Jesus* were produced, compiled, and published by following the rules and methods developed by the Society. Instead of writing these manuscripts to inform the Council of the Indies and the Spanish authorities, the Jesuit letters, diaries, and *relaciones* circulated among the members of the Society which had his own particular rules concerning the production of manuscripts and its publication.

After the initial period of religious and political expansion in East Asia (1550-1598), the main concern of governors and officials established in Manila and Macau was the consolidation of positions and the promotion of the intercontinental trade controlled by the cities of Macau and Manila.<sup>226</sup> As Manel Ollé has argued, the project of conquering China was set aside after the

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<sup>226</sup> The project of establishing a continental port in China a direct trade between Japan and New Spain went against the interests of authorities in Macau and the Philippines, who wanted to conserve the control over the trade with China and Japan.



defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, which put an end to the dreams of conquest of Spanish officials and missionaries.<sup>227</sup>

The majority of missionaries who participated in the mission in China were Jesuits who arrived through the Portuguese Indian run to Macau, the continental port that connected the Portuguese world to China. The Spaniards who visited China arrived with an official license from Manila, as was the case of Martín de Rada's embassy in 1575, or from Macau, joining the group of Jesuits who started the Catholic mission commanded by the Jesuit Matteo Ricci. In China, the Jesuits played different roles and adapt their message to heterogeneous audiences. The notion of accommodation was a central feature of the Jesuit way of proceeding in converting non-Christians in China, Japan, and the Americas. The policies of accommodation, which consisted of adapting the Christian revelation message to one particular audience, was developed and supported by Ricci and his followers. These Jesuits argued that Chinese culture, and especially early Confucianism, was inherently predisposed to Christianity, and therefore required only minor modification in order to conform to Christian revelation.<sup>228</sup>

Unlike the group of Jesuits, the members of other Catholic Orders as well as dissident Jesuits condemned Matteo Ricci's accommodationism and interpreted Confucianism as essentially a genre of idolatry. From the beginning of the mission, the polemic question of accommodation shaped the writings of letters and manuscripts as well as the policy concerning the publication of printed books dealing with the Jesuit mission in China. However, instead of

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<sup>227</sup> For the Spanish plan to conquer China see Manel Ollé, *La empresa de china, de la Armada Invencible al Galeón de Manila* (Barcelona: Acantilado, 2002)

<sup>228</sup> The Jesuits who privileged the policy of accommodation in China by Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607) and Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) wanted to adapt the Christian revelation to the religious qualities of the Chinese. Whereas Ruggieri's approach was addressed to the common people, in whom Buddhist and Taoist elements predominated, Ricci focuses on educated classes, where Confucianism prevailed.

discussing this polemical question in their books, Jesuits tended to promote their mission by appealing to the secular dialogue with science, which became a crucial element in the development of rhetoric strategies in the Society of Jesus.

As Florence C. Hsia has shown, among the variety of roles adopted by missionaries in late imperial China, "their most memorable guise was that of scientific expert, whose maps, clocks, astrolabes, and armillaries reportedly astonished the Chinese."<sup>229</sup> According to Florence Hsia, the "missionary-scientists remade themselves as they negotiated the place of the profane sciences in a religious enterprise."<sup>230</sup> The Jesuits missionary work in China remains today one of the major chapters of cross-cultural scientific and technological exchange in the early modern era. This chapter examines how letters and manuscripts reshaped individual and collective experiences of writing within the community of Jesuits, defining how the different modes of articulating the art of writing itself is determined by the interaction between members of the Society and the entire "body" of letters-writers. The first two sections of the chapter examine how the art of writing itself arose from the need to send a letter, examining how letters in the Society of Jesus were a crucial narrative artifact that reshaped their collective and individual experience. The second part, which covers the half of the chapter, analyzes an illustrated manuscript written by Adriano de las Cortes and illustrated by a Chinese painter. Unlike the letters and printed books of Jesuits who followed Matteo Ricci's mission, Adriano's manuscript reflects a narrative of the self that differs from the experience of missionary-scientists, proposing a closer look eye that narrates a misfortune sojourn of captivity in China.

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<sup>229</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land: Jesuits and Their Scientific Missions in Late Imperial China* (Chicago University Press, Chicago, 2009) Abstract.

<sup>230</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, abstract and thesis of the book.

Since the beginnings of the Society of Jesus, letters were the crucial narrative artifact that articulated a collective sense among those missionaries expected to be scattered in the world. Letters were not just a media of communication, but they were the element that made possible to integrate the experience of missions within a collective experience. The foundational legislative text of the Society, the *Constitutions*, specified that members of the Society had to maintain regular correspondence and write and inform regularly to their provincials. Written originally in Spanish, the *Constitutions* were translated into Latin and printed for the first time in 1556 and 1558. Expanded and revised during the early decades of the Society, the *Constitutions* shaped the letter-writing of missionaries, and it characterizes the Society and its members as "limbs of one and the same body of the Society."<sup>231</sup> Among other instructions, the *Constitutions* assumed the collective determination of the Society to be scattered in the entire world (Constitutions N°603). As Florence C. Hsia has pointed out, "the letter-writing measures developed within the Society of Jesus represent a strategy—a particularly innovative and effective one, to be sure—for managing a complex organization."<sup>232</sup> For the Jesuits, the writing of letters was the media that made possible to integrate the journey itself as their main residence. In the words of the Spanish Jesuit Jerónimo Nadal, "the whole world becomes our house."<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, Chapter 2, Writing Missions.

<sup>232</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, Chapter 2. Writing Missions.

<sup>233</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, chapter 2, quoted from ÓMalley, "To travel" (1984), 6 and 17, n. 9: "Notandum diversa esse in Societate mansionum seu habitationum genera. Est enim domus probationis, collegium, domus professorum, peregrinatio; et hac ultima totus mundus nostra fit habitatio."

The letters written and read by Jesuits had to provide "mutual consolation and edification in the Lord."<sup>234</sup> Beyond the concepts of *consolationem et aedificationem*, letters were also an instrument for learning and for promoting missions and projects developed by the Society. Letters were also printed and they represented a document that could articulate the character of a letter-*relación*, as in the Diego de Pantoja's letter analyzed in the first section of this chapter. The publication of these letters-*relaciones* normally followed a promotional goal of the company. As scholars have noted, the Jesuits avoided including in their printing works the information related to the polemic debate of "accommodation" and other questions that may have represented negative propaganda for the Society.<sup>235</sup> Rather, the printed letters mainly worked as instruments of propaganda, avoiding the publication of elements referring to the internal polemics and including content that was considered promotional for their mission in China.<sup>236</sup> Among the promotional elements included in their printed works, the Jesuits projected a positive image of Europeans by including descriptions that represented the Chinese idealization of Europe, articulating a positive image of Europe as seen through the eyes of the Chinese. Included repeatedly in different type of printed works, this positive characterization of Europe and the West projected an inverted form of exoticism that situated the narrator or narrators as the fundamental element of the narrative.

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<sup>234</sup> Quoted from Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, chapter 2. Originally in *Constitutiones* (1938), pt. 8, chap. 1, M, 225 [675]: "Ut autem res Societatis ad aedificationem pertinente communicari omnibus possint, hanc formulam sequi oportebit" M. 9, 224 [673]: "ut quovis in loco, quae ad mutuam consolationem et aedificationem in Domino faciunt, ex aliis sciri possint."

<sup>235</sup> See for instance Paula Hoyos Hattori, "Políticas editoriales en las cartas jesuitas de Japón (Évora, 1598): análisis de tres epístolas, (Anuario de Historia Virtual, 2015) For the Evora edition: *Cartas que os padres e irmãos da Companhia de Jesus escreverão dos Reynos de Iapão & China aos da mesma Companhia da India, & Europa, desde anno de 1549 até o de 1580* (Evora, 1580)

<sup>236</sup> Federico Palomo, "Corregir letras para unir espíritus. Los jesuitas y las cartas edificantes en el Portugal del siglo XVI" (Madrid: Cuadernos de Historia. Anejos IV, 2005), pp. 57-81

Unlike the 18<sup>th</sup> century orientalist travelers who visited Europe and presented to the audience a diverse and more critical eye of European cultures, the inverted exoticism of Jesuits presented an idealized Europe as seen by the Chinese. This positive construction is central in Diego de Pantoja's letter, which was printed in 1604 in Valladolid, in Nicolás Trigault's *De Christiana Expeditione apud sinas* (Augsburg, 1615), and in Adriano de las Cortes' *relación* describing his period of captivity in China (1627), which are the three works examined in this chapter. The writings of these Jesuits constructed an inverted exoticism that mainly idealized the narrator of the letter, placing the traveler and observer of the remote and oriental world at the center of the narrative. Unlike the writing of *relaciones* that presented an experiential information that focuses on the exotic and remote character of regions and people of the Far East, the writings of Jesuits produced an inverted narrative approach that shows how the Chinese perceived the Jesuits and the European culture.

From this perspective, instead of idealizing or bringing to Europe an exotic China, the writings of these Jesuits reoriented the exoticism of remote worlds by situating the narrator and Europe as an exotic world that fascinated the Chinese. This inverted exotic construction was not merely a self-centered idea of particular individuals, but rather a strategic narrative of the Jesuits, who wanted to promote their agenda in Europe by presenting the individuals who wrote these letters as heroes admired by both the Europeans and the Chinese. In addition to providing necessary updates on the evolution of Jesuits activities in China and Asia, the letters of Jesuits reoriented the ancient fascination for the Orient into an idealization of Europe. As this chapter shows, this was a crucial element that determined the publications and promotional strategies of the Society of Jesus. Similarly, as this chapter argues, this inverted form of exoticism is a

particular production that emanates from the possibility of writing and exchanging individually reports and experiences that were part of the collective and global agenda of the Society of Jesus.

### **I. Diego de Pantoja and the Chinese Fascination for Europe**

Among the few Spaniards who visited China during the early 17th century, the Jesuit Diego de Pantoja was one of the most influential characters in the history of the Jesuit mission initiated by the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci. Pantoja was one of the main supporters of Ricci's policy of accommodation and the person who made possible the burial of the Matteo Ricci in Beijing in 1610.<sup>237</sup> Even though Pantoja's role in the Jesuit mission had been commonly minimized, his writings and publications in Chinese and Spanish had an important impact.<sup>238</sup> Known for his skills as astronomer, geographer, and musician, Diego de Pantoja was the only Spaniard in a group in of Portuguese, Italians, and converted Chinese. Pantoja's letter was first published in Spanish, and it is the first printed account that narrates the early history of the Jesuit mission in China.

Diego de Pantoja was born in Valdemoro (Madrid) in 1571. He studied at the College of Alcalá (1589), in Plasencia (1593) and in the city of Toledo (mid-1590s), where he took holy orders and met Father Gil de la Mata, the Superior of the province of Japan. Pantoja went to Macau through the Portuguese route, where he arrived on July 20th, 1597. On November 1<sup>st</sup> 1599, Pantoja and the Jesuit Lazzaro Cattaneo embarked for China, sailing up the river Chang-

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<sup>237</sup> By the Ming Dynasty's law, foreigners who died in China had to be buried in Macau. The Wanli Emperor granted Pantoja's request and designated a Buddhist temple for the purpose.

<sup>238</sup> The only biography on Diego de Pantoja is Zhang Kai, *Pang di wo [Pantoja] yu Zhongguo* (Beijing: Beijing Tushuguan Chubanshe, 1997)

jiang (Yangtze) to reach Nanjing and passing through Anqing and Wuhu.<sup>239</sup> In March of 1600, Diego de Pantoja met Matteo Ricci and they went to Beijing two months later.<sup>240</sup>

Printed ten years before Nicolas Trigault's influential *De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas*,<sup>241</sup> Pantoja's letter was first written on the 9th of March of 1602 and sent to Father Luis de Guzmán, Pantoja's previous mentor in Spain. Guzmán, who had published a book about the Jesuits missions in Japan, China, and India, had initiated Pantoja's interests in Asia.<sup>242</sup> Pantoja's letter was soon printed in Valladolid (1604), Seville (1605), and Palencia (1606), and subsequently translated into French, German, and Latin.<sup>243</sup> The letter is divided in two sections and entitled *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China* [*Account of the Entry of Some Fathers of the Company of Jesus in China*]. In the first part, Diego de Pantoja's describes the journey from Macau to Beijing along with the group of Jesuits commanded by Matteo Ricci and the group's establishment in the Chinese city. The second part is an account of the geography, laws, customs and government of China.

From this perspective, Pantoja's letter is published as a *relación* that contains the history of political and social structures and his own personal observations. His first years in China were

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<sup>239</sup> Diego de Pantoja had planned first go to Japan. However, due to the war and persecutions in Japan he was advised to stay in Macau.

<sup>240</sup> For Diego de Pantoja's travels in China see: Zhang Kai, *Diego de Pantoja y China (1597–1618)* (Beijing: Editorial de la Biblioteca de Beijing, 1997). Beatriz Moncó, "The China of the Jesuits: Travels and Experiences of Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes," *Culture & History Digital Journal*, 2012.

<sup>241</sup> Niclas Trigault, *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas suscepta ab Societate Jesu. [...] Auctore P. Nicolao Trigautio Belga ex eadem Societate. Edited by Nicolas Trigault.* (Augsburg: Apud Christoph. Mangium, 1615)

<sup>242</sup> Luis de Guzman, *Historia de las misiones que han hecho los religiosos de la Compañía de Jesus, [...] en los reynos de la China y Iapon.* (Alcalá: Por la biuda de Iuan Gracian, 1601)

<sup>243</sup> Titled *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China y Particulares Sucesos que tuvieron y de cosas muy notables que vieron en el mismo Reino.* The manuscript letter is conserved in the Biblioteca Nacional de España. For notations, I follow the edition of Seville (Sevilla: por Alonso Rodriguez Gamarra, 1605). The Carta consists of 133 sheets of paper and 256 pages. It is written in Spanish but it includes occasionally some Portuguese words or phrases.

a period of isolation in which he had to learn the Chinese language and culture along with Portuguese, which was the main language for the mixed European group of Jesuits. As some scholars have noted, Pantoja was isolated due to his unfamiliarity with Chinese culture as well as with the linguistic and cultural differences from his European partners.<sup>244</sup> In the opening of the letter, Pantoja cites this amalgamation of languages to justify the mistakes and barbarisms that his letter contains:

For charity, do not pay attention v. R [Your Reverence] for the order, and good disposition, neither in things nor in words, because I would not be able to order well things that are very diverse in genre, nor put into words, things that are very diverse in genre, because the mixture that I already have of various languages, I have lost a great deal (while in little time) of my native language, and so, for that reason, there will be many mistakes, barbarisms and mixtures of Portuguese words.<sup>245</sup>

Like the author of the Boxer codex, Pantoja also speaks about a diversity of genres [*géneros*] that are very difficult to describe and categorize. According to him, the things narrated in the *relación*, which are very diverse in genres [*por ser de diversos géneros*], and the mixture of languages and words [*con la mistura que ya tengo en diversas lenguas*], made impossible to him to put things in order. Through this lens, Pantoja presents his letter-*relación* as a personal narration that contains many mistakes, barbarism, and Portuguese words *misturadas* (mixed). However, more than order, structure, and narrative that aims to produce an absolute point of view, Pantoja's letter-*relación* narrates a personal and individual experience in a remote and

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<sup>244</sup> See Beatriz Moncó, "The China of the Jesuits: Travels and Experiences of Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes," *Culture & History Digital Journal*, 2012.

<sup>245</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, (2r) "No mire v. R. por caridad por el orden, y buen concierto, ni en las cosas, ni en las palabras, pues ni aquellos por ser de diversos géneros y muchos, me atrevo a encadenarlos bien, y en estas con la mistura que ya tengo en diversas lenguas, tengo perdido gran parte (aunque en poco tiempo) de la natural, y así necesariamente (3), yran muchos yerros, barbarismos y palabras Portuguesas misturadas."



exotic world. Although Juan Antonio de Mendoza's successful book about China had been published almost twenty years before, Pantoja contributed with his letter to the knowledge about the Middle Kingdom by narrating a very particular and exceptional individual experience.

Beyond the descriptive sections devoted to the geography, government, and customs of China, Pantoja's letter projects a particular construction associated with Europe and the West. In the letter, Pantoja refers repeatedly to "our Europe," opposing the world of the Chinese to a broader political and social space. As Richmond Ellis has noted, Pantoja's attempts to affirm or construct an idea of Europe works as a form of "mediation between two imagined essences (Chinese and European) of cultural selfhood."<sup>246</sup> As developed in the letter, Pantoja's construction of the image of Europeans is particularly related to the experience of being an accepted foreigner in China. During the first part of the letter, Pantoja refers repeatedly to the atmosphere of distrust of the Chinese towards foreigners, "because concerning foreigners the Chinese are very finicky (more than what your Reverence could imagine)."<sup>247</sup> Although Pantoja's group was well received and they were able to remain in Beijing, the Chinese generally prohibited foreigners from residing in China. According to Pantoja, the Emperor probably let them remain in the city because the Chinese were afraid of the information the Jesuits could diffuse about their Kingdom.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Richmond Ellis, "Representations of China and Europe in the Writings of Diego de Pantoja: Accomodating the East or Privileging the West?", in *Western Visions of the Far East in a Transpacific Age (1522 – 1671)*. (Edited by Christina Lee. New York: Ashgate, 2012), 101-117 (p. 112)

<sup>247</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, pp. 10, 11 "Mas como en materia de estrangeros son los Chinas sumamente escrupulosos (mas de lo que v. R podrá creer) avia muchos que hablaban de nuestra estada en Navquin, considerando que ya teníamos tres casas en la China, y cada uno dando el juyzio en esto que le parecía, que siempre es el peor."

<sup>248</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 41v "Nos quedásemos por temor no tornassemos a nuestra tierra, a dar nuevas de su Reyno, como ya hicieron con un Turco que aquí esta mas a de quarenta anos."

However, beyond the information about China, Pantoja's letter particularly emphasizes the Chinese admiration for European culture. This admiration was mainly articulated through the mediation of science. Thanks to the gifts given to the Emperor and to the curiosity of the Chinese towards the Jesuits' knowledge, the inaccessible China gradually became an open and welcoming land. Among the objects offered to the Emperor Wanli, Pantoja listed two clocks of wheels kept in beautiful boxes,<sup>249</sup> three religious oil paintings,<sup>250</sup> several mirrors, a Japanese box, a book of maps (probably Ortelius' *Theatre of the World*), a breviary, and a clavichord that Pantoja himself played in the palace as the most skillful musician of the group. However, it was mainly the interest of the Chinese in the scientific knowledge that allowed the Jesuits to enter and remain in Beijing.<sup>251</sup> According to Diego de Pantoja, the Emperor was very surprised by the gifts and particularly by the two clocks, which stimulated his curiosity for better knowing its mechanisms and operations. This material and scientific mediation allowed the Jesuits to enter the palace and begin a scientific exchange that would represent the way for progressively approaching the circle of Chinese high officials.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 13. "Puestas en orden las cosas, particularmente las del presente del rey, que eran dos relojes de ruedas, uno grande de hierro en una caja muy grande, hecha hermosamente con mil bobores (13v) de escritura llena de dragones dorados, que son las armas e insignia deste Rey, como del Emperador la águila. Otro pequeño de muy hermosa figura mas de un palmo de alto, todo de metal dorado de obra la mejor de las que en nuestra tierra se haze, que para este efeto nos avia embiado nuestro Padre General, metido también en su caja dorada, como la otra, y en ambos en lugar de las letras nuestras, esculpidad las de China, y una mano que por fuera salía las mostraba."

<sup>250</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 13. "Fuera desto, tres imágenes al olio, dos grandes de vaya y media de altura, y una pequeña la myor era la figura y retrato de nuestra Señora del Populo por San Lucas: la segunda era de nuestra Señora con el Niño Jesus, y san Iuan: la tercera era un Salvador, mas pequeño, todas ellas de obra prima."

<sup>251</sup> About the role of science in the Jesuit mission in China see Florence Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land, 2009*; Antonella Romano, *Impressions de Chine, L'Europe et l'englobement du monde (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)* (Paris: Fayard, 2016)

<sup>252</sup> For this particular episode in the letter of Pantoja, see Beatriz Moncó, "The China of the Jesuits: Travels and Experiences of Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes" (Culture & History Digital Journal, 2012)

From this perspective, Pantoja presents the scientific exchange as the medium that captured the attention of Chinese and uses it to promote an idealized perspective of Europe. The Fathers entered the Palace and explained the mechanisms of the clocks to the eunuchs of the Emperor Wanli. Pantoja notes in the letter that the Emperor appointed four eunuchs among his best mathematicians to learn the mechanism of the strange machines. This scientific exchange is described by Pantoja by noting that they were treated at that moment “with much respect and a warm welcome.”<sup>253</sup> During this time, the Jesuits could remain inside the palace as the Emperor sent the Eunuchs to learn more about the Jesuits, including their land and Kingdom and different manner of dress.<sup>254</sup> The group of Jesuits took advantage of this curiosity by showing the Eunuchs an image of the Emperor and the Pope, and plans of the Escorial; they also explained the burials of the Emperor using a letter that they had received from Europe a few years before. Thanks to science and to the objects brought by the Jesuits, the skepticism of the Chinese towards the Jesuits turned into a curiosity for learning more about the foreigners.

Pantoja observes that the Chinese were completely ignorant about the existence of other letters and that they were particularly surprised to know that the group of Jesuits also have their own books: “They thought that there were no other letters and books in the world but theirs, and when they saw our books, which they saw to be at least in their exterior appearance similar to or even better than theirs, they were astonished and disenchanted, showing more respect for us.”<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 34. "Señaló el rey cuatro Eunuchos de sus principales matematicos para que aprendiessen, y mando que nos estuviessen en este inter en su casa dentro del propio palacio. Recibierenos con mucho respeto y Buena acogida, acudieron muy grande multitude de Eunuchos a nos ver y preguntar cada uno lo que se le antojava."

<sup>254</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 34 "Muchas vezes embiaua Eunuchos a nos preguntar varias cosas de nuestra tierra, si avia rey, que modo de vestido traya, y que modo de sombrero, porque en la China hazen grande diferencia del vestido del rey."

<sup>255</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 43. "Tenian para si no avia en e mundo, ni otra letra, no otros libios mas que los suyos: y quando vian los nuestros, que

Instead of focusing on describing the Chinese customs, religion and science, as previous accounts had done, Pantoja dedicates the first part of the letter to describing how the superior science of the Jesuits represented a cultural element that gave to the foreign visitors an important esteem and recognition from their Chinese hosts. From this perspective, Pantoja's letter constitutes the first printed document in which the Chinese idealized vision of Europe appears at the center of the narrative. This perspective was not only based on the exchange of scientific knowledge, but also on the idea that the Jesuits and Europeans had a more complete and informed knowledge about the different nations and people in the world. As Pantoja observes, it was the worldly perspective brought by the Jesuits that particularly fascinated the Chinese scholars and officials:

And (they) asked some things that they wanted to know, because we were known for having the knowledge of all things and customs of the world, the material and spiritual of the Heaven were great, and so each one came to ask what they wanted. And even though our knowledge is little, compared to our land, if we compare it to the knowledge of Chinese (who about the world know near to nothing [...]) it was something, and we only needed to surprise them by showing a beautiful Map that we brought, declaring to them how huge was the world, that they considered to be so small. And so they did not imagine that there was something like their Kingdom on it. Then, they looked among each other saying: we are not as big as we imagined, because here this people are showing us that our Kingdom, compared to the world, is like a grain of rice compared to a big heap.<sup>256</sup>

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por lo menos vian en la apariencia exterior tanto mejores que los suyos quedavan espantados y desengañados, cada vez haziendonos mas honra: y particularmente se espantaban declarándoles algunas cosas de matemáticas, que ellos sabían dando a algunas personas relojes: que para esto de propósito hicimos: y con estas otras cosas, y lo principal con hablarles de las virtudes morales."

<sup>256</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 43. "y preguntar varias cosas que desseavan, porque la fama que teníamos de saber todas las cosas y costumbres del mundo, y de las materiales y espirituales del Cielo eran grandes, y assi cada uno venia a preguntar lo que desseava. Y aunque el saber nuestro es poco, comparado con el de nuestra tierra, comparado con el de China (que del mundo sabe casi nada, mas que su reyno, a quien con nombre, como llaman todos, el mundo de Dios, y de las cosas del Cielo nada, y de las demás poco) era alguna cosa, y bastava para hazer ir espantados a sus casas y siempre con desseo de tornar Vian un Mapa muy hermoso y grande que trayamos, y declaramos les como el mundo era grande, a quien ellos tenían por tan pequeño que en todo el no imaginaban avia otro tanto como su reyno: y miravanse unos a

Besides the scientific exchange, Pantoja describes how the Chinese were fascinated with the open perspective to the world that the Jesuits brought to China. This opening vision was not only reflected in their display of the map of the world, but also in their knowledge concerning the different customs and cultures of the world. The idea that the Jesuits brought a superior knowledge about the world to China also participated of the promotional ideas of the Society. As Pantoja observes in the letter, the Chinese were fascinated about their knowledge about the world and they learned from the Jesuits that their kingdom was just "a grain of rice compared to a big heap." Printed in Europe in Latin and vernacular languages, Pantoja's letter was an exceptional instrument that allowed the Jesuits to promote their schools as a highest education that provided a knowledge that had no equivalent in the entire world.

The Chinese idealization of the Jesuits is also narrated in relation to an indirect encounter with the Emperor Wanli. According to Pantoja, the Emperor only showed himself to a reduced group of people and foreigners were not allowed to see him in person. As Pantoja observes, the Jesuits gave information about "our Lord" and "our Europe" to the eunuchs, who later transmitted the information to the Emperor. After these indirect exchanges, the Emperor Wanli began to desire to see them and ordered a portrait of the Jesuits from two Chinese painters.<sup>257</sup> In the letter, Pantoja observes that these painters did "their best that they knew. But in truth, I did

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otros, diciendo, no somos tan grandes como imaginavamos, pues aquí nos muestran que nuestro reyno comparado con el mundo, es como un gran de arroz, comparado con un monton grande."

<sup>257</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 34. "Procuramos responder autorizando las cosas de nuestro Señor, quanto podíamos, y las de nuestra Europa, todo aquella que la verdad nos dava lugar, por parecernos assi conveniencia de nuestro Señor. Dixeronle tantas cosas al rey, que parece desseo grandemente vernos, mas por otra parte le parecieron era demasiada humanidad y muy fuera de su constumbre."

not recognize either myself or my companions in that portrait,<sup>258</sup> because they appeared “with a span beard in length and dressed in the garb of an honorable Chinese man of letters. Because the charity and treatment of these pagans forced us to wear this mask.”<sup>259</sup> However, far from idealizing Europe as an unknown, exotic, and superior world, when the emperor finally viewed the portraits, he supposedly exclaimed: “Oh, they are Turks (hui hui).”<sup>260</sup>

As scholars have noted, the place of Europeans in relation to the scientific and philosophical development of China during the late Ming period was marginal.<sup>261</sup> However, besides the debate around the impact that Jesuits had in the evolution of Chinese science, it is clear that Pantoja’s letter and similar Jesuit accounts presented to the European audience an exaggerated perspective of their role in the Imperial palace in Beijing. Similarly, Pantoja's idealized scientific superiority was inscribed in a problem that goes beyond the question of European science versus China and the Orient. It is first the emergence of global networks that aimed at presenting their collective scholarly agenda in different political spheres that defined their promotional agenda.

In the project of Jesuits, the adaptation of promotional strategies to particular contexts is seen in the multiple and changeable appearance of Jesuits. The distance between two forms of

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<sup>258</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 36. "Lo qual hizieron dos pintores cada uno de por si lo mejor que supieron que sabían. Pero y en la verdad ni a mi, ni a mis compañeros conocía en aquel retrato, mas como quiera que era le llevaron."

<sup>259</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*, p. 37. "No era en la figura y modo que v. R me conoció, sino con una barba de un palmo, y un vestido de letrado onrado China [...] porque con esta mascara nos obliga a andar la caridad y trato desta Gentilidad, hasta nuestro Señor quiera otra cosa."

<sup>260</sup> Zhang Kai, *Pang di wo [Pantoja] yu Zhongguo* (Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 1997). Quoted from, Hsia, R. Pochia, *A Jesuit in the Forbidden City: Matteo Ricci, 1552-1610* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 208.

<sup>261</sup> For this debate, see Benjamin R. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900* (Harvard University Press, 2005)

scientific culture is reduced through the adoption of a Chinese appearance. In order to be accepted among the Chinese elites, the Jesuits adopted the appearance of a Chinese learned *letrado* as a necessary mask that allowed them to establish a productive dialogue. As Richmond Ellis has observed, the “narrative voice of Pantoja’s letter seems anxious not merely to describe China, but to validate European civilization over the Chinese.”<sup>262</sup> This positive validation of the European world was not just the product of Pantoja’s personal ideas and opinions, but it rather represented one of the strategies developed by the Jesuits in Europe for promoting their collective agenda in Asia. Otherwise, Diego de Pantoja’s continuous remarks about the Chinese fascination for the European science and culture would never have reached the printing press and attained the rapid and extensive diffusion that the letter had in Europe.

In addition to the depiction of the Chinese discovering the European science, Pantoja associates the fascination for Europeans with his own physical appearance. When Pantoja describes the common dark eyes of the Chinese, he observes that they were very different from his own eyes, and that this aroused a fascination among them: “a thousand of mysteries, and most often they say that these eyes of mine know the location of gems and precious objects, and a thousand of other mysteries.”<sup>263</sup> Through this description, the letter projects the idea of a mysterious European world that has to be decrypted and revealed through Pantoja’s particular eyes. In this way, Pantoja develops an inverted ethnographical perspective in which the observer, who is supposed to describe a different and remote world for the European audience, becomes the exotic element of the narrative. Pantoja’s narrative develops a different perspective than the

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<sup>262</sup> Robert Richmond Ellis, “Representations of China and Europe in the Writings of Diego de Pantoja: Accomodating the East or Prvileging the West?”, p. 111.

<sup>263</sup> Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China*. Translation drawn from Robert Richmond Ellis, “Representations of China and Europe in the Writings of Diego de Pantoja: Accomodating the East or Prvileging the West?”, p. 109.

previous account written by the Augustinian Martín de Rada in 1575. Even though Rada criticized Chinese scientific development, he did not refer to their perception of Europeans. Furthermore, Pantoja's inverted idealism of Europe deconstructs an established narrative that refers to the Great China as the most advanced Kingdom in the world. As mentioned in the first chapter, the superior image of China was not a medieval construction, but one of the ideas extended by Iberian historians and scholars during the 16th century. This is the case of João de Barros, who estimated in the third volume of his *Asian Décadas* (1563) that the Chinese were the most advanced civilization in the world:

And in the same way as the Greeks thought that in respect of themselves all other nations were barbarian, similarly the Chinese say that they have two eyes of understanding concerning all things, that we Europeans, after they have communicated with us, have one eye, and that all other nations are blind. And truly whoever sees the manner of their religion, their sacred temples, their men of religion living in convents, their way of praying day and night, their fasts, their sacrifices, their universities, where all the sciences, natural and moral, are learnt, their manner of giving degrees for each of these disciplines, and the precautions that they take to avoid bribery, and the fact that they have printed letters which are much older than ours, and above all the government of their commonwealth, and the mechanical arts they use for works of metal, clay, wood, cloth and silk: he will see that these gentiles have all those things for which Greeks and Latin are praised.<sup>264</sup>

João de Barros's idealization of the Great China is also seen in the writings of the physician and naturalist Cristóbal de Acosta, for whom "China is a great Kingdom in the large size of the populations and the excellence of its public order. It exceeds all other Kingdoms in the world, in

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<sup>264</sup> João de Barros, *Terceira Década da Asia* (Lisbon: Joam de Barreira, 1563) Translated in Joanb Pau Rubiés. *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance, South India Through European Eyes, 1250-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 117.



its possession, riches, and government".<sup>265</sup> In contrast, Pantoja's superior image of Europe was based on the necessity of connecting with a European audience by promoting the Jesuits agenda in Europe. Unlike João de Barros and Cristóbal de Acosta, the Jesuits were not interested in presenting remote worlds as idealized and superior, mainly because the necessity of educating an emergent scholarly network of Jesuits who were expected to travel all around the world implied a promotional agenda in which the Jesuit education had to be presented as the best in the world. Pantoja's letter, which described a great success of the Society in the Middle Kingdom, was an excellent instrument to promote this ideal mission of Jesuits. The use of scientific instruments and knowledge soon became one of the main characteristics of the Jesuit global agenda. Besides the promotional element, the letter also constituted a new form of narrating Europe that integrated two essential elements of an incipient modernity, the writing of the self and the role of science in the mediation and measure of societies and kingdoms.

In Pantoja's letter, the narrative is associated with the construction of a European advanced and positive image. One of the main elements of the letter is not the information concerning China, but the successful experience of Jesuits in the Imperial palace in Beijing. Unlike the writings of Juan González de Mendoza and José de Acosta, which focus more on contrasting and redefining Asia and the New World, Pantoja's work put in dialogue the history of China and Europe. From this perspective, the experience of exchange in the Imperial palace of the forbidden city made possible to rethink Europe from a new and unusual perspective.

## **II. The Promotional Narratives of the Jesuit's Chinese Mission**

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<sup>265</sup> Cristóbal de Acosta, *Tractado de las drogas y medicinas de las Indias Orientales*, (León: Universidad de León, 1995), 250. Translation drawn from Christina H. Lee, Introduction, "Europe's Encounter of Asia in Early Modernity," in *Western Visions of the Far East in a Transpacific Age, 1522-1657*.

Printed 11 years after the first edition of Diego de Pantoja's letter (1604), Nicolas Trigault's *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas suscepta ab Societate Jesu* (Augsburg, 1615) is one of the most successful books in the early modern period concerning China published.<sup>266</sup> A large volume of nearly 700 quarto pages in its original 1615 edition, *De Christiana expeditione* reappeared in Latin (1616, 1617, 1623), French (1616, 1617, 1618), German (1617), Spanish (1621), and Italian (1622) within the space of a decade. The author of the book is Nicolas Trigault (1577–1628), who reworked Matteo Ricci's journal, letters and manuscripts along with other Jesuit sources. After a brief period in China, Trigault, who was appointed by Niccolo Longobard as the China Mission's procurator for Europe in 1612, sailed from Macau to Rome in 1613 with Matteo Ricci's journals and letters and with the purpose of reporting the mission's progress to Pope Paul V. Among other goals, Trigault wanted to promote the independence of the Chinese Jesuit mission from the mission in Japan and recruiting missionaries in Europe.

Trigault's promotional trip resulted in a painting made by Peter Paul Rubens, who depicted the Flemish Jesuit in Chinese costume during his stay in Antwerp on 17 January 1617. Rubens made the drawing when Trigault visited the city to raise funds and recruit missionaries. The Jesuit is depicted with a costume that combines a Korean cap and the robe of a Chinese scholar. The painting includes a note in Latin that refers to the color of the dark costume, which "is not peculiar to Chinese scholars but to the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, except for the blue facings which are common to all."<sup>267</sup> As Logan and Brockey observed, Rubens met Nicolas

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<sup>266</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *De Christiana expeditione apud sinas suscepta ab Societate Jesu. Ex P. Matthaei Riccii eiusdem Societatis commentariis Libri V: Ad S.D.N. Paulum V. In Quibus Sinensis Regni mores, leges, atque instituta, & novae illius Ecclesiae difficillima primordia accurate & summa fide describuntur* (Edited by Nicolas Trigault. Augsburg: Apud Christoph Mangium, 1615)

<sup>267</sup> Anne-Marie; Brockey, Liam M (2003). "Nicolas Trigault SJ: A Portrait by Peter Paul Rubens," (The Journal of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, vol. 38, 2003), pp. 157-160

Trigault when he was already working on full-length portraits of Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier commissioned by the Jesuit College in Brussels.<sup>268</sup> Rubens painted *The miracles of St. Francis Xavier* only few years before the canonization of the friar on 12 March 1622. As it is the case for Trigault's *De Christiana Expeditione apud Sinas*, Rubens' painting of Nicolas Trigault was part of the promotional trip that brought the Jesuit back to Europe.

In Rubens' painting, the Korean cap and the robe of a Chinese scholar signals the Jesuits' desire to assimilate into Chinese culture. However, the note in Latin indicating the Jesuit dark elements of the costume expresses also the desire of keeping a certain distance from the Chinese culture. Moreover, Ruben's illustration also show how the Jesuits promoted their agenda in Europe. The Chinese appearance of Trigault is not simply related to the desire of integrating a Chinese intellectual milieu, but also a way of presenting the Society of Jesus in Europe as an elite that can be adapted to the most qualified and complex political contexts. Also included in printing books of the Society during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Jesuits explicitly presented in Europe the notorious figures of the mission in China as a Chinese intellectual.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>268</sup> For this painting see Logan, Anne-Marie; Brockey, Liam M (2003). "Nicolas Trigault SJ: A Portrait by Peter Paul Rubens" (PDF). Metropolitan Museum of Art. Retrieved 24 November 2016. Also see the website of the MET: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/337844>

<sup>269</sup> Among other works, Athanasius' Kircher *China Illustrata* (1667) also incorporated images of Jesuits dressed as Chinese lettras. See chapter 4, III. Anthanasius Kircher, China, and the Museum.



Figure 24. Peter Paul Rubens, Portrait of Nicolas Trigault in Chinese Costume, 1617.

Medium: Black, red, and white chalk, blue pastel, and pen and brown and black ink on light brown laid paper. Dimensions 44.6 x 24.8 cm. Source, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

As is the case of Ruben's painting, *De Christiana expeditione* is also an artifact conceived for promoting the Jesuit mission in China. Nicolas Trigault's *De Christiana expeditione* combines Matteo Ricci's personal journals with letters written by Ricci and other Jesuits. Trigault conceived the book as an artifact that projects a collective experience and that had a series of great and exemplar figures, such as Francis Xavier, Matteo Ricci, and Bento de Goes. Beyond its goal of informing Europeans about the particular customs, laws, and history of China, *De Christiana expeditione* is a rhetoric artifact that integrates a sophisticated archival collective activity into the promotional agenda of the Society. At the beginning of the book, Trigault reveals his reasons for publishing the work by noting that he wanted to present to the European audience a work that was entirely produced by friars who had lived or were living in China:

China and Europe differ as much in manners and customs as they do in geographical position, and because this entire narration is intended for Europeans, I have thought it necessary before entering upon my chief tasks of recording our experience in China, to give a brief account of the position of this Kingdom, of its customs, its laws, and of other like topics. My purpose in so doing is to save the reader the distasteful task of repeatedly breaking the thread of the diary story by frequently encountering explanatory passages that would otherwise have to be inserted. Concerning the matters treated, however, I shall adhere to the practice of touching only upon such things as are at variance with our own customs and manners, in so far as this will reveal something historically new. Although many books are circulating in Europe concerning these same topics, I am of the opinion that it will not bore anyone to hear these same things from our companions. We have been living in China for well-nigh thirty years and have traveled through its most important provinces. Moreover we have lived in friendly intercourse with the nobles, the supreme magistrates, and the most distinguished men of letters in the Kingdom. We speak the native language of the country, have set ourselves to the study of their customs and laws and finally, what is of the highest importance, we have devoted ourselves day and night to the perusal of their literature. These advantages were, of course, entirely

lacking to writers who never at any time penetrated into this alien world. Consequently, they were writing about China, not as eyewitnesses but from hearsay and depending upon the trustworthiness of others.<sup>270</sup>

As Trigault observes in this passage, *De Christiana expeditione* focuses on those aspects that represented something historically new from the perspective of the European audience. The first words of the book emphasizes that the narration is "intended for Europeans" and the idea that it is about the experience of Jesuits in China as a group: "recording our experience in China." As in Pantoja's letter, one of the elements of the narrative is the experience and the knowledge acquired by exchanging information with Chinese learned doctors. From this perspective, the Jesuits derived legitimacy from the contrast between the new knowledge they provided and the common ideas about China that were already circulating in Europe through the works of medieval writers as well as previous Iberian historians and scholars, such as João de Barros, Gaspar da Cruz, and Juan González de Mendoza. After an introduction describing the purpose and methods of the work, Trigault explains the history of the name of China in Europe and the different ways of pronouncing the word China in Spain, Italy, and Portugal: "This most distant empire of the Far East has been known to Europeans under various names. The most ancient of these appellations is Sina, by which it was known in the time of Ptolemy. In latter days it was called Cathay by Marco Polo, the venetian traveler who first made Europeans fairly well acquainted with the empire."<sup>271</sup>

As we will see later, the redefinition of the diversity of names related to China is one of Trigault's most important contributions, and this is why he emphasizes in the first chapter the

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<sup>270</sup> For the English translation, I follow Louis J. Gallagher edition, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*. Translated from the Latin by Louis J. Gallagher, (New York: Random House, 1953), preface to the reader.

<sup>271</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 5.

problem of assigning a name to the Middle Kingdom. As seen in chapter 1, the reference to ancient and medieval authors such as Pliny the Elder, Ptolemy and Marco Polo is a common technique to introduce a work about China or Asia to the European reader. These classical authors were however referring to Asia with outdated names that often created a confusion among modern scholars. This is seen in Martín de Rada's account, which starts observing that Marco Polo used the name of Cathay, and not China: "“The country we typically call China was called the kingdom of Cathay by the Venetian Marco Polo, perhaps because this was the name in the Tatar language at that time, for when he went there, in approximately 1312, the Tatars were in power.”<sup>272</sup> Trigault never mentioned Rada's literary account and he argues in the book that the Jesuits were the first to discover that China and Cathay were the same kingdom.

The redefinition of terms and notions allowed the Jesuits to place their own collective experience at the core of the narrative. Divided into five books, *De Christiana Expeditione* narrates the Jesuits mission in China from the first settlement at Macau in 1565 until Matteo Ricci's burial in Beijing in 1610. The history begins with a first book devoted to the history of China and the Chinese institutions as well as to the range of European ideas about China since antiquity. After the first book, the history moves towards the Jesuits mission and actors, starting when the “Blessed Francis Xavier Undertakes to Enter China, but fails.” The main subject of the work is not China, but the history and adventures of Jesuits. In several passages, the narrative projects the idea of having a direct experience in China from inside. Trigault describes this experiential element in the preface to the reader as one of the main elements of the book:

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<sup>272</sup> George Bryan Souza and Jeffery S. Turley, *The Boxer Codex*, (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), p.559. Spanish: “La tierra que comunmente llamamos China la llamo Marco Polo beneciano el rreyno de Catay quisa que en lenga tartaresca se devia llamar ansi entonce.s”

Up to the present, there are two kinds of authors who have written about China; those who have imagined much, and those who have heard much and have published the same without due consideration. From this latter class I can hardly except certain of our own fathers, who placed their credence in Chinese merchants, without realizing that it is a common custom with them to exaggerate about everything and to report as true what never really happened. When our Fathers were first permitted to penetrate into the interior of China, it was remarked that they were taking much on faith, and for the first few years after they were allowed to enter the Kingdom, it is quite probable that much went out in letter to Europe, that was not wholly reliable. No one, as is evident, could be expected to acquire a thorough understanding of European life without long years of contact<sup>273</sup>

The direct and interior experience in China is one of the main argumentative elements that legitimatizes Trigault's narrative. However, as he observes, the crucial question is first the reliability and veracity of sources, which were often including exaggerations and mistakes. Trigault proposes in *De Christiana Expedition* a collective narrative that clarifies terms and demystify or correct previous ideas. *De Christiana Expedition* is then the first Jesuit book that projected a new narrative mode that integrated the collective experience of the mission into a sophisticated archival and communication methodology. Unlike Juan González de Mendoza, who explicitly erased the traces of Marco Polo and presented the account of Martín de Rada, Martín Ignacio, and other Spanish accounts as a narrative of discovery, Trigault develops a complex enquiry that clarifies and correct ancient and contemporary errors. It is not just by appealing to the experience of travelers that Trigault and the Jesuits acquired the throne of the Orient in 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe, but by developing a sophisticated approach concerning the reliability of sources and materials.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, XIV.

<sup>274</sup> For this question, see chapter 4, section 3.



However, both Juan González de Mendoza and Nicolas Trigault's works have in common the continuity of their primary sources. In Mendoza's *Historia del Gran Reyno de la China*, it is the Spanish writings of Martín de Rada, Miguel de Loarca, fray Martín Ignacio, and other Spanish travelers that are opposed to the writings of ancient, medieval, and Portuguese authors. In Trigault's *De Christiana Expeditione*, it is the letters and manuscripts of Matteo Ricci, Bento de Goês and the Jesuits that articulate a collective voice that aimed at becoming a modern actualization of the European knowledge concerning the Middle Kingdom. From this perspective, the personal journals and individual letters represent for the Jesuits what the Spanish *relaciones* were for Juan González de Mendoza, a narrative archive of primary sources that supported a political and historical agenda. This is primary why unlike Mendoza's *Historia del Gran Reyno de la China*, Trigault's *De Christiana Expeditione* focuses more on the individual and collective experience of Jesuits, and not on the description of Chinese laws and culture. In the works of the Jesuits, the subject and topic of the narrative is not China, but the Jesuits.

In the first chapter of *De Christiana Expeditione's*, Trigault introduces however the reader to the history of Jesuit missions in China and he presents and describes Matteo Ricci's archive, which is the main source of the book: "such is the opening paragraph of Ricci Diary, after which Father Trigault remarks, in the first person, that he is endeavoring to write an historical account of facts gathered from the posthumous papers of Father Mathew Ricci, facts which were set down in his Diary of the benefit of posterity."<sup>275</sup> Trigault signals that it is by keeping and publishing Ricci's Diaries that he "hopes to rescue from oblivion the story of the

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<sup>275</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 3.

entrance of our Society into the vast dominion of China, whose borders have been closed for so many ages."<sup>276</sup>

As Trigault argues, the personal diaries of Mathew Ricci, "our annals," and the "private letters of our companions [...] have the solidity of truth, based on authority, which of right they should possess, unless perchance there be a contradiction between them."<sup>277</sup> As was the case with the *relaciones* analyzed in the first chapter, the personal letters and diaries of Jesuits represent also an archive of facts. This collective archive of private voices is integrated into a global mission that, as mentioned previously, aimed at making the world a domestic Jesuit sphere. From this perspective, although based on an ideal of factuality, the Jesuit archive is of a very different nature than the Spanish *relaciones* and the subsequent histories produced from them. Unlike the Spanish *relaciones*, the authority and factuality of Jesuit letters and diaries is not opposed to other political forms of narrating China and the Orient, as in Juan González de Mendoza's *Historia del Gran Reyno de la China*.<sup>278</sup> On the contrary, the Jesuits letters and personal diaries represent a coherent historical narrative that can be adapted to different political and territorial context. By doing so, the Society of Jesus aimed at placing his historical and religious agenda beyond the unstable dynamics of political powers.

Amon the symbolic achievements of Jesuits in China, Trigault presents Matteo Ricci's burial and the foundation of a church in Beijing. As Trigault observes at the end of the book, "those who had died before in this field of labor were buried in the community cemetery of the College of Macao, within the confines of the kingdom, but on a coastal island. And so, those

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<sup>276</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 3-4.

<sup>277</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 4.

<sup>278</sup> As mentioned in chapter 1, Mendoza omits to mention ancient, medieval, and Portuguese sources and defended the reliability and authority of Spanish *relaciones* dealing with China.

who still labor in this vineyard, including your narrator, will not only lay down their lives here, but will leave their bodies as well, as a testimony to this people and to the rest of the world."<sup>279</sup> Presenting himself as the narrator, in this ending, Trigault projects to the European audience the idea that China was not a hostile and closed world, but a land open to Christians. From this perspective, Trigault's embodies the narrative voice of the work, a voice that speaks through the experience of those who still "labor in this vineyard." For the Society of Jesus, this symbolic achievement is one of the main elements that allowed them to present China as a domestic world.

Contrary to the voices of travelers who published experiential individual narratives, *De Christiana expeditione* develops a collective narrative experience that mixed ways of chronicling and living. Produced by combining letters and journals, the archive that Trigault put together displays a collective narrative experience that aimed at bringing closer and familiar a remote and strange world. In *De Christiana expeditione*, China begins to be presented by Jesuits as our land, a territory in which one can be live and die. This is why Matteo Ricci's burial is presented as one of the symbolic events that made possible to present China as a domestic territory. As mentioned in the introduction, one of the main goals of Jesuit letters was to integrate the journey itself as their main residence and to make the world a domestic space. In the words of the Spanish Jesuit Jerónimo Nadal, "the whole world becomes our house."<sup>280</sup>

In *De Christiana Expedition*, Trigault included a Latin translation of the letter written by Diego de Pantoja to the Emperor Wanli in which the Jesuit asks for a place of burial in Beijing for Matteo Ricci: "I, Diego Pantoja, subject of a kingdom of the Great Occident, present a

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<sup>279</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 594.

<sup>280</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, chapter 2.

humble request in favor of another subject of a foreign realm, lately deceased."<sup>281</sup> After presenting the letter, Trigault explains the particular and intricate Chinese administrative system to the European reader. In this section, Trigault describes a context of competition around the Imperial court and he observes that other people come to honor the king: "these people come in search of ealth and fortune, under lying pretext that they were sent in by the kings of their own native countries." Such are the Saracens merchants, who appear from time to time from the west."<sup>282</sup> As in other sections of the book, Trigault argues that the access to the imperial court is a very competitive thing to make the European reader familiar with the complexity of their mission and their strategical choices.

As in Pantoja's letter analyzed previously, *De Christiana expeditione* projects the idea that Europe is the most advanced region in the world. Trigault even suggests that the Chinese saw themselves as barbarians in relation to Europeans. In the chapters devoted to the positive mediation of mathematics for conversion, Trigault introduces a question relative to the attitude of the Chinese toward Europe by describing an episode narrated by Ricci in his journals.<sup>283</sup> This episode tells the experience of a Father who began to learn Chinese by conversing with a learned Chinese doctor. Trigault's observes that this Father usually gave satisfactory answers to the inquiries of the Chinese doctor, to which the Chinese doctor said: "I really should feel ashamed in your presence, because it seems to me that you put all the Chinese, and particularly myself, in the same class, into which we Chinese formerly put the unbelieving Tartars and Barbarians."<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 559.

<sup>282</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 570

<sup>283</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, Book 4, chapter 5, Mathematics and Converts

<sup>284</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 327.

As we can observe in this passage, the Chinese voice is introduced in the first person, developing the idea that the Chinese themselves saw most learned people in China as barbarians in comparison to Europeans, and that where the Chinese “left off intellectually, you (The Jesuits Father and Europeans) are merely beginning.”<sup>285</sup>

As in Pantoja’s letter, these comparisons were mainly made in relation to science and the arts, and not to the activity of conversion. From this perspective, even though Trigault’s work avoids explicitly explaining their particular method of conversion, this example shows how the mediation of science, and particularly mathematics, is at the center of the Jesuit’s strategies of conversion. Furthermore, as Florence Hsia has pointed out, *De Christiana Expeditione* represents a milestone into the Jesuit relation with mathematics: “works written in its shadow [of *De Christiana Expeditione*] continued the hagiographical saga of Jesuit masters of mixed mathematics as instruments of providential action.” As Hsia has pointed out, science is not inscribed into a narrative of secularization, but they represent rather an instrument of conversion.<sup>286</sup>

As scholars have noted, the Jesuits believed that it was through science that they could convince the Chinese of the superiority and greatness of the Christian faith.<sup>287</sup> However, in Diego de Pantoja’s letter and in *De Christiana Expeditione*, science is not directly associated with the superiority of Christianity, but with the European world. Trigault’s work uses a Chinese mediation to present to the European audience the successful mission in Asia, emphasizing that the Jesuits science was superior to the knowledge of the Chinese. By doing so, Trigault was

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<sup>285</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 327.

<sup>286</sup> See Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, Chapter 3, Telling Missionary Lives.

<sup>287</sup> See Antonella Romano, *Impressions de Chine, L’Europe et l’englobement du monde (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)*, (Paris: Fayard, 2016)

simultaneously promoting the mission in China as well as the superior scholarly agenda of Jesuits in the world. In Trigault's writings, this experience is contrasted with other interactions between the Chinese and other nations. Several chapters and sections in the work describe the history of foreign people in China before the arrival of the Jesuit mission. These sections describe how the Saracens entered the Kingdom from the West, from Persia, particularly when "the Tartars held sway over the Chinese, when entrance to the Kingdom from that approach was unrestricted."<sup>288</sup> According to Trigault, the Sarracens were treated "as natives and not held as suspects, like other strangers. In fact, they are admitted to literary studies and to public degrees without discrimination and even to the magistracy." Furthermore, the Saracens who came to China and were established there imported their scientific knowledge, which Trigault observes as something that still subsists in the Chinese institutions:

Some knowledge of the science of mathematics was given to the Chinese by the Saracens who penetrated into their country from the West, but very little of this knowledge was based upon definite mathematical proofs. [...] The present Emperor supports two separate schools of mathematics at a very great expense, and those attending these royal academies are retained, either in the palace as eunuchs, or outside of it, as royal magistrates, two of whom are in the royal tribunal in Peking. One of these schools follows the method of the Chinese who claim to possess the knowledge of determining the calendar and eclipses. The other follows the system of the Saracens, reducing the same facts to the tables which have been introduced from abroad.<sup>289</sup>

As it is noted in the passage, the Saracens were particularly well adapted to the Chinese culture, they learned their language and were treated as natives, participating in intellectual and administrative activities, renouncing their own law and customs when they attained a Chinese

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<sup>288</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 106.

<sup>289</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, chapter 5, p. 31.

literary degree. Moreover, in the passage mentioned above, Trigault provides an important information concerning the different schools of mathematics that are supported by the Emperor. This information implicitly implies that the Jesuits realized that the competition for obtaining the favor of the Chinese Emperor was not simply opposing Chinese and European science, but a more complex and diverse set of traditions that operated within the Chinese intellectual milieu. In opposition to these interactions between the Chinese and other cultures, the science of Jesuits is in the book presented as something completely new that fascinated the Chinese. This sort of internal and external comparisons allowed also the Jesuits to emphasize their privileged place among the crew of people who were accepted in China.

Furthermore, as I noted before, Trigault's work does not discuss the intellectual debate dealing with accommodation and with the possible parallelisms between Christianity and Confucianism, mainly because the authors of the book considered that the main goal was not to describe or defend their polemic methods of conversion from other positions. Instead, their main aim was to convince the European audience of the success of another dimension of their mission: protecting their interest from the competition with other orders and groups that were also developing missions and exchanges in China. In other words, whereas the polemical debates concerning conversion were mainly seen as part of the internal and non-public discussions among Jesuits, elements such as the idea that the Chinese idealized Europe and the Europeans, and the superior science of the Jesuits over other groups were included among the main promotional narratives that had to be published and diffused in Europe.

From this perspective, *De Christiana expeditione* concentrates on presenting the history of the Jesuit mission by emphasizing those promotional elements that were positive for recruiting new missionaries and establishing profitable relations with Portuguese and other European

officials and merchants. Through this lens, the Jesuit experience in China is partially described in Trigault's work as in other published letters; these texts avoided the most polemical aspect of the mission and promoted the Jesuit agenda by producing sophisticated narratives that showed the superior science of Jesuits. As Paula Hoyos has observed after contrasting an edition of Jesuits letters with the original manuscript letters included in the same collection, the Jesuits explicitly erased passages that referenced the adoption of foreign customs and appearances as well as those descriptions that established similarities between Christianity and other religions and practices.<sup>290</sup> Similarly, as Federico Palomo has observed, manuscript letters were propaganda artifacts that functioned at different levels. On the one hand, the circulation of manuscripts contributed to the learning process of missionaries. On the other hand, the collection of letters printed and diffused through Europe invited the audience to be part of the Society of Jesus.<sup>291</sup>

Based on the necessity of connecting with the European reader and recruiting people, Trigault's rhetoric artifact projected a collective image of Europe by integrating the mediation of Chinese learned scholars, who were depicted as fascinated by the scientific knowledge of Jesuits. This approach placed science and knowledge as the instrument that makes conversion possible in Asia. However, beyond the scientific discourse and idealization of Europe, the printed works of the Jesuits also tended to present models representing an ideal for its future missionaries. From this perspective, in its synthesis of journals and letters, *De Christiana expeditione* presented the Jesuits of the Chinese mission as heroes or models for the future missionaries of the Society. The Jesuits were presented as symbols in different sections of the printed work, in the frontispiece,

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<sup>290</sup> Paula Hoyos Hattori, "Políticas editoriales en las cartas jesuitas de Japón (Évora, 1598) : análisis de tres epístolas," (Anuario de Historia Virtual, 2015)

<sup>291</sup> Palomo, Federico., "Corregir letras para unir espíritus. Los jesuitas y las cartas edificantes en el Portugal del siglo XVI" (Madrid: Cuadernos de Historia. Anejos IV, 2005), pp. 57-81.



and in the chapters narrating their exemplarity in China. One of the main rhetorical strategies of the book aimed toward recruiting missionaries and promoting the mission, this exemplarity is not only produced by presenting the great achievements of individual characters, but also by showing how the Jesuits were perceived by the Chinese as exotic and great figures.

As in Pantoja's letter, the inverted exoticism of presenting the Jesuits as admirable figures through the eyes of the Chinese represents one of the main artifices of the work. However, Trigault developed this inverted exoticism by integrating several voices and characters that project the idea of collective exemplarity. As Antonella Romano has observed, *De Christiana Expeditione* projects a plural authorial regime in which there are several hands operating. In the frontispiece, we see the figure of Francis Xavier, the founder of the Jesuit Mission in Asia, and Matteo Ricci. Under these two figures, there is the name of Nicolas Trigault, who appears as the author of the work. Besides the dual authorship of Nicolas Trigault and Matteo Ricci, Romano observed that Niccolo Longobard also participated in writing the book.<sup>292</sup> As mentioned before, Trigault includes Diego de Pantoja letter in which the Spanish Jesuit asks for a place of burial in Beijing for Matteo Ricci.

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<sup>292</sup> Antonella Romano, *Impressions de Chine, L'Europe et l'englobement du monde*, p. 161.



Figure 25. Frontispiece. *De Christiana expeditione apud sinas*, Aubsburg, 1615.

Additionally, two chapters describe the travel of Bento de Goës (1562-1607), which has been incorrectly quoted as the first account that underlines that Cathay was not a different Kingdom from China, but just a different name used in India to refer to China. The discovery

was made by the Jesuit Bento Goës, who was the first European to travel by land from India (Agra) over the mountain range of the Hindu Kush to China. *Cathay and China, The Extraordinary Odyssey of a Jesuit Lay Brother*, the chapter describing Goës' travel, begins by referring to the letters of fathers who were living at the Royal Court of Mogor; it indicates the importance of the Jesuits reading and studying the letters of Fathers that were established in many different regions of the world. As mentioned in the introduction, letters were much more than a media that informs about the experience of an individual, they were the narrative artifact that linked each member to the entire body of the Society. Besides this social function, letters constituted a collective archive that allowed the Jesuits to identify historical and geographical mistakes that circulated in many different cartographical works, literary accounts, and also in the same letters of the Jesuits.

The study of letters allowed the Jesuits to identify mistakes, as was the case with the name Cathay, which often appeared as a different Kingdom located near China. In the letters of Jesuits living at the Royal Court of Mogor commented in Trigault's *De Christiana expeditione in China*, the Jesuits refer to the famous Empire that the Saracens called Cathay, which was known in Europe mainly from the writings of Marco Polo. Included in maps and accounts until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Cathay continued to be considered and represented as a Kingdom separate from China. However, the Jesuits began to doubt the existence of this Kingdom after contrasting letters written in both sides of India and China. As Trigault observes, there were different versions concerning the Kingdom of Cathay: "In letters sent by Father Matthew Ricci from the Capital of China, the Fathers had read that Cathay was only another name for the Kingdom of China. This had been confirmed by various proofs already offered, but the letters from the fathers at the

Court of Mogor held a contrary opinion.”<sup>293</sup> As Trigault observes, this confusion produced a challenge for interpreting the information provided by letters, because many Fathers said they were in Cathay and others in China. Unlike Martín de Rada, who identifies the confusion at the beginning of the account without giving to the mistake a great relevance, Trigault integrates the discovery into a heroic narrative of travel.



Figure 26. Abraham Ortelius’s *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, 1570. Map of Tartaria in which China and Cathay appear to be different Kingdoms. Original source: BPL. Image: archive.org.

<sup>293</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, 500.

At the beginning of this travel story, Bento de Goës adopted the dress of a Christian Armenian merchant, called himself Abdula, and began an adventurous and dangerous journey along with two Greeks and some Saracens who had been converted to Christianity. In Laor, the second capital city of the Mogor Kingdom, Bento left the Saracens and hired an Armenian called Isaac. There, “brother Bento bade adieu to his Superior and started on his famous Odyssey, as shown in his patent letter, on the sixth of January, 1603.<sup>294</sup> Traveling in a caravan with five hundred persons, mules, camels, and wagons over the mountain range of the Hindu Kush, Bento de Goës met some people who were returning in another caravan from the capital of the so-called Cathay Kingdom. These Saracens travelers told Bento de Goës that they had been in the capital of Cathay and had seen how the Jesuits “Fathers had made presents to the Emperor of clocks, of a clavichord, of pictures and of other things from Europe, and they also reported that the Fathers were treated with great respect by the leading officials at the capital.”<sup>295</sup> At this point, the Jesuit instantly understood that Cathay and China were the same Kingdom and that the capital, which the Saracens called Cambalu, was the city of Beijing.

In the last part of the travel, Trigault narrates how Bento de Goës exchanged letters with the Father in Beijing from Soceu, the city where the Portuguese Jesuits died of a mortal illness in 1607. After a previous letter was unsuccessfully sent to Beijing, the father received from Soceu a letter from Goes, which was “a source of great joy,” because the fathers were waiting for news concerning Bento de Goës’ travel. In the end, the Jesuits in Beijing decided to send the novitiate Giovanni Fernandes to Soceu in order to “bring Bento and his companion (Isaac) back to Peking.” When Fernandes arrived in Soceu, he saluted Bento in Portuguese and offered him some of the

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<sup>294</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 501.

<sup>295</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 512.



letters sent from the Fathers in Beijing. Once Bento de Goës understood that the unknown foreigner offering him letters came from Beijing, “he took the letters that were offered to him, lifted them up toward heaven and, with tears in his eyes and his soul overflowing with joy, he broke forth into the hymn, *Nunc dimittis*. He felt that his orders were fulfilled and his pilgrimage at the end. After reading the letters he kept them near his hearth all that night.”<sup>296</sup>

Beyond narrating the completion of an unfinished journey and the accomplishment of the mission, the letters represent at the end of Bento de Goës’ story an artifice embodying the feelings and emotions of the Jesuits that are always separated from their own native kingdoms and from their friends. The letters do more than just inform and reproduce a collective archive: they also symbolize the different affective links that the Fathers constructed during their lives. At the end of Goës’ story, Trigault observes that Goës’s collection of materials, letters and documents given to him by the kings of Cascar, Quotan and Cialis during his travels were kept as memorials in the house of the Society in Beijing. In that archive, Trigault observes that there was a cross beautifully painted on gold paper that Bento carried with him during the travel, and that “there are more letters from Alexius Menesius, Archbishop of Goa, and from the same father Xavier to the fathers of Beijing, on which they say that they are quite certain that Cathay is not far distant from Beijing and that perhaps the two Kingdoms are contiguous.”<sup>297</sup> As Trigault notes, Bento's letters clarified a historical confusion that consisted of associating the name of Cathay, which was part of a medieval imaginary of the Orient that still persisted in Europe at that time, as a kingdom situated near China. Moreover, the letters, personal belongings and

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<sup>296</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 518.

<sup>297</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 521.

memorials of Bento's travel acquired the meaning of relics that symbolized the adventure of Bento de Goës and his epic travels.

### **III. Adriano de las Cortes' Captivity and the Chinese Painter**

More dramatic than epic, the story of captivity of Adriano de las Cortes in China is however also one of those manuscript *relaciones* narrating travels and individual experiences in the remote China. However, unlike Diego de Pantoja's letter-*relación*, Adriano de las Cortes's manuscript narrates an unsuccessful story about a group of prisoners in China. Adriano de las Cortes was not part of the Ricci's group, but a prisoner who spent a year and a half in China after a misfortunate shipwreck of a ship traveling from Manila to Macau. Adriano was held captive in China along with a heterogeneous group of converted Japanese, Portuguese, Spaniards, Indians from the Philippines, and slaves from Africa. Far from the Imperial Palace of Beijing where Matteo Ricci and Diego de Pantoja had begun their successful story, Adriano recounts the individual and collective feelings and suffering of a group of captives in a foreign and hostile world. Unlike the writings of Juan González de Mendoza, Adriano's manuscript is not based on a composite archive of *relaciones*, but it narrates his own personal experience and feelings in China. Instead of trying to propose an absolute point of view about China, Adriano wrote and illustrated a manuscript that aimed at describing the smaller details of the Middle Kingdom. As he even mentions, by displaying a more detailed narrative, he shows things that other general and universal histories had neglected. To do so, he displayed a more visual and subjective narrative that focused on a remote and hidden China that no one had previously visited and described.

Born in 1578 in Tauste (Aragon) to a noble and wealthy family, Adriano entered the Society of Jesus in 1596 and studied arts and theology at the College of Barcelona in 1602.

Adriano arrived in the Philippines through New Spain on June 22, 1605. Three years later, he moved to the Visayas Islands to work as a missionary. Contrary to other Jesuits who arrived in China throughout the Portuguese Indian Run, Adriano had a long experience in the Philippines and had been in contact with the community of Chinese *Sangleyes* established in Manila. On the 25th of January 1625, he left Manila for Macau. In the manuscript, he explains that the travel and his mission were related to the relations between Macau and Manila. This was a period in which the Jesuits faced increasing hostility from Japanese and Chinese authorities. Furthermore, the Dutch influence in the region placed the Jesuits as well as the Iberian networks established in the two cities in a very difficult position.<sup>298</sup>

After the official prohibition of Christians in Japan in 1614 and the intensification of persecutions in the 1620s, the cities of Manila and Macau had to welcome many missionaries who escaped from these Kingdoms. In China, the so-called Nanjing incident of 1616 represented one of the most important set-back for Christianity after the success of Matteo Ricci, Diego de Pantoja, and other members of the Jesuit China mission. After becoming less accommodating towards traditional Chinese rituals since the death of Ricci in 1610, some members of the Jesuit mission were put on trial for their actions in Beijing and Nanjing. Of the twelve Jesuits in China, four were banished to Macao and the remaining eight retired from public life and ceased publication until 1622.<sup>299</sup> Adriano's period of captivity took place few years later, when the Jesuits were still there and discovered the Nestorian Stele, which is a Tang Chinese stele

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<sup>298</sup> For Adriano de las Cortes' biography see "The China of the Jesuits: Travels and Experiences of Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes," (Culture & History Digital Journal, 2012). Also see the introduction to Monco's and Girard's editions: Beatriz Monco, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes* (Madrid: S.I. Alianza Editorial, 1991). Pascale Girard. *Le Voyage En Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes s. J (1625)*, Traduction, présentation & notes de Pascale Girard. (Paris: Chandeigne, 2001)

<sup>299</sup> In Mathias Schemmel, "The Transmission of Scientific Knowledge from Europe to China in the Early Modern Period," in Jürgen Renn, *The Globalization of Knowledge* (Berlin: Epubli, 2012), pp. 280-281



erected in 781 and buried in 845 that documents 150 years of early Christianity in China.<sup>300</sup> However, as he mentions, Adriano was in a region of China with any trace of Christianity.

In the opening of Adriano's manuscript, the Jesuit observes that he was appointed by Father Alonso de Humanes to go to Macau in order to "manage an important negotiation" between the two cities.<sup>301</sup> Even though Adriano was not directly connected to the group of Jesuits working in China, he observes that the request, which came directly from the city of Macau, was to send a Father that had to deal with the administrators of the Chamber in the Portuguese city.<sup>302</sup> This comment suggests that Adriano was probably sent to Macau in order to negotiate on something related to the Jesuit Company. When Adriano embarked on the trip from Manila to Macau in 1625, the authorities of the two Iberian cities were worried about protecting their colonial positions and about the increasingly hostile environment for the Christian mission. In Macau, the project of building a wall around the city motivated a conflict with the Chinese authorities, who demanded a partial destruction of the fortification in 1622.<sup>303</sup> The year before Adriano's departure from Manila, the governor Alonso Fajardo de Entenza died (July 1624) and his succession motivated several conflicts before the arrival of the new city governor, Fernando de Silva.<sup>304</sup> During this period, Nicolas Trigault continued to work with the group of Jesuits in

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<sup>300</sup> See chapter 4, Section III. Athanasius Kircher, China, and the Museum. For a more detailed work on the stone, see David E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), pp. 46–48.

<sup>301</sup> In Spanish: *Tratar un negocio de consideración*. For the different hypothesis about the goal of Adriano de las Cortes's travel see: Pascale Girard, *Le Voyage en Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes s.j (1625)*.

<sup>302</sup> I follow Monco's transcription and edition for the notes and page numbers. Beatriz Monco, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes* (Madrid: S.I. Alianza Editorial, 1991), p. 97. "Esta (the city of Macau) tuvo necesidad el año de 1625 de enviar una persona a ella a tratar cierto negocio de consideración y para ello pidió al P. Alonso de Humanes, provincial de la Compañía de Jesús, un padre que fuese a tratarlo con los señores de la Cámara."

<sup>303</sup> Pascale Girard. *Le Voyage En Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes s. J (1625)*, Introduction.

<sup>304</sup> De Silva arrived to Manila on June 1625

China. Trigault had returned from Lisbon to Macau with over 20 newly recruited Jesuit missionaries in April 1619, where he remained until his death in 1628.

Adriano de Las Cortes left Manila in the galley of *Nuestra Señora de Guia* on January 1625 along with a crew of more than one hundred people. The majority of the crew was Japanese, but there were also some Portuguese merchants and navigators, African slaves whom Adriano called our blacks (*nuestros negros*), and six Spaniards. Three weeks later, on February 16, 1625, the ship sank on the coast of China, and the Chinese arrested the survivors. Adriano remained in China for one year and four months, until he was released and allowed to return to Macau and then to Manila in May 1626. There, he wrote the manuscript of his unwanted Chinese adventure. The manuscript contains 174 pages divided into two different parts. The *Primera parte de la Relación [...] del viaje, naufragio y cautiverio que con otras personas padeció en Chauceo, Reino de la Gran China* [*First part of Father Adriano's Account of the Travel, Shipwreck, and Captivity in China*] is devoted to his misfortunate adventure and to the description of Chinese towns, people and customs.<sup>305</sup> The second part is an illustrated section in which Adriano included drawings made by a Chinese Sangley painter who depicted "the most notable things described in the first part."<sup>306</sup> Even though Adriano's work was quoted later and some of the images probably used for other printed works, the illustrated manuscript have remained unpublished until Beatriz Monco's modern edition published in 1991.

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<sup>305</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes* (Madrid: S.I. Alianza Editorial, 1991), pp. 96-326. The entire title is "Primera parte de la Relación que escribe el P. Adriano de las Cortes de la Compañía de Jesús del viaje, naufragio y cautiverio que con otras personas padeció en Chauceo, Reino de la Gran China. con lo demás que vio en lo que de ella anduvo."

<sup>306</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, pp. 327-353. Title: "Segunda parte de la relación, en la cual se ponen en pinturas y en plantas las cosas más notables que se han dicho en la primera parte, citándose a los capítulos de ella y añadiendo algunos nuevos puntos y declaraciones sobre cada una de las pinturas."

Just as Diego de Pantoja and Nicolas Trigault's works, Adriano de las Cortes also refers to the eyewitness experience as one of the fundamental elements legitimizes his work. He devotes the first two books of the manuscript to narrating and display his visual and textual descriptions of China. However, Adriano's manuscript does not include information related to the history of Christianity in China. In the introduction to the unfinished third book of the manuscript, he observes that some of the readers of his unpublished draft noticed that he did not say anything about Christianity in the Great China. In the same introduction, Adriano mentions that he answered them that he did not speak about Christianity because he was in a remote and hidden region where there was no Christianity at all.<sup>307</sup> Adriano, who wrote his manuscript twelve years after the publication of *De Christiana Expeditione Apud Sinas* (1615) and while the Jesuits were still promoting in Europe the idea that China was closer to the West and Christianity, tried to offset the absence of Christianity in order to promote his manuscript by adding a third book dealing with Christianity. As he also observes, this never completed third book was however not based in his own personal observation, by on accounts, reports and testimonies of other fathers that he had met in Macau and Manila.

While Adriano's manuscript represented a unique contribution in Europe about an unknown and hidden China, the absence of references to Christianity was undoubtedly the reason why the Jesuit Company never considered Adriano's manuscript for publication. As member of the Society, Adriano knew well the policies concerning publications and he certainly may have known general histories of China, as Nicolas Trigault's *De Christiana Expeditione*. As member of the Society of Jesus, Adriano certainly knew histories about the Jesuit missions in China and,

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<sup>307</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 355. "a lo cual me pareció que satisfacía en responder que no estuve en parte donde la hubiese."

for that reason, he probably understood that his *relación* had to offer a different perspective than the narratives of Diego de Pantoja and Nicolas Trigault. Unlike these works, Adriano proposes also a visual *relación* or report that make visible details that are commonly neglected in the more absolute narratives of the company.

Moreover, Adriano's experiential narrative can be associated with the travel books to China and Asia published few years earlier, such as Fernão Mendes Pinto's *Peregrinação* (Lisbon, 1614), which had been translated to Spanish few years before, and Pedro Ordóñez Ceballos *Viaje del mundo* [Travel around the World, 1614].<sup>308</sup> Nonetheless, Mendes Pinto and Ceballos' include episodes that promote Christianity and narrate improbable stories, and Adriano de las Cortes' individual account develops a closer ethnographical eye that explores and presents a reliable and trustful Chinese world. Similarly, whereas Pedro Ordóñez Ceballos observes in the preface to the reader that the book was written for the glory of God and to provide "example and consolation for the audience,"<sup>309</sup> Adriano does not aim at glorifying and making a model of his personal experience of captivity in China. However, his narrative is closer to the literary approach of captivities that in the Spanish literature were more common linked to the Mediterranean world. As Lisa Voight has observed in relation to the narrative of captivity in the Mediterranean and Atlantic world, "the captives and authors teach us to embrace, rather than

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<sup>308</sup> Fernão Mendes Pinto's *Peregrinação*, Lisbon: Pedro Craesbeek, 1614; Pedro Ordoñez Ceballos, *Viaje del mundo. Hecho y compuesto por el licenciado Pedro Ordóñez de Ceballos, natural de la insigne ciudad de Jaén*, Madrid: Luis Sánchez, 1614; Fernando Mendes Pinto, *Historia oriental de las peregrinaciones de Fernan Mendez Pinto portugues : adonde se escriben muchas y muy estrañas cosas que vio, y oyó en los Reynos de la China, Tartaria, Sornao, que vulgarmente se llama Siam, Calamiñan, Peguu, Martuan*, traduzido de portugues en castellano por Francisco Herrera Maldonado. Madrid: Tomas Junti, 1620.

<sup>309</sup> Pedro Ordoñez Ceballos, *Viaje del mundo hecho y compuesto*, Madrid: Nueva Biblioteca de autores españoles, 1942. Preface to the reader. "Dos finalidades de la obra: mayor gloria de Dios y algún ejemplo y consuelo para los oyentes, y así lo dice San Mateo, cap V: "Las obras que hiceres den ejemplo a los que las vieren, y juntamente den gloria a vuestro padre celestial".

elide, distance and difference."<sup>310</sup> This is clearly the case in the writings of Adriano de las Cortes, which constantly bring closer to the reader a remote, unknown, and hostile China.

As some scholars have noted, Adriano's text is closer to the eye of an ethnographer that experiences China from inside, combining elements that refer to the experience of captivity with ethnographical writings describing the Chinese people. In Contrast to the writings of Diego de Pantoja or Nicolas Trigault, Adriano describes a more intimate experience, expressing his personal feelings and suffering and privileging a subjective point of view. Instead of proposing a big picture of China, Adriano explicitly notes that his writing provides a particular and detailed perspective that focuses on hidden and minute aspects of the Chinese cultures: "I am satisfied to have said and narrated in this account ordinary and small things about the Chinese."<sup>311</sup> Adriano's presents his personal and detailed perspective as a sort of methodological approach allowing him to reveal the hidden and unknown parts of China:

I have said then many ordinary and detailed things with the purpose of discovering what the Chinese carefully hide by negating foreign people access [...] I have not considered it vain to write all these details, because it is so hard to know them and, adding to this the more general accounts dealing with China, they will provide a more complete idea about that country. And, if this was already written, the new witness will allow the reader to confirm it, because there are few people who write accounts about the Great China, nor do they after difficulties, stamps, and licenses, see more than the river of the city of Canton and its suburbs.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Lisa Voigt, *Writing Captivity in the Early Modern Atlantic: Circulations of Knowledge and Authority in the Iberian and English Imperial Worlds* (North Carolina: North Carolina Scholarship Online, 2014), Conclusion: Comparative Crossings.

<sup>311</sup> Beatriz Monc6, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 265. "Satisfacese al haber dicho y contado en esta relaci6n cosas muy ordinarias y menudas de los Chinos."

<sup>312</sup> Beatriz Monc6, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p.b 266. "He dicho pues cosas muy comunes y estas muy por menudo, no sin particular fin y intento de descubrir lo que con tanto cuidado los chinos de sus reinos encubren no dexando entrar extranjeros en ellos y a los que por alg6n caso fortuito entran, procurando que no salgan. [...] (fol. 99 vto.) No he tenido pues por tiempo ocioso escribir tantas menudencias, siendo cosa difi6cil el ser

As Adriano observes, the manuscript reproduces an individual experience that could be added to “the more general accounts dealing with greater things of the same China.”<sup>313</sup> However, his individual experience is not connected to the successful group of Jesuits received in the Imperial palace, but to the heterogeneous group of people who traveled with Adriano in the ship. This is one of the reasons why Adriano's manuscript represents a problematic and shameful story for the Jesuits, but a unique account for modern scholars. Beyond the ethnographical reports, Adriano places the captives of the group as the center of the narrative in most chapters. Except for the few chapters devoted to the products, commodities, and wealthy of China (from chapter 16 to 23), the chapters always include in the title the word *captivos* and the narrative commonly refers to the vicissitudes of the group.

The first chapter narrates the group's arrival, describing the unfortunate shipwreck from a moviemaking perspective. In the absence of any preface or note to the reader, Adriano opens the book describing the departure from Manila and the shipwreck that happened a few days later. When the ship was already damaged, Adriano saw at the first light of day some Chinese people waiting on the coast to capture the victims.<sup>314</sup> After the ship sank, Adriano, who mentions that he did not know how to swim, arrived at shore holding a wooden log while piggybacking on and imitating the swimming of a Japanese man named León.<sup>315</sup> He then describes how 15 people

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por puntualidad sabidas y que añadidas a relaciones de otras cosas mayores de la misma China harán hacer della mas pleno concepto y si ya escritas servirá de mayor confirmación al lector el nuevo testigo de vista, siendo pocos los que como tales de la Gran China hacen relaciones ni llegan a ver della los que mucho tras dificultades, chapas y licencias, mas que el rio de la ciudad de Canton en tiempo de las ferias y el pedazo de arrabal fuera de los muros que están en la orilla del mismo rio."

<sup>313</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 255. "Añadidas a relaciones de otras cosas mayores de la misma China harán hacer della mas pleno concepto."

<sup>314</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p.99. "Estos no nos ayudaron en cosa alguna, que no venían a eso sino a esperar la presa."

<sup>315</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 100. "Yo no sabía nadar, pero púseme sobre el árbol mejor que cortado que estaba en el agua, costado del navío, donde cogiéndome a cuestras un buen japon llamado León comenzó el a nadar y yo a hacer lo mismo con solo los pies, assi llegamos juntos a tierra."

died during the shipwreck: a Franciscan from Goa, some sailors, a lascar, some slaves, some Indians from the city of Manila, and a Japanese kid. Some of the 15 were even killed by the Chinese, who cut their heads as they were dying.<sup>316</sup>

This brutal opening is followed by a second chapter in which Adriano explains how the Chinese made the survivors prisoners and how they began to torture them. As in the first chapter, Adriano develops a subjective narrative that combines the plural voice of the heterogeneous group of survivors with his own personal feelings and fears, displaying to the reader a detailed sequence of events after the shipwreck: “we looked at each other without knowing what happened. Some being with their wet clothes, others just wearing only shirt and linen underpants, the wind and cold penetrated us so much that we made a parapet in the sand, and it was there that I experienced most clearly and grievously it is to die.”<sup>317</sup> In this passage, the word experience does not refer to reliability and factual information, but to Adriano's personal sufferings. After having these first feelings, Adriano observes the increasingly number of Chinese people: “it was already a thousand of Chinese people who came with a captain on a horse.”<sup>318</sup>

During the opening of the narrative, Adriano meticulously describes the captured by referring to his own feelings and by placing the reader in the interior of the action. It is in this same moment that Adriano introduces for the first time the word Europeans to define two

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<sup>316</sup> Beatriz Monc6, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 101. Adriano mentions that there were 34 lascars o marineros (sailors). Lascar is a Sailor from the East Indies, Southeast Asia, the Arab world, and Asian territories who were employed on European ships from the 16th century until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>317</sup> Beatriz Monc6, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 102. "Vi6ndonos ya en tierra los que escapabamos con vida, mir6bamos unos a otros sin saber lo que nos hab6a sucedido. Estando unos con sus vestidos mojados, otros en camisa y calzoncillo de lienzo, penetr6bamos el viento y fr6o tanto que nos hicimos luego una pina sobre la arena, y all6 fue adonde m6s al ojo y sensiblemente experiment6 que cosa es morir."

<sup>318</sup> Beatriz Monc6, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 104. "Ya serian mil los chinos a quienes ven6a capitaneando, aunque en la retaguardia, un personaje de a caballo con bandera y atabales y en lugar de p6fano campana de las que en las Islas Philippinas llaman de sangley."

individuals that were part of the crew: “Two Europeans and I were the first to surrender, and later it continued with the rest. They received us as barbarians and thieves as they had before, at the beginning of our loss.”<sup>319</sup> As Adriano observes, the Europeans were not distinguished from the rest of the crew, because all of them were treated just as barbarians. However, Adriano observes that the Chinese were particular surprised and curious about the uncommon heterogeneity of the group, considering that this diversity of people was one of the proofs that they were pirates and thieves: “they think that we were all thieves and pirates that we were in the sea stealing vessels. They proved this by observing that we were people from many and very diverse nations who came together for stealing and doing evil. they judged two or three in our group to be Dutch, who are considered their enemies, because they were white and with blond beards.”<sup>320</sup> Unlike the group of Jesuits, which included mainly Europeans and some converted Chinese, Adriano’s unfortunate group came from Manila and the western route, bringing to the coast of China a very strange and mixed community of people who came from the four parts of the world.

As the previous works of Jesuits dealing with China, Adriano also compares China and Europe. However, Adriano also often compares China with the Philippines and New Spain, where he worked as a missionary mostly on the islands of Visayans, and was in contact with the diverse communities of the Spanish colony: “This is a good and thick cut of the reeds that in the islands of the Philippines people call *patones*, that serves as asigue or column for the houses of

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<sup>319</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 105. "Dos europeos y yo nos entregamos los primeros, luego se siguió con todos los demás. Recibiéronnos como bárbaros y ladrones de la misma manera ue antes, en el principio de nuestra pérdida, lo habían hecho."

<sup>320</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p.152. "que éramos ladrones piratas que andábamos por la mar robando otros navios). Esto último probaban con que éramos gente de muchas y varias naciones que para robar y hacer (Fol. 31) mal nos habíamos aunado, que dos o tres de los nuestros, por ser muy blancos y barbarrubios, eran holandeses, los cuales son sus enemigos."



the Indians,”<sup>321</sup> or “But the Philippines Islands does not have rabbits and hares, but neither does the Great China, where I saw an animal almost of the size of a cat that my native fellow-captives from the Indies called *mongus*.”<sup>322</sup> These comparisons between the Indians and the Chinese, and particularly the Mandarins, allowed Adriano to observe that the Chinese were like barbarians or people without compassion and good judgment: “Strange nation of people that, being known as good people and friends of Macau and Manila, because they go to trade there and they live with their houses and professions. Even after telling them that our only crime was none other than having gotten lost, they do not show us compassion [...] or any genre of good judgment, in the end like the Chinese, Indians, savagely and without any reason.”<sup>323</sup> Like the Jesuits, Adriano places the Chinese among the barbarians. However, he develops a larger comparative perspective that includes his experience as missionaries with Indians in the Philippines.

Like Joaõ de Barros, Adriano also mentions the metaphor of the two eyes that symbolizes the Chinese superiority over the rest of nations in the world. However, Adriano associates this idea with one of the inventions and lies that the Chinese often said about themselves: “there is not subtlety among them, but a common and despicable appearance. There is no subtlety in the genre of lying that they could not reach and invent again. And they have the following concept of

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<sup>321</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p.174. "Ella es una buena y gruesa raja de las cañas que en las islas de Phillipinas llaman patones, que uno sirve de asigue (?) o columna para las casas de los indios."

<sup>322</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 225. "Pero las Islas (Fol. 72 vto.) Phillipinas son ni capaces de conejos y liebres, no por esto digo que lo sea la Gran China, en la cual vi un animalejo casi del tamaño de un gato que mis concaptivos naturales de la India llamaban mongus."

<sup>323</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 274. "Extraña nación de gente, siendo conocidos por gente buena y amiga de Macan y Manila a donde ellos van con sus mercaderías y viven millares dellos con sus casas y officios de asiento, y constándoles que nuestro delito no era otro que habernos perdido y padecido los trabajos y agravios que he dicho, no tenemos compasión, a lo menos no dar muestras della, y por otra parte celamos sin qué ni para qué, sin género alguno de prudencia; al fin como chinos, indios, bárbaramente y sin fundamento alguno."

themselves, they say that they have two eyes and the rest of nations are blind, although to the Europeans they concede one eye, saying that we also understood, but not two comparing us to them.”<sup>324</sup> However, this bad perception of the Chinese as arrogant is combined with other passages in which he describes their compassion. In any case, Adriano’s ethnographical description often includes a comparative perspective in which the Chinese expressed their curiosity or even fascination for Adriano and the group of captives.

In the chapter devoted to science and to writings methods in both the Chinese and European cultures, the title refers directly to the Chinese admiration for the group of captives, and not to the particular aspect of the Chinese culture to be treated: “The Chinese admired a lot seeing the captives writing our letters and said something about the schools of their kids.”<sup>325</sup> Even though the entire chapter is devoted to describing Chinese writing, printing, and sciences, Adriano opened the chapter by referring to their fascination for the group of captives: “They could die to see us writing and obtaining from our letter some little paper to keeping and show to those of other towns who could not see us. We never satisfied them [...] and they admired to see how different is our writing to their own.”<sup>326</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, Jesuits and scholars often considered the Chinese characters a picture-writing system and that the Chinese writers depicted and imitated things with figures, which is the term used by scholars for naming

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<sup>324</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 223. "No hay sutileza en género de engañar que no alcancen y de nuevo inventen y de sí mismos tienen este concepto y dicen que ellos tienen dos ojos y todas las demás naciones son ciegas, aunque a los europeos conceden uno diciendo que también entendimos, pero no dos comparándonos con ellos."

<sup>325</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 216. "Admirábanse mucho los chinos de ver escribir a los captivos nuestras letras y dicese algo de las escuelas de sus niños."

<sup>326</sup> Moríanse por vernos escribir a nosotros y sacarnos de nuestra letra algún papelillo para guardarlo y mostrarlo a los de otros pueblos que no nos vieron. No acabamos en esto de satisfacerles por muchos papeles que les escribiésemos. Solíanos mostrar algún palillo de los perdidos de nuestro navio y esto ya en pueblos lejos de donde se perdió, no había remedio de poderlo recobrar y admirábanse (Fol. 67) de ver cuan contrario es nuestro escribir al suyo.

the characters. As in the writings of José de Acosta, and Athanasius Kircher, Adriano also defines the Chinese writing system as a way of painting: "there were also some number of brushes that our painters used to paint (and the Chinese use to write as quills)."<sup>327</sup> However, besides this idea, he emphasizes in his writing the exotic character of European letters, as it is accentuated in the title devoted to the topic of letters and characters: "the Chinese admired a lot to see the captive writing our letters."<sup>328</sup>

Unlike Diego de Pantoja and Nicolas Trigault, who emphasize that they were in contact with Chinese intellectual and officials and entered the Imperial Palace, Adriano describes a more common China. According to Adriano, the majority of the Chinese that he knew during his captivity were barbarians who had no relation to the foreign world and who had never visited Macau or Manila. He also observes that the Chinese were particularly curious about the group of foreigners, showing a great curiosity for the heterogeneity and physical appearances of the group: "as these people have never seen foreigners or people from other nations [...] they were generally admiring when seeing us in those cities and towns for where we passed through. They particularly had a lot of curiosity for our black, and they wouldn't stop admiring how they didn't become white despite washing themselves."<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 115. "Estaban también algún número de pinceles de los que usan para pintar nuestros pintores (y a los chinos sirven para escribir de plumas.)"

<sup>328</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 216. "Admirábanse mucho los chinos de ver escribir a los captivos nuestras letras y dicese algo de las escuelas de sus niños, collegios, ciencias y de los exámenes para el grado de bachilleres."

<sup>329</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p.120. "Como la multitud y vulgo a donde estábamos jamás habían visto extranjeros, ni gente de otras naciones, ni entrado éstos su tierra adentro, ni saliendo los muchos dellos de las suyas a otros reinos, les era de una general admiración, en las más de las ciudades y pueblos por donde pasábamos, el vernos; particularmente tenían en que ver mucho en nuestros negros, y no acababan de admirarse cómo lavándose no se volviesen más blancos."

Adriano includes a chapter about the physical appearance and behavior of the Chinese and he observe that they commonly strong and tall, but some of them very small. Their skin color is "moderately white."<sup>330</sup> However, he also describes how the Chinese distinguished among white people and the rest of the group, "they also invited five whites among our comrades to the table,"<sup>331</sup> or "The Mandarin in chief of the war in this audience ordered to give to each one of the white people a *real* of relief, and to the rest, three *condines*."<sup>332</sup> In this passage, Adriano suggests that the white people of the group received the equivalent of a Spanish *real* from the Chinese, and the rest of prisoners a *condin*, which is a term used in the Philippines to design the coin that had lesser value the rest of coins.<sup>333</sup> Moreover, Adriano mentions that the Chinese were surprised that a crew with only few white people had so much silver: "He ended the lawsuit after hearing these two answers by telling us that he could not bring back to live dead people, and that the ship's silver was lost in the sea without knowing no more about it, and that how it was also possible that among as few whites as we were, we had so much silver, and he requested if we had to ask for something else."<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 262. "Son comúnmente membrados, fornidos y altos los chinos y muchos de la cintura arriba y no por esto dexé de ver entre ellos algunos perfectísimos enanos. Son medianamente blancos, carnudos, sanguinos, alegres y de buen parecer; los ojos negros, ovados y pequeños, y las narices chatas y cortas, y así desde la punta de la nariz hasta la del labio de arriba tienen todos muy grande distancia, y parécenles a ellos las nuestras tan feas y para pintar a un hombre feo lo pintan con narices cuales las nuestras."

<sup>331</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 133. "convidió también a cinco blancos de nuestros compañeros y entre lo demás que les sirvieron a la mesa fueron unas escudillas con carne de perro que los nuestros luego conocieron y a los Mandarines les supo muy bien."

<sup>332</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 157. "Mandónos dar el Mandarin general de la guerra en esta audiencia a los blancos, a cada uno, un real de socorro; a los demás a tres condines."

<sup>333</sup> See Fr. Joaquín de Coria, *Nueva Gramática Tagalog, Teórico Práctica* (Madrid: Imprenta de J. Antonio García, 1872), p. 455, del modo de contar la plata, Tongcol as panahon.

<sup>334</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 319. "Remató el pleito oídas estas dos respuestas con decirnos que a los muertos él no nos podía dar vivos, y que la plata del navio fue plata perdida en la mar sin saberse ya della, y que cómo era también posible que entre tan pocos blancos como éramos tuviésemos tanta cantidad de plata y que viésemos si teníamos que pedir otra cosa."

Unlike the writings of Juan González de Mendoza, Martín de Rada, and even the Boxer codex, Adriano proposes an inverted perspective that objectivize the observer and the group of foreigners, who are hierarchized by the Chinese people. However, the references to the white color represent also a sign of power and wealthy. These descriptions accentuate the proximity between the Chinese people and the white people of the crew, who are considered as better than the rest. However, Adriano observes that white northern people were also considered as enemies, because the Chinese associated this with the Dutch: "they judged two or three in our group to be Dutch, who are considered their enemies, because they were white and with blond beards."<sup>335</sup> As mentioned in the first and second chapters, even though the color remained a fluid marker of physical and cultural difference, whiteness was associated with advanced civilizations, and it was not until the 18th century that scholars started to represent the Chinese and East Asian people as non-white or also a yellow race.

In Adriano's narrative white color is a distinctive sign. However, unlike those writings that tended to depict other people as non-white, here the positive connotations of white color are presented inversely. Whereas the Chinese distinguish the group of white people in the narration, Adriano describes them as moderately white. Adriano's closer and ethnographical description of the skin color of the Chinese also differs from Nicolas Trigault's descriptions. In *De Christiana Expeditione's* first book, Trigault associates the skin color of people with the theory of climate zones: "the Chinese people are almost white, though some of them in the southern provinces are quite dark because of their proximity to the torrid zone."<sup>336</sup> Closer to González de Mendoza's

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<sup>335</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p.152. "que éramos ladrones piratas que andábamos por la mar robando otros navios). "por ser muy blancos y barbirrubios, eran holandeses, los cuales son sus enemigos."

<sup>336</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 77.

perspective, Trigault narrative situates the question of color within the framework of the theory of climates and the evolution of geographical knowledge in the early modern period. Integrated into the scope of modern universal histories, both Mendoza and Trigault's narratives situate China within a broader and global comparative model. However, Trigault does not associate explicitly the skin color with the idea of a good behavior, laws, and government, as in Mendoza's *Historia*, but simply with the geographical zone. Unlike Juan González de Mendoza, who tended to privilege the West over China by emphasizing political and religious elements and even predicting a future conquest, Trigault concentrates on displaying the European scientific superiority over China.

On the contrary, Adriano's individual perspective includes a social and inverted element. In his narrative, the skin color is an element of social distinction among the group of prisoners. Furthermore, Adriano unpublished work is the only one who explicitly incorporated a social scale linked to the Chinese perception of physical appearances of other groups.<sup>337</sup> From this perspective, Adriano's *relación* shows how the Chinese saw and differentiate other groups and social types. In Adriano's description, it is not just him or the Europeans that are represented through the eyes of the Chinese, but the entire and diverse group. Adriano's description even projects the Chinese fascination for the group by emphasizing a sensorial experience: "Some of them tried, women and men, to touch our head and beard hair, hands and legs barefoot, and they would have done as much as they could, because they were not satisfied just by seeing us."<sup>338</sup> Similarly, he narrates the interest that their group aroused among the people of Chingaiso, who

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<sup>337</sup> As mentioned previously, Trigault also included sections about the Saracens in China. However, he did not describe how the Chinese distinguish among groups depending on their skin color and origin.

<sup>338</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 120. "Intentaban algunos, así dellos como dellas, llegar a tocarnos los cabellos de la cabeza, de las barbas, manos y piernas descalzos y hiciéranlo si para ello se les diera lugar; sólo el ver no parecía que les satisfacía."

made several trips back and forth to see the prisoners. The description of these exchanges shows the curiosity of the Chinese towards the diversity of the group and their heterogeneous and exotic physical appearance. In doing so, Adriano reduces the big pictures of Mendoza and Trigault's theory of climates, which associates the skin color and physical appearance with particular geographical zones, to a sensorial and intense social experience.

Adriano also expresses this mutual curiosity by describing how in these exchanges the Chinese were surprised by the group's way of eating with their fingers, and not with chopsticks, and by how they drank cold water, which was considered an unhealthy behavior among the Chinese: "particularly in seeing us drinking from a bowl of cold water, they admired us so that they even ended up taking the bowl away from our mouth and hands, saying through signals that it could hurt us."<sup>339</sup> As in Diego de Pantoja's writings, Adriano also developed an inverted exoticism that here consisted of presenting the fascination of the Chinese towards the heterogeneous group of Asians, Europeans, slaves, and Indians. However, in this text the curiosity of the Chinese is not based on the scientific superiority of Europeans, but rather on the physical appearance of the captives and their cultural behaviors. This inverted exoticism reflects the necessity of narrating the Chinese perspective and perceptions towards other cultures.

Signaled as pirates and thieves, the heterogeneity of the group nonetheless provoked admiration and surprised among the Chinese. Adriano contrasts the terrible experience of captivity with the humanity of the group. Among the group of survivors, there was even a mastiff dog, which expressed his own feelings and the same destiny as the humans in the group: "He was

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<sup>339</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 121, "Particularmente en vernos beber una escudilla de agua fría, se admiran mucho, tanto que llegaban a quitárnosla de la boca y manos, haciéndonos señas que si la bebiésemos nos había de hacer mucho daño."

so sad that he even seemed to know that time and fortune went against him.”<sup>340</sup> The dog, who also held a noose on his neck like the rest of prisoners, aroused the curiosity of the Chinese: “He was big and very well made, so that the Chinese and even the Mandarins did never get enough of seeing him. This was normal, because they had undoubtedly never seen another on like him, or one even approaching him, because all their dogs are of a very bad cast, very small, disabled and ugly.”<sup>341</sup> The use of the expression *ruinisima casta* to categorize Chinese dogs, which is a term “embedded in identifiably biological ideas about animal breeding and reproduction,”<sup>342</sup> contrast the description of the European dog, who is humanized by Adriano. Included among the group of pirates and leprous, the dog was also presented to the tribunals and audiences: “in the audiences and tribunals where we the leprous were presented, the dog was presented the first or among the firsts with his noose, as if they were about to take his confession and declaration and as if he were to be judged by the audience.”<sup>343</sup>

During their misfortunate travel, the group visited the audiences and tribunals of China, so Adriano describes attentively the different practices of the legal and punitive system in China. The textual and visual descriptions of punishments are one of the important contributions of

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<sup>340</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 132, “El iba muy triste, que parecía conocer el tiempo y que la fortuna le era contraria; yo creo que le debía también hacer la pequeña ración de la escudillita de arroz si es que ésta se la daban o le mandaban se contentase con lo que a su casero se le caía de la (Fol. 20) mesa que a ser así gozaría de muy buenos hambres como de lo adelante se podrá colegir.”

<sup>341</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 132. “El era grande, muy bien hecho, y que aún no se hartaron los chinos, hasta los mismos Mandarines, de verlo y con razón, pues sin duda jamás habían visto otro tal, ni que con mucho le llegase, pues todos sus perros son de ruinísima casta, pequeñuelos, disminuidos y feos.”

<sup>342</sup> David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and today* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2014), 182.

<sup>343</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, (p. 133). “En ocasiones que de aquí dicho de una vez para adelante de nuestro alano que en las audiencias y tribunales donde los leprosos éramos presentes a él lo presentaban con su dogal el primero o de los muy primeros como si le hubieran de tomar su confesión y dicho y por él hubiera de ser juzgado.”



Adriano's manuscript, and they inspired an anonymous circulation of orientalist images during the late 17th and 18th centuries in Europe. Adriano's manuscript was the only one of the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century to have depicted the theme of bodily pain and enforced suffering in China. Adriano describes this torture in several chapters (V, X, and XIV), and he includes drawings with textual descriptions in the second book. These descriptions refer mainly to the different punitive forms applied to criminals and thieves as well as the administration and application of these practices. The different techniques of torture are depicted along with other cultural and artistic practices in the second book of the manuscript, which Adriano includes in combination with the first narrative section. Adriano had probably in mind an ideal narrative that combined the travel and captivity of the group with series of images that should have illustrate the story.

From this perspective, Adriano's narrative experience of captivity appears always in tension with the desire of producing an ethnographical textual and visual report. However, this closer look of the Chinese world also brings an inverted perspective that shows the Chinese perceptions about the heterogeneous group of survivors. This inverted form of exoticism is however richer than the promotional narratives of Diego de Pantoja and Nicolas Trigault. In Adriano de las Cortes' text, the inverted exoticism emanates from an experience in which the narrator has no agency and is more sensitive to the actions and perceptions of other people. This is not however the case in the second book of the manuscript, in which Adriano included images made by a Chinese painter with his comments and descriptions. However, as he mentions in the preface, the second book was intended to illustrate the objects and stories narrated in the first book. Nonetheless, this visual complement also participates of the idea that the book aims to

make visible things that were commonly overlooked in the more comprehensive general histories about China published until then.

Adriano starts the second book by referring to the painters and to the art of painting in China and Manila, noting that the Chinese painters that went to Manila soon learned the techniques of European painters: “the Chinese painters in the same China are very important in their art, they paint everything without shadows, but when they come to the city of Manila, they soon learn from European painters and they improve their art.”<sup>344</sup> Furthermore, like in the first book, Adriano warns to those who might be interested in copying or using the images that the paintings focus on very small details: “he should carefully note how many small stuffs there are in the paintings in adapting them, unless it is not particularly necessary, according to the rules of the art of painting.”<sup>345</sup> From this perspective, Adriano introduces the sequence of paintings by referring to the main principle that had driven the first book; concentrating on particular details of things and presenting China to the reader and observer in a more dynamic, spatial and closer way. Moreover, as Adriano observes, he hired a Chinese painter in Manila because he considered that it would be very difficult to depict properly things of China with a European painter.

For the following paintings, I want to point out that, besides the fact that I assisted at their painting, I chose a Chinese painter learned in training, who gave back with great exactitude and accordingly to what they represent the precise features and things typical of China and the Chinese. And it would be very difficult for a European painter to represent them so vividly and properly as they are at first glance. Likewise, the one who would like to made from these paintings others, he

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<sup>344</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 329. "Los pintores chinos en la misma China son importantísimos en su arte, todo lo pintan sin sombras, pero venidos a la ciudad de Manila, en breve aprenden de los pintores europeos y se perfeccionan."

<sup>345</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 329-330. "Y así quien hubiese de sacar de estas otras debería notar con cuidado cuantas menudencias en ellas hay, y nominarlas si no es particularmente que tuviese necesidad según reglas del arte de pintar."

should identify carefully all the small details that are on them, designing them, unless it is not necessary to improve them according to the rules of the art of painting<sup>346</sup>

Adriano's observation concerning the art of painting agrees with the purpose of his narrative, which aims at representing accurately the small details of the Chinese world. As he observes, this meticulous literary and visual narrative could only be accomplished by hiring a Chinese painter, who was able to see those small things that the European eye could not identify. The information provided by Adriano here shows that it is not to produce something exotic and strange that he hired a Chinese painter, but rather to depict more accurately the small details of the Chinese culture. Similarly, as seen previously, Adriano repeatedly introduces a Chinese subjective perspective into his first book, narrating how the Chinese perceived the heterogeneous group of captives. From this perspective, this idea is also exported to the second book, in which the images also emanate from the eyes of a Chinese painter, displaying not only a more accurate Chinese world, but also introducing an inverted form of exoticism by means of images. As Adriano suggests, the paintings provide a more accurate visual information because they make visible China through the eyes of a Chinese artist.

Divided into several sections, the second book includes drawings depicting the customs of people in China, weapons, houses, and official buildings, along with a set of ethnographical drawings illustrating tortures and punishments. As Benjamin Schmidt has suggested, Adriano de las Cortes' drawings were probably adapted a half-century later by the Holland printer and

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<sup>346</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 330. "Para las pinturas siguientes, quiero advertir que fuera de mi asistencia al pintarlos, escogí pintor chino perfeccionado en mandar, el cual en la puntualidad de facciones y otras cosas propias de la China y chinos las sacó muy conformes a lo que representan y fuera muy difícil con pintor europeo de primera instancia sacarlas tan al vivo y propiamente como van, y así quien hubiese de sacar de estas otras debería notar con cuidado cuantas menudencias en ellas hay, y nominarlas si no es particularmente que tuviese necesidad según reglas del arte de pintar."

engraver Jacob van Meurs.<sup>347</sup> The publisher integrated Adriano's sketches into Olfert Dapper's geography of China, which narrated the failure of a Dutch embassy in the imperial court of China, frustrated paradoxically by Jesuit interventions. As Schmidt has observed, the images of Dapper's geography of China were diffused widely through other publications during the 18th century, but Adriano's drawings made by the anonymous Chinese painter in Manila are the only surviving corpus of illustrations of bodily pain known before Drapper's work. As Schmidt suggests, the similarities between Drapper's engravings and Adriano's drawings and the fact that Adriano's manuscript is the only one depicting these practices in China before the publication of Drapper's work in 1670 indicate the more than probable association.

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<sup>347</sup> Schmidt, Benjamin, *Inventing Exoticism: Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015)



Figure 27. Adriano de las Cortes, Chinese corporal punishments, *Relación del viaje* (1627); pen drawing. The British Library Board. Folio 169v. Source: Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism* (2015), p. 318.



Figure 28. Jacob van Meurs (atelier), *Caning in courtyard* (engraving), in Olfert Dapper, *Gedenckwaerdig bedryf der Nederlandsche Oost-Indische Maetschappye, op de kuste en in het keizerrijk van Taising of Sina* (Amsterdam, 1670). University of Amsterdam (OM 63-124). Source: Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism* (2015), p. 317.

Drapper's drawings dealing with China incorporate especially those drawings referring to ethnographical subjects, but adapting Adriano's drawings to van Meurs' own style. Jacob van Meurs incorporated sketches illustrating Chinese fashion and drawings illustrating Imperial justice, as well as the sensational set of engravings depicting the torture meted out by the Chinese authorities, which were later adopted by other European printers in the 18th century. As

Benjamin Schmidt has demonstrated, after the publication of Drapper's engravings, these images gained "further endorsement in their subsequent iterations. The images circulated widely in other prints and publications." The printers who adapted the engravings of van Meurs gradually aggrandized the pictures, displaying a more spectacular production that accentuated "the images association with torture." This tendency is particularly evident in Pieter van der Aa's *La galerie agreable du monde* (Leiden, ca. 1729), which "enhances the images sense of spectacle by recasting them, specifically the courtyard caning scene."<sup>348</sup> Drawn likely from an image reproduced in Adriano's manuscript, this engraving illustrates a woman strapped horizontally to a pole, whose upturned feet are crudely tormented.

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<sup>348</sup> Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism*, 319.



Figure 29. After Jacob van Meurs (atelier), Scenes of Chinese justice and torture (“La torture chez les Chinois”) (engraving), in Pieter van der Aa, *La galerie agreable du monde* (Leiden, ca. 1729). Collection Antiquariaat Forum BV, ’t Goy-Houten, The Netherlands. Drawn from Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism* (2015), p. 320.

Adriano describes this punishment in the second book: “They torment a Chinese by tying his hands behind him and then stretching him face down, lifting up his head and unfolding the feet towards the head as much as possible, and they tie his feet with his own hair, and if they have it very short, they add a string for it. Then they put between his legs and between his arms, on his back, a large stick with which two Chinese squeeze him hard and crush him in order to



obtain his confession."<sup>349</sup> In Adriano's manuscript, the image of the torture reproduces a very similar scene as in *La galerie agreable du monde*. Similarly, he incorporates an image depicting a torture applied to a woman: "Chinese woman whipped without taking off her underpants and stockings. Notice how she is showing the money to the executioner to release from punishment."<sup>350</sup> In the same folio, Adriano illustrates the punishment for concubinage [por *amancebados*]. In this image, Adriano describes the *cangue* or *tcha*, which is a device used for public humiliation and corporal punishment, and another device used for punishing players. In the illustration, instead of referring to the crime of concubinage, the Chinese painter wrote in Chinese character the word adultery on the *cangue*.<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 349. " Dan tormento a un chino atándole las manos atrás y luego tendiéndole boca abajo, levantándole la cabeza y hacia ésta los pies cuanto pueden, y átanse los con sus cabellos y si tiene ellos muy cortos añádenles para ello un cordel; luego le meten por entre las piernas y por entre los brazos, sobre las espaldas, un gran palo con el cual dos chinos le aprietan con fuerza y lo van estrujando para que confiese."

<sup>350</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 349. " Mujer china azotada sin quitarle los calzones y medias. Adviértase cómo le está enseñando el dinero al verdugo para que afloje la mano."

<sup>351</sup> See, Pascale Girard, *Le Voyage En Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes s. J (1625)*, p. 506.

17. Silla de Audiencia cubierta con sedas.
18. Silla donde esta aposentado el Mandarín dando Audiencia.
19. Bufete que viene delante de el Mandarín adornado con su laboriosa de seda e damasco y sobre el que papel, plumas, rinceros canito con las canchelas que tienen los números y los aceros y el sello del officio.
20. Lugar donde estan en pie los criados y pajes del Mandarín y otros oficiales.
21. Un cancel de madera que viene de respaldo de tras de las sillas del Mandarín y impide el ser la guerra por donde se entra a su casa, y un callejoncillo de tras del cancel por el qual se va a la guerra etc.
22. Puerta por donde se entra a la casa del Mandarín.
23. Lugar donde esta edificada la casa o palacio del Mandarín.
24. Lugar donde estan en pie y en silla los Mandarines que son menores que el que juzga respectos en sus insignias de Mandarines, las manos apretadas dentro de las mangas azules de sus ropas.
25. Lugar donde estan en pie y en silla los Joff. que asisten al Mandarín.
26. Lugar donde estan en silla y en pie los ofes con sus cadenas en las manos que son los verdugos.
27. Lugar donde estan los Secretarios y ofes. Junto a las columnas y varillas de la sala de la Audiencia.
28. Apofensillos o Secretarios de los Secretarios, apofensillos y otros oficiales.
29. Corredor con sus balcones que esta delante de las guerras de los dichos apofensillos.

Dan tormento a un chino atándole las manos atrás, y luego sentándolo la boca abajo levantando la cabeza y hacia esta los pies quando quedan, y atásetos con sus cabellos y se viene otros muy malos atádetos para ellos un cordón luego le moien por entre las piernas y por entre los brazos sobre las espaldas un grande palo con el qual dos chinos le aprietan con fuerza y le van estrujando jam que se desfice.

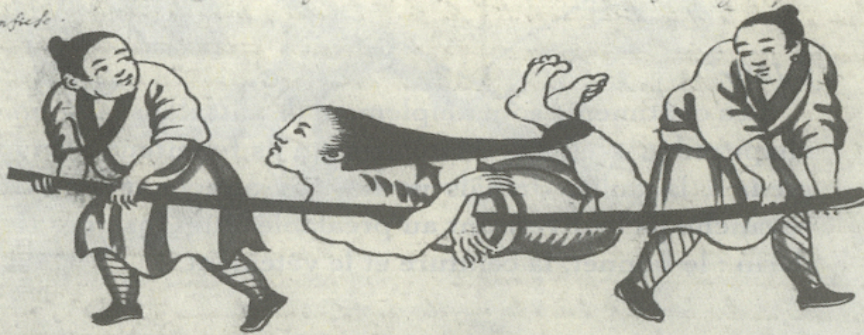


Figure 30. Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de Viaje* (1627); pen drawing. The British Library Board. Folio 168v. Source: Pascale Girard, *Le Voyage En Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes* s. J. (1625), p. 453.





Figure 31. Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de Viaje* (1627); pen drawing. © The British Library Board. Folio 169v. Source: Pascale Girard, *Le Voyage En Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes* s. J. (1625) p. 453.

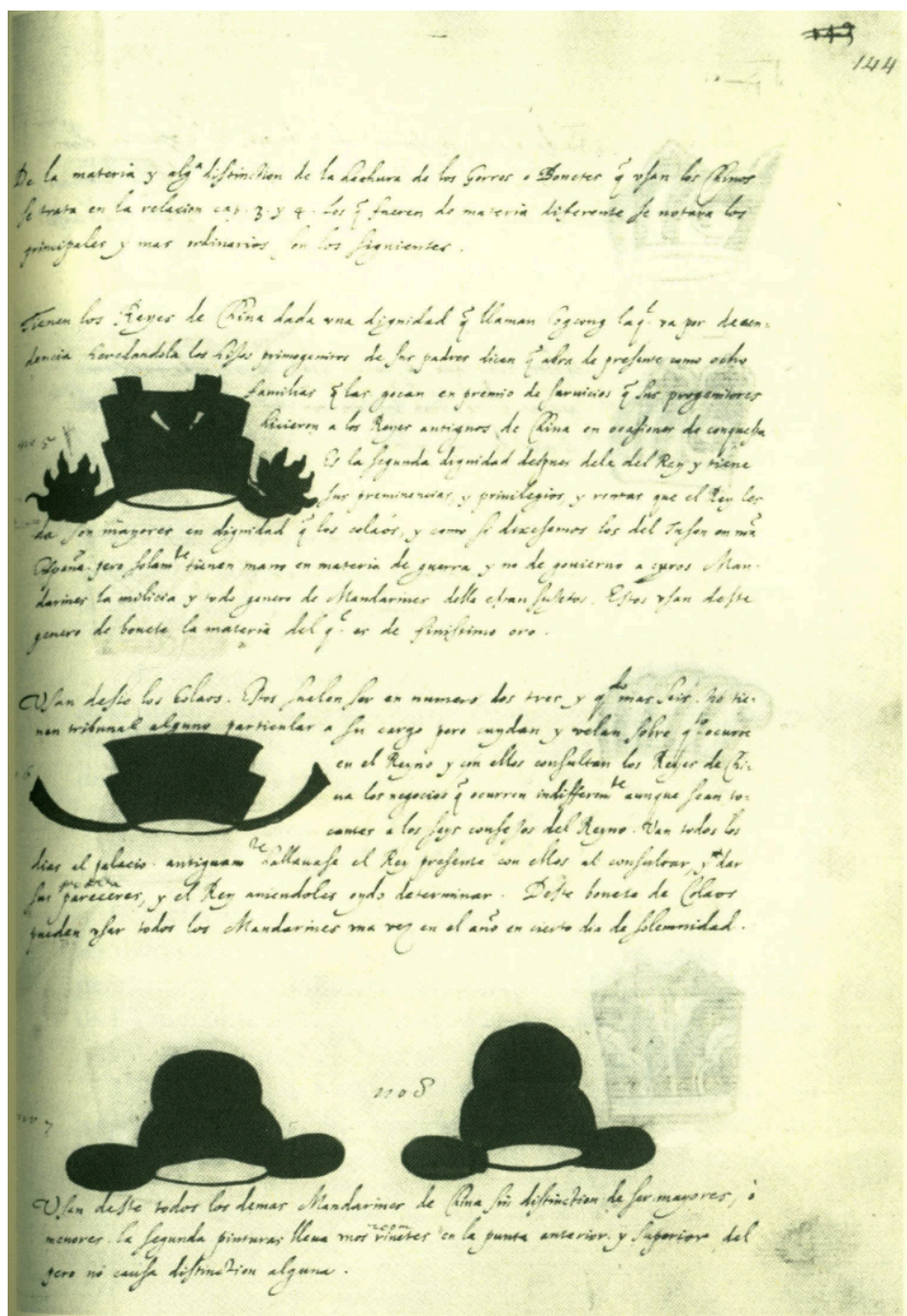
As Adriano repeatedly noted, his work aims at making visible small and particular details of the Chinese world. Unlike the big pictures of Juan González de Mendoza's *Historia del Gran Reyno de la China* and Trigault's *De Christiana expeditione*, Adriano provided an ethnographical eye that displays textual and visual descriptions that present the Chinese cultural life by integrating their own vices, feelings, and morality. As seen in this chapter, the writings developed by the Jesuits project an inverted exoticism that consisted of making the narrator and visitors the exotic object of the story. However, in Adriano's work, this inverted exoticism is conceived through the creative process of the manuscript, in which Adriano constantly integrates a Chinese subjectivity that emanate from the interaction with the group of prisoners.

Unlike the Boxer codex, Adriano's second book does not incorporate description of social types and groups and he does not compare the Chinese to other social types in Asia and Europe. The images of Adriano's travel manuscript mostly depict a series of miscellaneous sketches that show Chinese attire and what might be called status devices and accessories: hats, belts, boots, halberds, trumpets, flags, tombs, and so on. From this perspective, Adriano mainly focuses on distinguishing social status within the Chinese society by describing objects and customs. He elaborates this social order by describing small objects and practices that the general histories of China neglected. In the texts describing these images, Adriano often refers to the social status of these objects. For instance, in the illustration depicting tombs, he differentiates among tombs for powerful people [los muy poderosos], for the middle state [chinos de medio estado], and for very common people [de la gente muy común].<sup>352</sup> Similarly, Adriano also indicates how the bonnet

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<sup>352</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 351.

represent an important social marker: "about the matter and some distinctive signs of the hats and bonnets that used the Chinese."<sup>353</sup>



<sup>353</sup> Beatriz Moncó, *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes*, p. 331. "De la materia y alguna distinción de la hechura de los gorros o bonetes que usan los chinos."



Figure 32. Adriano de las Cortes, *Relación de Viaje* (1627); pen drawing. © The British Library Board. Folio 144r. Source: Pascale Girard, *Le Voyage En Chine d'Adriano de las Cortes* s. J. (1625) p. 371.

As in the first book, Adriano's social distinctions and presentation are based on the inclusion of small details that display a Chinese point of view. In the folio included above, Adriano describes in detail the social, political, and military connotations of each hat, referring to the section of the first book in which he describes these accessories (chapter III and IV). As mentioned previously, Adriano's manuscript contributed in different areas to a better understanding of China in Europe. However, the lack of interest of the Society of Jesus in publishing these materials indicates that Adriano's ethnographical production knowledge was not one of the promotional areas of the Society. As Adriano observes, the readers of his work considered the manuscript to lack references to Christianity, which for the Society of Jesus was the main criteria for publishing a manuscript about China in Europe.

In addition to the absence of Christianity in China, Adriano's manuscript develops a narrative that situated the Chinese Jesuit mission within a precarious and weak position and projects a negative model for future Jesuits. As with other illustrated manuscripts produced in Asia and the New World, the relatively lack of interest of Iberian scholars and printers brought these valuable objects to the northern regions of Europe and Italy. This was the destiny of the Boxer codex, the codex Mendoza, the Florentine codex, Francisco Hernández's collection of manuscripts dealing with the fauna and flora of New Spain, and Adriano's illustrated manuscript. In many cases, these illustrated works were printed and disseminated by groups of non-Iberian European printers and patrons, who used these artifacts to promote their own agenda. Combining images made by native painters with writings of Iberian scholars and missionaries, all of these

illustrated manuscripts reached the printing presses only once they began to circulate outside of the Iberian world, in the printing centers of Italy and northern Europe. In the Iberian libraries, these materials were also used for promoting a particular patron or collector, as was the case in the library of El Escorial analyzed in the next chapter. However, these illustrated artifacts were often treated as trophies of the remote that remained among the possessions of a private collector and never reached the printing houses, as was the case with Hernández's illustrations.

The story of Adriano's drawings included in the second book shows that images made by native painters in Manila had a specific value beyond the local requests for churches. As was also the case in the Boxer codex, these native images were commanded from Spain and they were collected and displayed within the royal context. In these exotic images, scholars and collectors were not simply looking for new objects of study, they were rather interested in integrating exotic forms of seeing and representing the world. Far from a static depiction of a patronizing western image of the Orient, the production of images dealing with China were a multifaceted practice in which paradoxically the artisanal production of the image was closer to the hands of Chinese painters than to the constructions of western scholars. Instead of reproducing a dynamic of western depiction of the Orient, the images of Adriano de las Cortes integrate a perspective that contribute to redefine a western subjectivity. As we will see in the next chapter, the circulation and exchange of illustrated manuscripts and exotic artifacts had a great impact in an emergent community of European scholars who transformed their ways of enquiry the remote world and antiquity by interrogating the exotic sources and words of codices, *relaciones*, and letters written and composed in the New World and Asia.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Writing the World in a Room: Codices, Artifacts, and the Material Turn of Global History**

In the previous three chapters, I have focused on the writings and production of Iberian and European scholars who write about the Far East and the New World by integrating into their scope transpacific interactions between China, Macau, the Philippines, and New Spain. In this chapter, I examine how the circulation and collection of *relaciones*, codices and letters were integrated into European libraries and catalogues. The circulation of *relaciones* and codices played an essential role in reconfiguring scholarly practices of scholars interested in the study of artifacts and objects that came to Europe from different regions in Asia and the New World. As scholars have often observed, from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century antiquarians began to exchange and collect rarities and artifacts from all over the world. This community placed curiosity at the center of a new form of epistemology that gave a predominant role to the material and visual dimension of sources. According to Paula Findlen, "the creation of the museum was an attempt to manage the empirical explosion of materials that wider dissemination of ancient texts, increased travels, voyages of discovery, and more systematic forms of communication and exchange had produced."<sup>354</sup> This chapter explores the circulation of exotica by focusing on books that incorporated into their narratives artifacts from Asia and the New World.

In previous chapters, I have analyzed the role that codices, *relaciones* and letters have in configuring new methods of composing global histories. These synchronic narratives adopted contemporary sources and privileged the narratives of reports to the enquiry of ancient sources.

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<sup>354</sup> Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature, Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), p. 3.



In this chapter, I follow this central question by exploring synchronic forms of arranging exotic materials, codices, and artifacts from Asia and the New World. In Europe, scholars amassed a huge quantity of exotic artifacts with writings along with crafts and natural rarities that came from Asia and the Americas. These exotic artifacts were catalogued by following generic words, such as things from the Indies, antiquities, and exotica. The use of these words denotes that scholars lacked specific terms to organize the dissemination of objects from all around the world.

According to Ortelius, who was an eminent collector of rarities and exotic objects, a map is a hermeneutic instrument that allow to read and interpret histories dealing with both modern and ancient worlds. Ortelius defines his methodological spatial conception in the preface of the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*: "I omit here that the reading of Histories seems to be much more pleasant, and in deed so it is, when the map being laid before our eyes, we may behold things done, or places where they were done, as if they were at this time present and in doing."<sup>355</sup>

Ortelius wrote that geography was the "eyes of history" and a discipline that allows people to place things that we read about ancient and remote world "at this time present and in doing".

After the successful publication of the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Ortelius published a collection of maps of the ancient world "for the benefit of those interested in old history, both sacred and profane."<sup>356</sup> Ortelius' explicitly separates between old and modern maps and histories. However, this separation of ancient and modern geographies was not always diachronically defined. As we

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<sup>355</sup> Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, preface,1. English translation from the original Latin version published for the first time at the Officina Plantiniana, Antwerp, in 1571. William Bedwell, whose initials appear on the third leaf recto of this edition made probably the translation. Ortelius, Abraham, *The Theater of the Whole World, set forth by that excellent geographer Abraham Ortelius* (London, printed by John Norton, 1606), p. 4.

<sup>356</sup> A supplement of the ancient Geography. The first edition (1579) contained only 3 maps, but during the following years more maps were concluded and the *Parergon* became an autonomous collection of maps of the ancient world. *Parergon, sive Veteris Geographiae aliquot Tabulae*, (Antwerp: Christopher, Plantin, 1595), preface.

have observed in previous chapters, Ortelius wrongly illustrated in the same map of East Asia the China of early modern travelers and the Cathay of Marco Polo as two different kingdoms.

Ortelius' mistake shows that Marco Polo's Cathay and Martín de Rada's China could be read as two separated regions in both temporal and spatial terms. In the *Historia del gran reyno de la China*, Juan González de Mendoza presented Marco Polo's Cathay as a confusing reference to present China as if it was a new world for Europeans: "Although it seems that Marco Polo, in the long trip he made through Asia, wanted to announce to the world this sort of people, people do not clarify well if the incredible things that he narrates about that region deal with the Chinese or the Tatars."<sup>357</sup> The duplication of narrative spaces that belong to separate historical moments implies that formation of an early modern global consciousness separated from the references of ancient and medieval words was taking place mainly in the redefinition of words and historical narratives. In Francisco Hernández' work, the desire of joining ancient forms of representing and narrating the world to the modern [*juntando lo antiguo con lo moderno*] also indicates that the demarcation of lines between ancient and modern times and between Asia and the New World was not simply a matter of geographical discoveries, maps, and scientific instruments, it was also in the words and references of histories.

More than the effect of a doubling of time, late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century scholars faced historical narratives in which the space was anachronistically bent. Beyond the ancient model of universal history, the beginnings of global history emerged primary by separating temporally a plurality of narrative spaces. The process of this gradual separation between ancient and modern spatial narratives was possible by articulating collective forms of empiricism and exchange. As

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<sup>357</sup> Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia [...] del gran reyno de la China*, Preface to the reader. "Y aunque Marco Polo en el largo viaje que hizo por Asia, pareze que quiere dar a conozer al mundo esta suerte de gente, ay quien no se certifica, si las cossas increybles que della quenta sean de los Chinoas, o Tartaros."

mentioned, letters and *relaciones* had a crucial role in the formation of these collective networks promoted by the Council of the Indies in Spain, the Society of Jesus, as well as groups of scholars and merchants creating epistolary networks.

In this chapter, I analyze how the creation of forms of exchange and collection made possible and shaped the production of new historical narratives. As I argue, the collection of exotic artifacts from Asia and the New World and the exchange of information enabled historians and scholars to produce new methods of historical writing that were connected to the visual and material dimension of sources. Through this lens, the chapter defines how the concept of *exotica* emerged in this new culture as something that articulated the appearance of a new global consciousness that was particularly attached to the circulation of commodities and new material. Divided in three sections, the chapter examines three authors who attempted to organize material, knowledge, and disciplines in their libraries, catalogues, and museums. In El Escorial library, fray José de Sigüenza tried to catalogue strange and exotic codices from Asia, the New World with ancient books. In Antonio de León Pinelo's work, the production of a historiographical canon related to the West Indies implied a long research dealing with Oriental antiquities. Finally, in Athanasius Kircher's museum, the interpretation of an ancient stone buried with Syriac and Chinese inscriptions marks the beginnings of a collective work in which exotic forms of writing and depicting are the opportunity to establish new temporal causalities between Asia, the New World, and antiquity.

### **I. Synchronizing Printed Books and Manuscripts in El Escorial**

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century libraries and museums, manuscripts, books, and artifacts from the Americas and Asia were frequently collected and classified as codices from the East and West

Indies in the same repositories.<sup>358</sup> According to Daniella Bleichmar, the spatial references used for categorizing objects in museums were often inexact. The terms “India” or even “China” were often flexible or inaccurate geographical references. For instance, Bleichmar observes that Fernando Cospi categorized an Aztec codex received for his celebrated collection in 1665 as a “Libro della China.” Similarly, the so-called “Vienna Codex”, which is also an American artifact, has similarly been recognized in the Habsburg Imperial Library as an “Oriental Manuscript”.<sup>359</sup> Moreover, exotic rarities and wonders of nature were also arranged together and flexibly categorized. For instance, Bleichmar has identified an ivory Oliphant from the collection of Vincencio Juan de Lastanosa in Huesca that was classified as Japanese in one statement and Indian in another.<sup>360</sup> However, although these codices, artifacts, and rarities were often "wrongly" categorized, scholars often recognized the flexible and imprecise character of categories applied to the exotic and ancient world.

According to Bleichmar, the "geographical imprecision seems to have been the norm rather than the exception."<sup>361</sup> These imprecise words nonetheless represented the most useful way of arranging the artifacts that arrived to the European ports from many different locations around the world. For the most part, the collection of artifacts and objects from Asia and the Americas was reduced to the category of things from the Indies. The Spanish word *Indias* was

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<sup>358</sup> See for instance Jessica Keating and Lia Markey, “Indian’ objects in Medici and Austrian-Habsburg inventories: A case-study of the sixteenth-century term,” (Journal of the History of Collections, Volume 23, Issue 2, 1, 2011). Daniela Bleichmar, “Seeing the World in a Room: Looking at Exotica in Early Modern Collections”, in Bleichmar, Daniela, and Mancall, Peter C., eds. *Early Modern Americas: Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, PA, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011)

<sup>359</sup> Daniela Bleichmar, “Seeing the World in a Room: Looking at Exotica in Early Modern Collections,” p. 19.

<sup>360</sup> Daniela Bleichmar, “Seeing the World in a Room: Looking at Exotica in Early Modern Collections,” p. 21.

<sup>361</sup> Daniela Bleichmar, “Seeing the World in a Room: Looking at Exotica in Early Modern Collections,” 19.

used to categorize and catalogue Asian artifacts mingled with other forms of exotica from the Americas: objets d'art, paintings, letters, natural species, books, codices, etc. As Jessica Keating and Lia Markey have noted, the Italian and German catalogues and *kunstkammers* published between 1580 and 1750 used the terms *Indiana*, *alla Indiana*, *dell'Indie*, and *Indianisch*, to define objects from the Americas, India, and Asia.<sup>362</sup> Spanish authors perceived the term *Indias* as a flexible category that referred to the idea of something remote. This is the case in José de Acosta's *Natural and Moral History of the Indies* (Seville, 1590), where the word *Indias* is defined as a flexible concept that implies the idea of temporal distance (ancient East Indies) as well as geographical flexibility (the remote regions of both the West and East Indies):

Just as in our vulgar tongue the word Indies is general, for to name the Indies in our usage and language simply means lands that are very far away and very rich and very different from our own. And so we Spaniards indifferently call Peru and Mexico the Indies, and China and Malacca and Brazil as well, and when letters come from any part of these lands we say that they are letters from the Indies, although those lands and realms are at immense distances from each other and extremely different. Yet we cannot deny that the name Indies was taken from the East Indies and this because among the ancients India was famed for being a very remote land. Hence came the circumstance that when this other remote land was discovered it was also called India, because it was so far away and thought of as the end of the world.<sup>363</sup>

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<sup>362</sup> Jessica Keating and Lia Markey, "Indian' objects in Medici and Austrian-Habsburg inventories: A case-study of the sixteenth-century term," Pages 283–284

<sup>363</sup> Acosta, José de. *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, Book 1, Chapter XIV. "Qué significan en la Escritura Tarsis y Ofir. como en nuestro vulgar el vocablo de Indias es general, porque el uso y lenguaje nuestro nombrando Indias, es significar unas tierras muy apartadas y muy ricas, y muy extrañas de las nuestras. Y así los españoles igualmente llamamos Indias al Pirú y a México, y a la China y a Malaca y al Brasil; y de cualquier parte de estas que vengán cartas, decimos que son cartas de las Indias, siendo las dichas tierras y reinos de inmensa distancia y diversidad entre sí, aunque tampoco se puede negar que el nombre de Indias se tomó de la India Oriental, y porque cerca de los antiguos esa India se celebraba por tierra remotísima. De ahí vino que esta otra tierra tan remota, cuando se descubrió, la llamaron también India, por ser tan apartada como tenida por el cabo del mundo, y así llaman indios a los que moran en el cabo del mundo."

As José de Acosta observes, the term *Indias*, which he associates with the ancient meaning of the East Indies, was used as a flexible category to name and categorize remote things. According to Acosta, even though the hemispheres of East and West Indies were at immense distances from each other and entirely different, they were categorized under the same word because both hemispheres were perceived as remote lands. As mentioned previously, ancient words were often a problematic reference to define and categorize the remote world. As Acosta identifies in the passage above, the word Indies allowed to locate particular letters and objects into a general narrative. Although Acosta knew that the word *Indias* refers to different and remote worlds in Asia and the New World, he considered the word *Indias* to be a useful general category.

Similar to this use of the word *Indias*, early modern scholars began to adopt the words *exoticorum & peregrinarum rerum* [exotic and foreign things] to classify objects from distant regions. This was the case for Carolus Clusius, who also published a catalogue of exotic and foreign things: *Exoticorum Libri Decem* (1605).<sup>364</sup> In this catalogue, Clusius describes his partners as scholars devoted to the study of exotic and foreign things: *peregrinarum et exoticarum rerum studiosissimi*. In Clusius's work, the terms *exoticus* and *peregrinus* imply more than a category applied to things that come from remote regions; they also defined a community of scholars and friends who created links by exchanging the material culture of *exotica*.

In Latin, the term *exoticus* denoted the idea of something coming from remote lands, as in Alfonso de Palencia's *Universal vocabulario en latin y romance* (1490): “things that come from remote parts.”<sup>365</sup> In Spanish, scholars used the name *peregrino*, and not the word *exótico*, which

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<sup>364</sup> Carolus Clusius, *Exoticorum libri decem, quibus animalium, plantarum, aromatum, aliorumque peregrinorum fructuum historiae describuntur* (Antverpiae: Ex officina Plantiana Raphelengii, 1605)

<sup>365</sup> Palencia, Alfonso de, *Universal vocabulario en latin y en romance*, Gracia Lozano López, Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies (Madison), 1992. “Son cosas que vienen de partes lexanas: Plauto en la mustelaria que dize: non omnes possunt olere vnguenta exotica”.

appeared only in modern Spanish.<sup>366</sup> In English, the Oxford dictionary records the word *exotick* in 1599, but with a meaning related to magic and witchcraft. In French, we can also find a similar combination of the word *exoticus* and *peregrinus* in Francois Rabelais: “Some paintings, tapestry, animals, fishes, birds and other exotic and foreign goods that were in the breakwater and over the covered market of the port.”<sup>367</sup> As in Carolus Clusius's work, Rabelais also used the terms *exotique* and *peregrine* in relation to the diversity of commodities that reached the ports and cities in Europe. As in the case of the word *Indias*, the terms *exoticus* and *peregrinus* were applied to things that moved from one place to another, and through their travels lost their original domestic specificity.

Modern scholars have often linked the notion of exotica to the idea of non-European objects, associating exotica with the idea of Europe as the beneficiary of a global distribution of natural products. Moreover, as some scholars have noted, interest in exotica was particularly linked to the market value in Europe.<sup>368</sup> In the depiction of *Terra Australis Incognita* included in Arnold Florent's globe, we find one of the earliest examples of this definition of exotica. Set at the center of the image with her crown, Europe appears surrounded by figures representing people from Africa, Asia, and the Americas, offering their products. The new plants, trees and minerals described in this scene were considered as commodities (*mercium*, which translates to

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<sup>366</sup> For instance, the word does not appear in Sebastián de Covarrubias's *Tesoro de la lengua Castellana o española*.

<sup>367</sup> François Rabelais, *Quart Livre* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1997), p. 99. "Il descendit donc au port admirant, pendant que les chiourmes des navires faisaient provision d'eau douce, divers tableaux, diverses ries, divers animaulx, poisons, oizeaulx et aultres marchandises exotiques et peregrines."

<sup>368</sup> The literature on this topic is vast. See Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism, Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015). Jonker, Joost; Sluyterman, Keetie. *At Home on the World Markets: Dutch International Trading Companies from the 16th Century until the Present* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2001) Also, Claudia Swan, "Exotica on the Move: Birds of Paradise in Early Modern Holland", *Art History*. in *Objects in Motion in the Early Modern World*. Edited by Daniela Bleichmar and Meredith Martin. Volume 38, Issue 4, pages 620–635, September 2015

commodity, is the first Latin word in the stone) that came from particular geographical places.

Surrounding this scene, we see an exotic natural environment with foreign trees, plants and

animals. Under this scene and inscribed in stone are names of spices, minerals and materials that

are imported from different regions and continents of the world to Europe: gold, silver, diamonds

and different spices and fruits are classified in relation to their regions and locations.



Figure 33. Globe. Van Langren, Arnold Florent (1580-1644)., a Langren, Éditeur: (Amstelodami) 1630. - Version numérique 3D: © DNP Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd. [2015]: BnF.

The words *exoticus* and *peregrinus* were progressively adopted in catalogues and inventories of objects, rarities, and books. However, the word *exoticus* was not associated with the idea of non-European production. Rather, scholars perceived the word *exotica* as something in opposition to the idea of classic and ancient books and objects. The catalogue of books written in vernacular languages by Georg Draudii develops this opposition: *Bibliotheca Exotica: sive*



*Catalogus officinalis librorum peregrinis linguis usualibus scriptorium* (1610).<sup>369</sup> This catalogue applies the term *exotica* to books written in vernacular languages, such as *Gallica, Italica, Hispanica, Belgica, Anglica, Danica, Bohemica, and Ungarica*. Instead of referring to something that comes from distant lands, *exoticus* and *peregrinus* refer in Draudi's catalogue to vernacular European languages. Closer to the Latin term *vernaculus*, which originally referred to a "home-grown slave," the term *exotica* as well as the expression *peregrinis linguis* is opposed to the idea of classic texts written in Latin. Draudii's catalogue reproduces the same principle as Clusius' catalogue, which, instead of books, classified natural things that were not yet described in Latin books by classic authors and that had only vernacular names and histories.

Clusius' and Draudii's catalogue of books and things, respectively, represented an attempt to name and order vernacular knowledge. Like the word *Indias*, the word *exotica* was a flexible category that allowed scholars to order books, artifacts and objects by proposing a universal vernacular narrative. The ambition of classifying every exotic book and object in catalogues reveals the goal of articulating a new universal narrative linked to the diversity of exotic names and objects. As in the writings of Martín de Rada, Francisco Hernández, Juan González de Mendoza, and the Jesuits in China, these scholars of the exotic attempted to produce a universal narrative that is not based on ancient and classic authors, but on heterogeneous sources written in vernacular languages produced in remote worlds.

However, in the absence of specific words to universalize the dissemination of exotic objects, scholars tended to consider images to be a better medium to organize nature and the world. As in the Boxer codex and Adriano de las Cortes' manuscript, the collection of visual

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<sup>369</sup> Draudius, Georg. *Bibliotheca exotica: sive catalogus officinalis librorum peregrinis linguis usualibus scriptorium, videlicet Gallica, Italica, Hispanica, [...] La bibliotheque vniversail, contenant le catalogue de tous les liures, qui ont esté imprimes ce siecle passè, aux langues françoise, italien[n]e, espaignole, & autres ... depuis l'an, 1500. iusques à l'an present 1610. A Frankfourt, par Pierre Kopf, 1610.*

artifacts provided proofs of remote cultures and kingdoms. However, these exotic codices could not be catalogued in museums and libraries by discipline or author, but by adopting aesthetic and visual principles. These distributional principles were developed by fray José de Sigüenza, the second director of the library of El Escorial. In the *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, Fray José de Sigüenza describes the library and rooms of the Imperial palace inaugurated in 1585.<sup>370</sup> In his description of the section of the library that housed manuscripts and codices, Sigüenza classified exotic books produced in Asia and the Americas. Instead of organizing these books and codices by their authors, disciplines, or regions, Sigüenza organizes artifacts based on their exterior appearance:

Much abundance of things about painting, made by hand and mold, put and bounded in books of all good things that have been printed by brave men. Outside of this, there are stored in various drawers and desks other curiosities that are typical of this library and office. A very antique way of writing, not only in the Egyptian Papyrus of Alexander, which there are some pieces, or leaves, but also from before the invention of the book. Books made with leaves and barks of trees, from where people say there came the name of the book. We have here one of these books: some barks, or leaves that I do not know what they are, long as swords or daggers scabbards, all of them cut by one measure. The letters are recorded and engraved with great delicacy, and then, given with some powder or ink that make letters show up very well. This is an entire history, but I do not know what kind of letter it is, the title says: Malabar language. The binding is delicate and elegant, because all these leaves are pierced, and there is a string passing through them and the tables outside seem to be from the same tree or wood, very beautiful antiquity<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo* (Madrid: En la Imprenta Real, 1605)

<sup>371</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*. p. 589. "Mucha riqueza de cosas de pintura, de mano y de molde, puestas y encuadernadas en sus libros de cuanto bueno se ha impresso de valientes hombres. Sin esto se guardan en diuersos caxones y escritorios otras curiosidades propias de esta tienda y oficina. El

Sigüenza describes fragments and materials that are part of the book, such as the pieces of papyrus, leaves, and tree barks. In the description, he mistakenly associates the tree barks, which are at the origin of the word codex, with the origin of the name book: barks of trees, from where people say there came the name of the book.<sup>372</sup> Instead of reconstructing the origin of these exotic and ancient books by referring to their particular temporality, Sigüenza develops a comparative approach based on the materiality of books.

Moreover, Sigüenza uses the terms *antiquissimo* and *antigüedad* to define both the material forms of books and a way of writing.<sup>373</sup> He describes the books by observing the material and aesthetic characteristics that define the art of writing and producing codices. For instance, the codex written in the Malabar language described at the end of the passage is categorized as a very beautiful antiquity [*antigüedad hermosísima*]. In this description, Sigüenza's notion of antiquity does not refer to ancient times, but rather to an aesthetic and artistic excellence that reproduces an ancient mode of making a book: "the binding is delicate and elegant [...] very beautiful antiquity." Sigüenza's use of the term antiquity also refers to the temporal character of books: "the other [manuscript], which is called the codex Vigiliano, because it was written by a *Vigilia*, Presbyterian of the monastery of S. Martin of Alvelda (small village two leagues from Logroño) in the year of nine hundred and seventy-six, so according to

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modo de escreuir antiquissimo, no solo en el Papiro Egypcio de Alexandro, de que ay algunos pedaços, o digamos hojas, sino también el de antes que este se hallase, que era en hojas y cortezas de arboles, de donde dizen nació el nombre del libro, tenemos aquí uno destes: Unas cortezas, o hojas no se que se son, largas como baynas de espadas, o de dagas, cortadas todas a una medida, exaradas y grauadas en ellas con harto primor las letras, y después dado con cierto polvo o tinta con que salen muy bien. Es una historia entera, mas no se que letra es; el titulo dize: Lengua malabar. La encuadernación es graciosa, porque están todas estas hojas agujeradas, y por ellas pasa un cordel y las tablas de fuera parecen del mismo palo o madero, antigüedad hermosísima."

<sup>372</sup> A codex, from the Latin *caudex* for "trunk of a tree" or block of wood, is a book constructed of a number of sheets of paper, vellum, papyrus, or similar materials. *cortezas de árboles de donde dizen nació en nombre de libro*

<sup>373</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 589. "El modo de escreuir antiquissimo."

this it is more than six hundred and thirty years old."<sup>374</sup> However, sometimes the appearance of ancient books, characters and letters can be perceived as modern: "The letters are so much alive, so much full, and so shining, as if it were only two years ago that it was written, but it is more than five hundred and seventy years."<sup>375</sup>

In Sigüenza's library, the category of antiquity sometimes refers to a very specific temporal location, such as the "codex Vigilano", written in the year 976. In other places, as in the case of the Malabar codex, the word antiquity is applied to an ancient way of writing and making books, without knowing or specifying its antiquity. Sigüenza reproduces the aesthetic eye of antiquarians and collectors of the period, such as Benito Arias Montano, who was the previous librarian of El Escorial. In his description of the library, Sigüenza appreciatively mentions Montano's work and the disciplinary divisions proposed for the books of the library. However, Sigüenza adapts Montano's distributional ideas by favoring a principle based on the exterior appearance of books and codices. Instead of cataloguing the books by disciplines and authors, Sigüenza worried first about the visual order and appearance of books and the library.

In addition to the Malabar codex, the papyrus from Egypt, and the codices from Spain, Sigüenza describes in the same section of manuscripts a set of Chinese books: "the printing of the books of China and its figures is extremely rude, though the paper is of strange delicateness. They have been more advanced than us in the invention of printing and engraving, but in beauty

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<sup>374</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 589. "El otro, que se llama codex Vigilano, porque lo escribió un Vigilia, Presbytero del monasterio de S. Martin de Alveulda (aora es un poblezillo pequeño dos leguas de Logroño) el año de novecientos y setenta y seys, que segun esto tiene mas de syscientos y treynta años de antigüedad."

<sup>375</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 588, 589. "Estas agora las letras tan vivas, tan enteras, y con tanto resplandor, como si huviera dos años que se escribió, aviendo quinientos y setenta y mas, porque el de mil y treynta y nueve començo el Imperio de Enrique Segundo, por la muerte de su padre, y ya esava començado a escribir."

and delicacy they are much inferior.”<sup>376</sup> Instead of describing or categorizing the Chinese books as antiquities, Sigüenza develops a comparative and synchronic history of books based on the technique and appearance of Chinese and European books. Sigüenza's use of the term *figura* associates the Chinese characters with pictures or images that imitate things and objects in nature. Adopted by José de Acosta, Athanasius Kircher and other scholars, this term was not just applied to the Chinese system of writing, but also to other forms of writing from Asia and the Americas.

Like the codices, the papyrus and materials associated with the Chinese book, figures, and characters were also traces of an incipient history and evolution of *modus scribendi* and a history of the book that only began just to be rudimentary drafted through the eyes of Sigüenza. Unlike the Malabar codex, which is seen by Sigüenza as a material example of the ancient techniques of making books, the Chinese books represented a different evolution of the technological and material dimension of a book. Although aesthetically and technologically different, the Chinese printed books collected in the El Escorial library were situated alongside the manuscripts and codices. Though the Chinese books were not manuscripts, but were categorized with the exotic codices and manuscripts because were also different from the library's common books.<sup>377</sup> This principle of categorization by appearance is also seen in another set of books placed near the Chinese ones: Francisco Hernández's sixteen volumes containing

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<sup>376</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 590. "La impresión de los libros de la China, y las figuras son grosserissimas, aunque el papel de estraña delicadeza. Han nos llevado ventaja en ser primeros en la invención del imprimir y estampar, mas en la hermosura y primor se quedan muy inferiores."

<sup>377</sup> Sigüenza calls this room or section the librería de mano del Escorial, manuscript section of El Escorial. The introduction of Chinese books in Spain and in El Escorial had different origins. As we mentioned in the first chapter, some books were sent by Martín de Rada and Francisco de Sande to the king after the expedition to China in 1575. Scholars have commonly thought that these Chinese books described by Sigüenza were sent by Rada. However, according to Gregorio de Andrés, this collection of Chinese books was probably acquired by Juan de Borja from the Portuguese Gregorio Gonzalves. See: Gregorio de Andrés, "Los Libros Chinos de la Real Biblioteca de El Escorial", *Missionalia Hispanica*, N. 76 p. 115-123, CSIC, Madrid, 1969.

descriptions and images of New Spain and the Indies. As in that collection, Sigüenza focuses on the materiality of these codices and images, which represented the more valuable collection in the library:

Along with this [Chinese books] there is a curiosity in high esteem, worthy of the personality and greatness of the founder of this library. This is the history of all animals and plants that have been seen in the West Indies, with their own native colors. The same color as the tree and the grass has, roots, trunk, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits. The one that the caiman, the spider, the serpent, the snake, the rabbit, the dog, and the fish with scales have. The beautiful feathers of many different birds; feet and beak and even the same sizes, colors and costumes of men, and ornaments of their galas and parties, and the manner of their dances and sacrifices, which has high pleasure and variety in look at and not small fruit for those whose occupation it is to consider nature, and all that God created as medicine for man, and the various and admirable works of nature. The King commanded this work to Dr. Francisco Hernández, native of Toledo, a learned and diligent man, who, as he says in a preface [...] wrote fifteen books with large folio, in which he reported everything that we have said. This is a great accomplishment, worthy of being compared to Alexander and Aristotle, and although this work is not finished, it is more than a beginning for those who would want to complete it. This is not a work that can be accomplished by the strength of one man alone.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 590. "Junto con esto ay una curiosidad de gran estima, digna del animo y grandeza del fundador de esta libreria. Esta es la historia de todos los animales y plantas que se han podido ver en las Indias Occidentales, con sus mismos nativos colores. El mismo color que el arbol y la yerba tiene, en rayz, tronco, ramas, hojas, flores, frutos. El que tiene el cayman, el araña, la culebra, la serpiente, el conejo, el perro, y el peze con sus escamas; las hermosissimas plumas de tantas diferencias de aues; los pies y el pico y aun los mismos talles, colores y vestidos de los hombres, y los ornatos de sus galas, y de sus fiestas, y la manera de sus corros y bayles y sacrificios, cosa que tiene sumo deleyte y variedad en mirarse, y no pequeño fruto para los que tienen por oficio considerar la naturaleza, y lo que Dios ha criado para medicina del hombre, y las obras de la naturaleza tan varias y admirables. Encomendó el rey está impresa y trabajo al doctor Francisco Hernández, natural de Toledo, hombre docto y diligente, que, como dice en un proemio, pasando en Indias en poco más de quatro años, con el buen orden que puso y con no descansar lo que se le había encargado y con los recados y poderes que el rey llevaba, escribió quinze libros grandes de folio, en que dio grande noticia de todo lo que hemos dicho. De suerte que en unos puso la figura, forma y color del animal y de la planta, partiéndolos como mejor pudo, y en otros, a quien cada cosa, las calidades, propiedades y nombres de todo, conforme a que de aquella gente bárbara y de los españoles que allá han vivido, nacido y criádose pudo colegir; sacando unas veces por el discurso, otras por buenas conjeturas,

In the manuscript section of El Escorial library, ancient parchments from Egypt, Malabar codices, Chinese printed books, and codices made in the West Indies were classified in the same area. The collection of Hernández's codices is neither described as an antiquity, nor as a different technological artifact, rather, it is observed as a perfect form of naturalism. As in other codices, Hernández's volumes were also bound with exotic and strange materials: "These fifteen volumes are beautifully bound, different from the common bindings of this library, covered and engraved with gold under blue leather, brooches, spines, and ornaments made of silver, of great depth and excellent artistry."<sup>379</sup> Whereas the Malabar codex and the papyrus from Egypt refer to different material forms in the antiquity, and the Chinese books represented a sort of technological exoticism, Francisco Hernández's codices and images were perceived as trustful evidence of native nature and colors.<sup>380</sup>

Hernández's images were also exhibited in the in the *Sala del Mediodia* [Room of Midday] of El Escorial.<sup>381</sup> In this room, there were twenty three paintings from Hernández's collection, which were exhibited until 1640, when Philip IV decided to renovate the room decorations in El Escorial.<sup>382</sup> Sigüenza describes how Hernández's images were copied and

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la razón de lo que buscaba, así en los nombres, como en calidades, virtudes y usos, según había aquella gente probado. Hizo fuera de estos quince tomos, otros dos por sí: el uno es el índice de la plantas ... Empresa verdaderamente grande para ponerla en competencia de Alexandro con Aristóteles; y aunque no está tan acabado este trabajo como pudiera, es un más que principio para los que quisieren llevarla al cabo; no es negocio que puedan abarcarlo las fuerzas de un solo hombre."

<sup>379</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 590. "Están estos quince tomos encuadernados hermosamente, fuera de lo que en esta librería es usado, cubiertos y labrados de oro sobre cuero azul, manecuelas, cantoneras y bullones de plata muy gruesos y de excelente labor."

<sup>380</sup> Fray José de Sigüenza, *Tercera parte de la Historia de la orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 590. "con sus mismos nativos colores."

<sup>381</sup> This antechamber was located near the Royal chamber where people waited for the king's audience.

<sup>382</sup> There is a previous description providing the number of paintings in Juan Alonso de Almela's *Descripción de la Octava Maravilla del Mundo* (ca 1594): «[...] tiene también esta dicha antecámara 23 cuadros de topologías y diferencias de aves y animales y hierbas y frutales de las Indias, cosa peregrina y curiosamente procurada por Su

adapted to this particular room: "Portraits from nature of many things that have been seen in our Indies: paintings of many different type of birds, with the same color of its feathers, others of big and small animals. Although the big ones are reduced to smaller forms in order to fit them in the places where they were supposed to be located, as we will see when we will speak of the manuscript section of the library."<sup>383</sup> Unlike other corpuses of images, the collection of images produced during Hernández's expedition acquired a very important political and scientific symbolism. The codices and images of the library were also shown to illustrious visitors that went to El Escorial during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Cassiano dal Pozzo, who visited the library during the embassy organized by Cardinal Francisco Barberini (1597-1679) in 1626, also described Hernández's codices in his diaries, informing the members of the *Accademia dei Lincei* about this exotic visual corpus. At that time, the members of the academy were preparing a printing edition of Hernández's work by adapting the images and copies made by the Italian doctor Nardo Antonio Recchi after Hernández's expedition.

Besides the royal rooms reserved for visitors, the library also played a fundamental role in the display of the power of the Iberian Empire. This is seen in the aesthetic and material dimensions that Sigüenza gave to the library after succeeding Benito Arias Montano as its director. As one of the most illustrious members of Abraham Ortelius's network, Montano had

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Majestad». Documentos para la historia del Monasterio de San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial (editado por Gregorio de Andrés, 6. Madrid: Imprenta Saez, 1964, p. 78.)

<sup>383</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*. p. 606. "Ésta también tiene muchas diferencias de cuadros que son de consideración; retratos del natural de muchas cosas que se ven en nuestras Indias: unos de muchas diferencias de aves, con el mismo color de sus plumas; otros de variedad de animales grandes y pequeños, aunque reducidos los grandes y los más de ellos a formas pequeñas porque cupiesen en los lugares que pretendía ponerse, como lo veremos cuando vengamos a tratar de la librería de mano. Hay también otra diferencia de los que llaman reptiles, que en castellano comúnmente llamamos sierpes, tomando del latín el vocablo, en particular culebras, víboras, lagartos, caimanes, escorzones, sapos y otras mil sabandijas. En otros cuadros, en ciertos diseños y perspectivas de jardines, huertos, claustros y fuentes, hay gran variedad de plantas y hierbas con raíces, hojas, frutos, flores, coloridas al natural aunque mucho de ello pintado con artificio, no más de para hacer vistas y apariencias, componiendo de unas con otras, que entretienen harto la vista y aun la engañan."



imported to El Escorial an interest in the material dimension of antiquity. Sigüenza even signaled Montano's passion for coins and antiquities: "Like that very ancient and celebrated coin called Siclo, repeatedly mentioned in the old testament, and whose evidence and presence reveals thousands of truths related to the coins and pesos. Benito Arias Montano left here this excellent relic."<sup>384</sup> Besides these antiquities, books were also conserved and collected according to their material and aesthetic characteristics. Rather than being organized by following a disciplinary or authorial principle, Sigüenza divided books according to their materiality and form. As the main librarian of El Escorial, Sigüenza accommodated the distributional principle of disciplines and authors, which Montano had before established, to the material and formal disposition of books:

From that principle [referring to Benito Arias Montano's list of disciplines described previously by Sigüenza], it was ordered for the first time the library in the location that we said, with so many divisions, demarcations, and titles. Ordering books first by their language, then from each language dividing between manuscript and printed, and from each of these distinctions all the disciplinary divisions that could at least be found. The shelves were full of titles and the one mingled with the others, and like this, it was necessary to place the books in a disorganized manner, the big with the small ones, and because the library had only one room, it was a very confusing and ugly thing. After placing them in the new rooms they are in now that I said, it became easier, clearer, and better composed. When I moved the books from there, because I succeeded that illustrious librarian [...] and finally I made two catalogues, the first with the names of authors, the other with the same order of disciplines, and all this was

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<sup>384</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 585 "como es la de aquella antiquissima y celebrada moneda que se llama Siclo, tan repetida en el Testamento Viejo, y de cuya verdad y noticia se coligen y averiguan mil verdades, en cosas de monedas y pesos. Dexó aquí esta excelente reliquia, que assi quiero llamarla, el Doctor Arias Montano."

satisfied by its good appearance and composition from outside, and in the order of the sciences and faculties inside.<sup>385</sup>

Sigüenza's distribution aimed at preserving both an aesthetic order and an organization by authors and disciplines. Before Sigüenza, Montano had previously organized the books into one single room by languages, separating manuscripts and printed books, and creating a list of disciplines. As Sigüenza observes, the library was extended by adding two supplementary rooms, which are the rooms in which he located codices and manuscripts. In these two rooms, Sigüenza separated books on vernacular languages from Latin and Greek: "In the first and greater of these two rooms there are only Greek and Latin books, without mingling them with any other languages."<sup>386</sup> In the second room, Sigüenza included "Hebrews, Arabics, Italians, Spanish, Persians, from China, and Turkish, as well as other vernacular books, all manuscripts, although those from China are printed."<sup>387</sup> Once again, the printed Chinese materials seems to disturb Sigüenza, who probably thought that the true nature and form of the vernacular and exotic was always the manuscript. As in Draudii's *Bibliotheca Exotica*, Sigüenza considered the distinction

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<sup>385</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 586, "Desta suerte se assentó la primera vez la librería en el lugar que diximos con tantas divisions y particiones y títulos: cada lengua por sí, en cada lengua lo manuescripto por sí, lo impresso por sí, y en cada una destas diferencias todas estas divisions de disciplinas, quantas a lo menos se hallavan: los caxones llenos de títulos, que se alcancauan y cubrian vnos con otros, y así era forçoso estar los libros muy descompuestos y grandes con chicos, y como no era mas de una la pieça, era vna cosa muy confusa y fea. Despues que se puso en las que he dicho donde agora estan, tiene mucha facilidad, claridad, y compostura. Quando la mude de allí, porque sucedi en ella a tan illustre Bibliotecario, a quien tengo en todo por maestro (ojala mereciera yo nombre de su discipulo) me parecio guardar en quanto fue possible el orden que avia dado en el asiento de las disciplinas, y por quitar la fealdad que haxe la desproporcion de los libros, junte los de folio todos en los caxones que estan para ellos, y los de quarto en los de quarto, y assi los demas en sus propios senos, y para que con suma facilidad se hallase lo que se busca en ellos, hize dos catalogos, el uno de los nombres propios de los autores, y el otro con el mismo orden de estas disciplinas, y se satisfiziesse a todo la Buena apariencia y compostura de fuera, y al orden de las sciencias y facultades en lo de dentro."

<sup>386</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, p.585. "En la primera y mayor de estas dos pieças estan solos libros Griegos y Latinos de mano, sin mezclarse otra lengua ninguna."

<sup>387</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, p.585. "En la segunda, Hebreos, Arabigos, Italianos, y Castellanos, Persios y de la China, y Turquesos, y otros vulgares, todos de mano, aunque los de la China son impressos."

between Latin and vernacular an essential principle for the cataloguing of manuscripts. However, in the library of El Escorial, the collection of vernacular (vulgar in Sigüenza's terms) books also included books and manuscripts from north Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

In addition to books and manuscripts, the library also housed scientific instruments in both the main library and the supplementary rooms. These instruments are described by Sigüenza as portable artifacts that had no particular aesthetic value, but that existed for "practicing" with them and operating with precision: "there are also some earthly and heavenly globes, and many charts and maps of provinces, as in the main library, although we did not pay special attention to them before, because they are portable things."<sup>388</sup> As Sigüenza observes, the globe and instruments were exhibited as moveable artifacts that provided an entertainment to aristocrats and visitors. As with the naturalistic images in Hernández's collection, the scientific artifacts (maps, globes, and instruments) were also portable things that interacted with the collection of manuscripts and books. In the same room as the exotic codices, Sigüenza noted that "there are also here good earthly and heavenly globes, charts, maps, and other excellent mathematical instruments, and in particular there is one invented by Pedro Apiano [...] and it was made out of four bodies of books in folio, part in print and part by hand, for explanation and use, that are kept here along with the same instrument."<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 584. "Ay tambien algunos globos terrestres y celestes y muchas cartas y mapas de provincias, como en la libreria principal, aunque allí no hizimos caso de ellos, porque son cosas movibles, como ni de otros insturmentos matematicos, Esferas, Astrolabios."

<sup>389</sup> José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, p. 585. "También aquí ay buenos globos celestes y terrestres, cartas, mapas y otros excelentes instrumentos matematicos, y en particular uno que invento Pedro Apiano, y se lo presentó al Emperador Carlos V., que tiene grandes usos y para cosas de medir campañas, y cosiderar tierras, y medirlas y situarlas, tomar sus Alturas y distancias, excelentissimo para su declaracion, y uso hizo quatro cuerpos de libros de a folio, parte impressos y parte de mano, que se guardan aqui con el mismo instrumento."

As scholars have often observed, early modern libraries and museums combined and mingled objects that were categorized as *antiquitates*, *exotica*, *naturalia*, *artificialia*, and *scientifica*. As Horst Bredekamp has noted, the early modern museums reflected the necessity of including a spatial perspective into the activity of investigating and describing the world: "the isolation of the exotic [in the *kunstkammer*] attests to the desire to understand the earth in its horizontal, spatial entirety. Thus the *kunstkammer* combined the three vertical stages of development – from *naturalia* to *artificialia* to *scientifica* – with a horizontal plane that represented efforts to research the entire globe."<sup>390</sup> In the early modern *wunderkammer* the category of *antiquitates* and *exotica* attest to the necessity of reconstructing simultaneously time and space. However, as Sigüenza's library and early modern catalogues show, *exotica* was not simply a category that attested to the desire to research and reconstruct the entire globe, but it was also connected to the necessity of separating *exotica* and antiquity.

## II. The Paradise and the New World

Two decades after Fray José de Sigüenza (1544-1606) worked as librarian in El Escorial, Antonio de León Pinelo (1595-1660) continued the task of cataloguing books and manuscripts compiled by the Spanish administration. Pinelo was an erudite historian educated at the College of Jesuits of Lima. He travelled to Spain in 1622 and soon began a compilation of Indian laws: *Recopilación de Leyes de Indias*. In 1629, Pinelo published the *Epitome de la Biblioteca oriental i occidental*, a catalogue of books of the East and West Indies.<sup>391</sup> As Pinelo clarifies in the introduction to this volume, the title of *Biblioteca* could be applied to both a catalogue of books

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<sup>390</sup> Horst Bredekamp, *the Lure of Antiquity and the Culte of the Machine* (Markus Wiener Publishers, 2016), p. 36.

<sup>391</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *Epitome de la Biblioteca oriental i occidental, nautica i geografica*. (Madrid, Juan Gonzalez, 1629)

and a library. In the introduction, Pinelo describes the *Biblioteca* oriental y occidental as a "catalogue of the book of Indies that adds historical notice to the political science of that New World."<sup>392</sup> Therefore, Pinelo considered the epitome to be in dialogue with the compilation of laws. The former represents an attempt to produce a historiographical corpus to structure and legitimate the laws and policies of the West Indies. Pinelo's catalogue represents the first attempt to organize an index in Spanish by dividing both ancient and modern authors and western and oriental books. The catalogue includes travel narratives, histories, letters, discoveries, shipwrecks, natural history, and geography related to the East and West Indies: "I prepared a new study, a voluminous Catalogue [Biblioteca], in which one finds, if not all the authors that have written about the two Indies, the most that with diligence and not a few expenses it was possible to collect."<sup>393</sup>

Pinelo's catalogue is a bibliographical statement that aimed at separating two historiographical corpuses. On the one hand, a heterogeneous collection of ancients and modern books dealing with the East Indies. On the other hand, the corpus associated with the Spanish West Indies. As in the writings of Francisco Hernández, who tried to join ancient and modern description and to define the geographical and historical boundaries of the Spanish western hemisphere, Pinelo also aimed at separating and defining a historiographical corpus dealing with the Spanish West. Pinelo signals the need for the Spanish administration to articulate a canon of authors and works about the Indies, complaining in the introduction that foreign scholars and

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<sup>392</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *Epitome de la Biblioteca oriental i occidental, Dedicatoria*. "Quando V. Ex. Se sirvio de mandarme escribir una memoria de libros de Indias, para añadir noticia historica, a ciencia política de aquel Nuevo Mundo"

<sup>393</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *Epitome de la Biblioteca oriental i occidental*, preface, p. 2. "Dispuse con Nuevo studio una copiosa Biblioteca, en que se hallan, sino todos los autores, que de las dos Indias han escrito, los mas que mucha diligencia, I no poco gasto pudo juntar."



Figure 34. Frontispiece of Antonio de Leon Pinelo, *Epitome de la biblioteca oriental i occidental, nautica i geografica*. Juan Gonzalez, 1629. Collection JCBL; Americana. Image: archive.org.

In the introduction to the *Epitome*, Pinelo classifies catalogues of books by noting the specific discipline of each catalogue. In this list, Pinelo includes George Draudi's catalogue mentioned before, which he defines through the opposition between classic and exotica:

"Georgio Draudio, Clasica y Exotica."<sup>395</sup>As in Draudi's catalogue, the opposition between those narratives of "exotica" written in vernacular and classic books represents a crucial distinction in the work of Antonio de León Pinelo. After the introductory *Discurso Apologetico*, Pinelo includes in the catalogue an index with authors and a list with languages of Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Europe used by the authors: *Alemana, Arabica, Armenia, Aymara, Caldea, Castellana, Catalana, China, Etiopica, Hebrea, Italiana, Latina, Mexicana, Otomi, Tarasca* are some of the languages mentioned by Pinelo in the list.

The catalogue is divided into "Oriental" and "Western," and begins with Oriental books and manuscripts. It starts with a chapter of books written by ancient authors, opening with Hanno the Great and Arrian of Nicomedia. The second section is devoted to those travels made "after the India was discovered," and it includes Vasco de Gama, Luis de Camões and other modern Portuguese and European authors and travelers. Following these two sections, there are chapters related to different regions in Asia: India, Persia, Ethiopia, Tartaria, China, and Japan. After the Oriental catalogue, Pinelo introduces the Western bibliographical corpus, which includes not only the Americas, but also the Atlantic world and the Philippines: "The East from the province of Santa Cruz in Brazil to the Kingdoms of Malacca, and Archipelago of Moluccas: and

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<sup>395</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *Epitome de la Biblioteca oriental i occidental*, Discurso Apologetico..

Occidental, from where the true Meridian demarcates the same section, until going out in the West to our Atlantic Ocean. Embracing this part, the Fourth and largest of the World, in the two famous continents of the duplicated America, or *Iberica*, Northern and Southern."<sup>396</sup>

Pinelo's catalogue is an artifact that separates the historiographical production of the Spanish west from an orientalist production that combines ancient and modern books. He even renames America as northern and southern *Iberica*. This historiographical division helped him to establish a canon of the West that he used two decades later to complete a long historiographical compilation of ancient and modern sources. In this compilation, Pinelo argues that the paradise was originally located in the southern region of the New World. Like in the *Epitome de la biblioteca oriental i occidental*, Pinelo's *The Paradise in the New World* is divided into two volumes that separate an oriental bibliographical corpus from a western one. Both the *Epitome de la Biblioteca Oriental i Occidental* and the *Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo* aim to vindicate the West, which Pinelo always presents as superior to the Orient. Pinelo develops this superiority by mobilizing a corpus of western sources and deconstructing the authority of the Orient: "It is clearly recognized that our Indies are preferred to the Oriental Indies in the composition of the World, which is why it should be attributed the paradise."<sup>397</sup>

After the Iberian Union crowns (1580-1640), the Orient, which was associated with the Portuguese and Dutch expansion, was no longer perceived as a territory of conquest, but rather

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<sup>396</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *Epitome de la Biblioteca oriental i occidental*, p. 24. El Oriente desde la provincial de Santa Cruz de Brasil hasta los Reinos de Malaca, I Archipiélagos del Moluco: I Occidental, desde donde demarca el verdadero Meridiano la misma seccion, hasta salir por el Occidente a nuestro Oceano Atlantico; abrazando esta parte, la Quarta, I maior del Mundo, en los dos famosos continents de la duplicada America, o Iberica, Septentrional y Meridional"

<sup>397</sup> Don Antonio León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo, Comentario Apologético, Historia Natural y Peregrina de las Indias Occidentales Islas de Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano*, 2 volumes (Lima, Comité del IV Centenario del Descubrimiento del Amazonas, 1943.), p. 2. "Se reconoce claramente que nuestras Indias se prefieren a las Orientales en la composicion del Orbe, para que se les deba atribuir el Paraiso."



as a land controlled by enemies and competitors. Written between 1645 and 1650 in Madrid, *The Paradise in the New World* is the most voluminous work of the early modern period dealing with the question of the geographical location of the earthly paradise. The two volumes of the work combine a historiographical corpus of ancient and medieval sacred geography along with modern natural histories devoted to the study of exotica. Housed in the library of the Palacio Real in Madrid, the manuscript copy conserved today is divided in two volumes. In the first volume, Pinelo discusses ancient ideas about the paradise and about the antiquities of the New World. This first part analyzes the diversity of opinions of sacred scriptures and medieval theologians about the location of the paradise, including descriptions of archeological ruins in Peru and New Spain. In this first section, Pinelo argues that the ancient and great constructions discovered in New Spain and Peru were not made by the Indians of the New World, but rather by an ancient and lost civilization of giants:

According to what we have proved, although the Indians of Peru had the ingenuity for accomplishing great works, and much more those of New Spain, we can neither attribute to the ones or to the others the buildings found in their provinces. We have now to figure out or conjecture who might have done it and what kind of people would invent those structures, and see if through them it is possible to research some indications of the time in which they were built. Not even I can promise anything about such ancient and dark things, more than a few conjectures, so you should not ask me for individual and true proofs.<sup>398</sup>

Although he recognizes the lack of reliability, Pinelo nevertheless proposes that the ancient temples and edifices of the New World were made by an advanced civilization that was in the

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<sup>398</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol. 1, Book 2, Ch. XVIII, p. 272. "Según lo que largamente dejamos probado, aunque los Yndios del Perú tuvieron Ingenio para grandes obras, y mucho mas los de Nueva España, ni a unos ni a otros se pueden atribuir los edificios que en sus provincias se hallan. Resta pues ahora averiguar o congeturar quien los pudo hacer, que Gentes inventarian aquellas Fábricas, y ver si por ellas es posible investigar algunos indicios del tiempo en que se levantaron: que en cosas tan antiguas y obscuras, ni yo me atrevo a prometer mas que algunas congeturas, ni se me debe pedir prueba individual y cierta."

New World before the deluge. Moreover, he adds that "I think that it is true that these buildings are of giants."<sup>399</sup> In the passage above, Pinelo however observes that he only conjectured by examining the antiquities and forming from them his opinions: that only a more advanced and lost civilization, probably of giants, could accomplish those great buildings.

In addition to these conjectures, Pinelo incorporated images of the Mexican calendar in the previous chapter, comparing the Aztec calendar wheel, which he says allowed Mexicans to conserve their history, with the Peruvian Quipu as well as with the Egyptian hieroglyphs: "In front of each one they would place the main event of the year, painting what they judged to be most appropriate to signify each year. As the Egyptians did with their figures."<sup>400</sup> As in Athanasius Kircher's work examined later, Pinelo compared the Mexican writings with the hieroglyphs or rather *figuras* of Egyptians. However, unlike the German Jesuit, Pinelo had imagined an ideal antiquity in which an advanced and primitive civilization of giants lived in the New World. Unlike Athanasius Kircher, who considers the Egyptian hieroglyphs to be the representation of an original antiquity that preceded and announced anyone else, Pinelo's system constructs an ideal origin that begins in the West, or more exactly in the Spanish Southern and Western hemisphere that he baptized *Iberia meridional*.

In the second volume of *The Paradise in the New World*, Pinelo develops the main argument of the entire work: that the paradise is in the southern region of the New World and that the four rivers of the paradise are the Amazon, Río de la Plata, Orinoco, and the Magdalena river. As it is noted in the entire title of the work, the book is a natural and exotic history of the

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<sup>399</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, p. 272. "Tengo por cierto ser Edificios de Gigantes."

<sup>400</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol. I, Book 2, Ch. XVII. "Frontero de cada una ponían el suceso principal de aquel año, pintando lo que juzgaban más a proposito para significarlo. Como hacían los Egipcios con sus figuras."

West Indies, and islands of the mainland of the Ocean Sea.<sup>401</sup> Pinelo's title reproduces a political and legal definition that is exactly the same as in the histories by Antonio de Herrera de Tordesillas, in Francisco Hernández's title of *protomédico de Indias*, and in other titles and histories. In all these cases, the notion of *Indias Occidentales Islas de tierra Firme del Mar Oceano* (West Indies, and islands of the mainland of the Ocean Sea) refers to the political western dominions of the Spanish crown, which covers territories that extended to the east from the line of the Treaty of Zaragoza signed in 1529, which was 297.5 leagues (1,763 kilometers, 952 nautical miles), or 17° of the Maluku Islands.<sup>402</sup>

Pinelo observes that the exotic natural history of the Indies is a narrative that in his work represents "the body of this soul, or ornament of this body."<sup>403</sup> More than the research of exotic fauna and flora, Pinelo considers natural history to be a narrative artifact that allows him to trace the hemisphere's history back through the comparative study of images and exotic nature, artifices, and human inventions. Applied to the natural and exotic history of the Indies, the expression the "body of this soul" and "ornament of this body" refers to the narrative body of Pinelo's *historia* and it implies that it is through the study of nature and exotica that Pinelo aimed to recover the original antiquity of the New World. Similarly, natural history represents a legitimate narrative that challenges and transforms ideas and opinions concerning antiquity. This historical challenge was only possible by combining the study of objects, nature, and artifacts from both Asia and the New World.

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<sup>401</sup> *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo, Comentario Apologético, Historia Natural y Peregrina de las Indias Occidentales Islas de tierra Firme del Mar Oceano.*

<sup>402</sup> See Introduction chapter 1, New Spain Discovers Asia.

<sup>403</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol 1. p. 125. "El ultimo fundamento sera el de los cuatro Rios que se explicara en el ultimo libro. Con que habremos concluido no solo el Comentario del Paraiso, sino tambien la Historia Natural y peregrina de las Yndias, que es cuerpo de esta Alma, o adorno de este cuerpo."

In order to legitimate the primacy of the West, Pinelo projected ideas of the fabulous Orient onto the animals and nature of the New World. Describing the exotic qualities [*calidades peregrinas*] of the New World, Pinelo observes in the first chapter that in "Peru there has been seen a Giant of exotic figure, the father Juan Eusebio says that it was one of those monsters that the ancients called *Cinamolgos* or *Cinocefalos*, for having the bodies of men and the head of dogs, described by Pliny."<sup>404</sup> Likewise, after opining in the second volume that the ancient ruins of the New World were made by giants of antiquity, he projects the fabulous Orient onto the natural world of the West. In the first volume, Pinelo had exposed, verified, and accepted or refused ancient and modern opinions. After commenting on seventeen types of opinions about the location and properties of the paradise, he begins the second volume by approving the theory that the paradise was on another continent and verifying that this continent was the New World. Based on an interpretation of Ephrem the Syrian and the Bishop Moses Bar Cefas,<sup>405</sup> who argued that the paradise was situated in another world, Pinelo interpreted that this other world was the New World:

And this opinion is supported by Ephrem the Syrian, that in that Continent the sight of the Paradise, even though men lived until the deluge in that place, they all died with the inundation, except of Noah and his family. God passed Noah's Ark to this continent, changing the qualities of both. Since then, that continent (New World) was uninhabited and isolated. And after many centuries, the people found by the Spaniards entered into it, and in the interval between these two times no one has inhabited there"<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, p. 11. "En el Peru se vio un Gigante de peregrina figura, el padre Juan Eusebio, dice que era de los Monstruos que los antiguos llamaron Cinamolgos o Cinocefalos, por tener los cuerpos de hombres y las cabezas de perros, que trae Plinio."

<sup>405</sup> Moses Bar-Kepha (ca 813-903) was a bishop of the Syriac Orthodox Church of the ninth century.

<sup>406</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol. I, p. 278. "Ephrem the Syrian perceived however the Garden of Eden in a spiritual way: "with the eyes of my mind, I saw the paradise". Porque si el Nuevo Mundo estuvo poblado antes del diluvio, es evidente que en el fue el Paraiso: pues a ser en este no pasarían los hombres en

Pinelo's assumption that the Indians arrived in the New World after the deluge was a rare and controversial theory that opposed the common opinions of that time. Contradicting previous opinions developed by José de Acosta and Eusebio de Nieremberg, he argues that there were people in the New World before the deluge and that Noah's Ark was fabricated in Peru.

Illustrated in the manuscript, we see the four rivers of the paradise in the southern region of the New World. In the image, there is a caption in the north (bottom section of the image) that indicates *Habitatio filiorum hominum*, and another caption in the west (Pacific coast) *Habitatio filorum Dei*. In the western section of the map, we see Noah's Ark, which is depicted in Peru and oriented towards the Pacific Ocean which supposedly was the route taken by Noah's descendants. Pinelo describes Noah's travel from the New World towards Asia, inverting José de Acosta's idea that the Indians arrived from Asia to the New World. Acosta was the first to propose the theory of a northern passage that would have allowed the Indians to arrive to the New World from Asia through the strait of Bering, called of Anian in the 16th century.<sup>407</sup> This theory enabled Acosta to explain why some animals from the New World were not found in other regions.<sup>408</sup> Although different in their approach, José de Acosta and Antonio de León Pinelo's theories show that the theorization about the relation between Asia and the New World

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aquella edad a poblarle, surcando tan peligrosos Mares, quando está en duda que navegasen los mas pequeños golfos. Y queda firme la Opinion que seguimos de S. Efen, que en aquel Continente a vista del Paraiso, aunque fuera del vivieron los hombres hasta el Diluvio: que con su inundación pereciendo todos excepto Noé y su familia, le pasó Dios en el Arca a este, trocandose las calidades de los dos. Este desde entonces se vió poblado, no habiéndolo estado antes: aquel quedó hiermo y solitario, hasta que despues de muchos siglos, entraron en él las gentes que hallaron los Españoles; sin que en el tiempo intermedio le hayan habitado otras."

<sup>407</sup> The name of strait of Anian came from Marco Polo's travel account.

<sup>408</sup> Joseph de Acosta introduced the question in the fourth book of the *Natural and Moral History of the Indies* (1590): How is it possible that there are in the Indies animals that are not in other parts of the world (Ch. 36). Acosta proposed the hypothesis of an strait still unknown at that time: "because if we say that these species of animals were preserved in Noah Ark, it follows that those other animals went to the Indies from this world here."

was an essential element into the reconfiguration of historical narratives that tended to unify the origins of people from a global perspective.

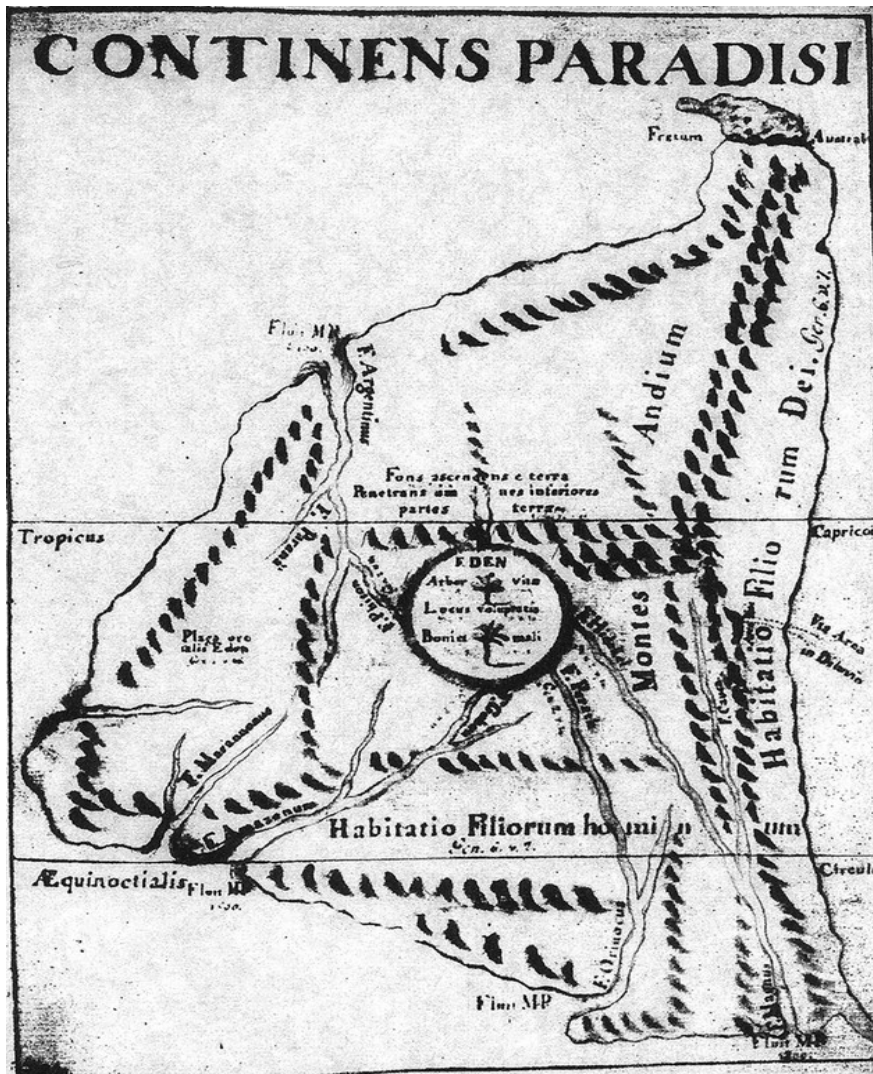


Figure 35. Map of the paradise in the southern continent of America, or the Iberian Meridional. The southern section of the Americas is in the upper section of the image. Folio 126. Image source: *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, ed. de Raul Porras Barrenechea, 1943.

Acosta adapted the Christian myth of origins to the geography and natural history of the period. After Acosta, Eusebio de Nieremberg also speculated on this question in the *Historia naturae, maxime peregrinae* (Antwerp, 1634). According to Nieremberg, American species had

been transported from the New World and back again transported by guardian angels. As was the case in other works of the period, Nieremberg's audacious theories about the origins of humans and animals were supported with visual evidence. In the *Historia naturae*, Nieremberg included illustrations from Clusius' *Exoticorum Libri Decem* (35 images) as well as images copied from the original manuscripts of Francisco Hernández housed in the library of El Escorial.<sup>409</sup>

Unlike Eusebio Nieremberg, who taught natural history in the Imperial College of Madrid, Pinelo had no experience on the field and he mainly drawn his sources from other naturalists. More than a naturalist or a scholar interested in collecting *exotica*, Pinelo was an erudite historian. From this perspective Pinelo's work represents an attempt to integrate natural history into a legal and historical narrative. In *The Paradise in the New World*, Pinelo opposed the narratives of *exotica* to an ancient corpus of texts that were mainly written in Latin, applying the category of *peregrino* to animals, snakes, birds, lakes, springs, rivers, trees, drugs, stones and any natural thing in the New World. The *exotica* is the main element supporting the argument that the New World is better than the Orient: "in those parts (Oriental Indies), people say that there are infinite singular and exotic things, and so this is why they deserve the primacy of the world, and it is understood that where nature spilled the treasures and manifested its power, there was the paradise."<sup>410</sup>

Pinelo's fourth book of the second volume is entirely devoted to description of the exotic and singular things of the West Indies, which he claims are equal or better than the oriental

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<sup>409</sup> For the work of Eusebio de Nieremberg, see José Ramón Marcaida López, *Arte y Ciencia en el Barroco Español*, (Marcial Pons, Madrid, 2014)

<sup>410</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol. 2 p. 3. "Con las Indias Orientales; en aquellas se alega que abundan de infinitas cosas peregrinas y singulares, y que por ellas merecen la primacia del Orbe, y que se entienda donde la Naturaleza con tanta abundancia y liberalidad derramó sus thesoros y manifestó su potencia, alli estaba el Paraiso, que fue el Epitome, ó el origen de lo major, mas precioso y peregrino de la tierra."

Indies “as we will see through the exotic of its natural history.” Moreover, Pinelo notes that the West Indies lacked the authoritative voice provided by ancient texts and authors. According to him, the alleged superiority of the oriental Indies was not based on its merits, but rather on their antiquity: “it is preferred to the Occidental Indies, more for antiquity than for merits.”<sup>411</sup> In this sentence, Pinelo opposes the narratives of antiquity, which he links to the Orient, to the exotic natural history that he develops in the second volume. As was the case in George Draudi and Carolus Clusius's catalogues, the writings of *exotica* are depicted in opposition to an antiquity that is written in Latin. However, Pinelo moves beyond the descriptive and naturalistic framework of Carolus Clusius and Francisco Hernández, adopting the corpus and catalogues of *exotica* only as a narrative artifact, allowing him to imagine and legitimate the great origins of the West.

Similarly, Pinelo deconstructs the legitimacy of the Orient by observing the relative character of the category: “in any place of the world there is orient and occident, and the same is either oriental or occidental in relation to the one or the other. It is ignorance that by considering that I am in Madrid, I make India intrinsically better in quality and essence than if I was in Manila, only because here I have that region to the orient, and over there to the Occident.”<sup>412</sup> These relative notions of Orient and Occident allow Pinelo to relocate some of the positive values of the Orient in the West, suggesting that the orient was in fact the New World: “and if

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<sup>411</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, p. 3. “Es preferida a las Occidentales, mas por antigüedad que por meritos.”

<sup>412</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, p. 5, 6. “Por que si como hemos notad, y es sabido, en qualquiera lugar del Orbe ai Oriente, y Occidente y el mismo respect de uno es Oriental, es occidental respect de otro. Ignorancio es imaginar que /6/ el considerarme yo en Madrid, haga la India de major calidad intrinseca, y esencial, que si me considerara en Manila: solo porque aqui la tengo a Oriente, y alla al occidente: como mas largamente explica este autor.”



even some understand these words in relation to the East Indies, many explain and are more convenient for the New World.”<sup>413</sup> Pinelo considered the notion of orient to be a relative and flexible category with no real historical or geographical value: “we have proved that, in the rigorous terms of Geography, the India that for antonomasia we call Oriental, it is not with respect to the place in which Moses wrote the sacred History of the Paradise.”<sup>414</sup>

Besides the political character of his work, Pinelo's vindication of the West integrates a form of writing that simultaneously opposed and mingled *exotica* and *antiquitates*. Both forms of narrating time and space could be indistinctively applied to Asia and the Americas. As in previous narratives analyzed in this dissertation, Pinelo's work also incorporates a dual tension between ancient words and modern spatial narratives. However, In Pinelo's work, it is an ancient and biblical location that appears integrated into a modern narrative of exotic natural histories. Pinelo's *Paradise in the New World* is a synchronic history that privileges the establishment of connections over the erudition of ancients. Written in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, *The Paradise in the New World* projects a modern and synchronic way of narrating the world towards the fictional and sacred spaces of ancient history. This original and curious inversed approach of reading and writing histories made possible a spatial displacement of the paradise towards the West. Although his theory was not among the accepted ideas about the location of the paradise, it projects a narrative of *exotica* that relocates the ancient paradise and the Orient into the West.

### III. Athanasius Kircher, China, and the Museum

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<sup>413</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, p. Vol 2, p. 290. “Y si bien algunos entienden estas palabras de la Yndia Oriental muchas explican del Nuevo Mundo, y le convienen mejor.”

<sup>414</sup> Antonio de León Pinelo, *El Paraiso en el Nuevo Mundo*, vol. 2, ch. 1. "dejamos probado, que en terminus de geografia, la India que por antonomasia llamamos Oriental, no lo es respect del sitio en que Moises escribió la sagrada escritura.”

The consolidation of antiquarian practices and the production of material and visual forms of enquiry attained one of the most sophisticated and prolific levels in the figure of Athanasius Kircher. In his publications, Kircher incorporated images and objects that he exhibited and studied in his museum in Rome. As Catherina Marrone has written: "It has been said that Kircher could not think except in images, but in fact thinking in images was not a limitation for him, but rather the realization of a *forma mentis* which he constantly followed."<sup>415</sup> Described by modern scholars as the "coolest guy ever" and "the last man who knew everything," Kircher's huge and diverse intellectual production is inscribed into a genealogy of Medieval and Renaissance philosophers who aimed at constructing universal ways of thinking: Nicolas of Cusa (1401-1464); Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494); Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535); and Ramon Llull (1232-1315); who Kircher emulated in the *Ars magna, sciendi, sive combinaoria* (1669).<sup>416</sup> Like Ramón Llull, Athanasius Kircher had also a problematic posterity and never attained the glory of 17<sup>th</sup> century great philosophers, like Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, and Baruch Spinoza.

Early modern scholars questioned Kircher's methods. For Henry Oldenburg, Kircher's custom was to publish "what is already extant and knowne, yn any considerable new Discoveryes."<sup>417</sup> Contemporary scholars have often quoted Oldenburg's criticism, defining Kircher's work as a sort of "massive encyclopedia" compiled with "total lack of discrimination"

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<sup>415</sup> Caterina Marrone, *I geroglifici fantastici di Athanasius Kircher*, (Viterbo: Stampa Alternative e Graffiti, 2002), p. 102.

<sup>416</sup> "Was Athanasius Kircher the coolest guy ever, or what?" Symposium at NYU organized by Professors Paula Findlen and Anthony Grafton, 2002. Paula Findlen, *Athanasius Kircher, The Last Man Who Knew Everything*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2004)

<sup>417</sup> Henry Oldenburg to Robert Boyle, (25 August 1664), in Oldenburg 1996, vol. 2, p. 532. Quoted from Florence Hsia, 2004.

and "with no suggestion that some authorities might be more reliable than others."<sup>418</sup> However, an increasing interest in the social history of science and in the scientific culture of images and materials has renewed interest in this early modern polymath.

Kircher was born in 1602 in Geisa, a little village near Fulda located at the center of today's Germany. He attended the Jesuit College in Fulda from 1614 to 1618, when he entered the novitiate of the Society. Before going to Rome, Kircher had an early interest in China and he wanted to become one of the missionaries of that remote kingdom. However, he went to Rome in 1634 and remained there until the end of his life in 1680. In Rome, he taught mathematics, natural history, and Oriental languages at the *Collegio Romano* (now the Pontifical Gregorian University). Kircher's position gave him access to information from all around the world and he amassed a huge collection of antiquities, manuscripts, exotic artifacts, and devices of his own invention which he exhibited in the *Museum Kircherianum*. Kircher's orientalist production stems from his earliest years in Rome and is mainly enclosed in three publications: *Prodromus coptus sive aegyptiacus* (1636), *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (1652-54), and *China Illustrata* (1667).<sup>419</sup>

In the *Prodromus* ("precursor" to future research), Kircher advanced some of the questions and theses he later developed exhaustively in *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* and *China Illustrata*. The *Prodromu* partially describes a Syno-Syriac stone which was buried and discovered in China in 1625. Dating from the 8<sup>th</sup> century, this stone is a Tang Chinese stele erected in 781 that documents 150 years of early Christianity in China. As we know today, the

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<sup>418</sup> Asworth 1986, p. 155. quoted from Florence Hsia, "Catholicism and Early Modern Science" In *God and Nature*. Ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, 136-66 (Berkeley, University of California Press. 2004)

<sup>419</sup> Athanasius Kircher. *China monumentis qua sacris quà profanis, nec non variis naturae & artis spectaculis, aliarumque rerum memorabilium argumentis illustrate* (Amsterdam: Apud Joannem Janssonium à Waesberge & Elizeum Weyerstraet, 1667)

stone revealed that the initial Nestorian Christian church was recognized by the Tang Emperor Taizong in 631, after which it continued to have the Imperial support until 781, when the stone was erected. The Nestorian church took its name from Nestorius (ca. 385-451), bishop of Constantinople. Nestorius was exiled from Rome to the east, where he established the Assyrian church, which spread to East Asia. According to David Mungello, the "tablet was probably buried to avoid destruction in the great religious persecution of 845, which thought primarily anti-Buddhist, also affected Nestorian Christians."<sup>420</sup>

The Portuguese Alvaro Semedo (1586-1658) was the first European to visit the Nestorian stele between 1625 and 1628.<sup>421</sup> Nicolas Trigault (1577–1628), who was at the end of his life in China during the discovery, visited the monument and translated the Chinese text into Latin. The discovery soon made its way in Europe. Kircher translated the Syriac part of the stone in the *Prodromus*. However, it was not until the publication of *China Illustrata* (1667) that he presented the entire discovery to the European audience. As David Mungello has observed, "Kircher's presentation of this inscription to European readers in a clearly printed and efficiently numbered manner was a significant scholarly contribution to European knowledge about China. Unfortunately, the level of sinological competence in Europe was not sufficiently developed to appreciate this presentation until the 19<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> David E. Mungello. *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (University of Hawaii Press, 1985), p. 165.

<sup>421</sup> Alvaro Semedo described the stone in *Imperio de la China I cultura evangelica en èl, por los religiosos de la Compañia de Jesus*, (Madrid: Impreso por Iuan Sanchez en Madrid: A costa de Pedro Coello mercader de libros, 1642)

<sup>422</sup> David E. Mungello. *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology*, p.167.

Moreover, Kircher's *China Illustrata* is a book that presented to the European readers a complete historical-theological system based mainly on the reports, letters, artifacts, and exotic objects brought to Kircher's museum. *China Illustrata* integrates the images and materials of the museum into an accessible and beautifully illustrated narrative. Although the theories and explanations are often wrong or confusing, the visual display of spectacular and exotic images had a great impact on early modern scholars in Europe. The first part of *China Illustrata* concerns "that marble monument which is famous all over the world, and which was the cause for undertaking this work."<sup>423</sup> The authenticity of the stone raised an intense polemic among Christians in Europe and it was this prolific dispute that led to Kircher's work and theories about the origins of Christians in Asia. The first chapter of *China Illustrata* begins by criticizing those scholars who had questioned the authenticity of the monument:

Already about thirty years have passed since I brought out an explanation in my *Prodromus Coptus* of a certain Sino-Syrian monument discovered in China in 1625 A.D. This earned considerable praise from intelligent readers, who were astonished by the novelty of its subject matter, but there was no lack of malicious, evil critics who attacked it with sarcastic arguments and many attempted corrections. All of these, however, were stupid and obtuse. They tried in every way to persuade themselves, as well as everyone else, that no such monument really existed and that it was only a Jesuit deception. These persons reject all human and divine faith and believe in nothing unless they themselves can see and understand it. They are like troublesome flies buzzing around a piece of fat.<sup>424</sup>

This aggressive opening shows that the book was not just intended to provide news about China, but that it was first meant to present a claim about the authenticity of the Nestorian stone and, by

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<sup>423</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, S.J. Translated by Dr. Charles D. Van Tuyl from the 1677 original edition, Indian University Press, Oklahoma, 1986. Preface, iv.

<sup>424</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 1.

extension, of Jesuit sources. The question of the legitimacy and reliability of sources produced by Jesuits and often exhibited in Kircher's museum was at the core of Kircher's *China Illustrata*. Kircher's work was not an important contribution to the knowledge about China that European scholars had at that time; he mainly imported materials from Alvaro Semedo, Martino Martini, and Michael Boim. The book functions more as a rhetoric artifact aimed at legitimating its sources and supporting the idea that the Jesuits were the main authoritative voice concerning the Orient in Europe. Instead of displaying news about China, Kircher incorporated into the book artifacts, trophies, and antiquities that legitimated the work of the Jesuits. As he observes in the preface, *China Illustrata* was mainly based on the thousands of objects and testimonies brought to Rome by his friends of the Society of Jesus: "They brought me many rare things, so many that I was almost unable to describe them all," and "They made notes on rare things which they observed in all these vast regions where they journeyed. They asked only that those notes [...] shouldn't be left to the roaches and worms, but that I should publish them."<sup>425</sup> As he observes, *China Illustrata* is only a partial exhibition of the prolific archive of sources accumulated in the museum over decades.

The Latin word *Illustrata* in the title of the book, which means both to clarify and to illuminate, reflects the purpose of the book: to demonstrate by making visible the authenticity and reliability of Jesuit sources dealing with China.<sup>426</sup> The first part of the book includes textual quotations from the Jesuits who visited and described the stone, quoting passages from Alvaro Semedo, Martin Martini, and Michael Boim. These Jesuits provided accurate descriptions of the

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<sup>425</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, preface, iv.

<sup>426</sup> The work is commonly abbreviated in *China Illustrata*. The entire title is *China monumentis, qua sacris qua profanis, nec non variis naturae & artis spectaculis, aliarumque rerum memorabilium argumentis illustrate*.

stone that was discovered in "the metropolitan city of Xemsi Province. While digging, the workers uncovered a stone tablet engraved with Chinese characters."<sup>427</sup> Kircher mentions the different descriptions provided by the Jesuits and reveals that he exhibited these evidences in his museum, including a replica of the stone:

He [Fr. Michael Boim] also left an account of the whole matter in the following preface to the Reader, which exactly describes the sequence of events and everything noteworthy that happened. I thought this ought to be included here, with his permission, as an eternal rich testimony. I also took care to inscribe a new stone monument according to the copy made in China, and this can be seen today in our museum.<sup>428</sup>

Furthermore, the use of visual and textual evidence in *China Illustrata* goes beyond the fabulous Nestorian stone and structures the whole book. For instance, Kircher introduces the chapter devoted to the dress, customs, and habits of Asian people by mentioning images and manuscripts brought by Jesuits to the museum: "since the fathers observed many things that are noteworthy about the dress, customs, and habits of those nations, they left this material with me deliberately in the form of manuscripts and drawings, so that these might be inserted into the account of the journey they completed."<sup>429</sup>

With only 237 pages, *China Illustrata* is one of the shortest books published by Kircher. This is probably why the book had a larger diffusion and was soon translated into vernacular languages. The narrative structure of the book reproduces the categories that organized the materials, images, and manuscripts exhibited in the museum. Kircher divided the different

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<sup>427</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 5.

<sup>428</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 6.

<sup>429</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, Part II, Chapter 4, p. 60.

sections and chapters of the book into antiquities, *exotica*, which includes both nature and the arts, and *scientifica*, which mainly covers "admirable architecture of temples, bridges, aqueducts, walls, and inventions unknown to Europeans."<sup>430</sup> Kircher thus conceived the narrative structure of *China Illustrata* in relation to the categories of his own *Museum Kircherianum*, whose materials and images were integrated and displayed in the book. However, the "exotic" evidence exhibited in the museum and the book were not only devoted to displaying a social and political force, but also aimed at demonstrating to the audience the authenticity of the theories and historical reconstructions of the book.

Divided in six different parts, *China Illustrata*'s reproduction of categories shows that the spatial experience of the museum shaped the constitution of the narrative artifact (the printed book with its images and texts) that reproduces a factual representation of both an exotic and an ancient world. As Joscelyn Godwin has signaled, Kircher and his readers probably interpreted the material reconstructions of antiquities in Kircher's books on antiquities not as a representation of the past, but just as facts.<sup>431</sup> This idea can also be applied to the images depicting remote worlds, which were not just a representation of a remote object, but an evidence of it. Collected in the museum, these pieces of visual evidence were adapted to the narrative of printed books, in an experiential production that integrates the spatiality of the museum into the narrative of the book. The Nestorian Stele, the Egyptian Obelisks, the wonders of nature, the optic instruments, and the codices were exhibited in both the museum and in the narrative as forms that legitimated the political and historical project of the Jesuits.

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<sup>430</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, Preface, iv.

<sup>431</sup> See Joscelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher Theatre of the World, The Life and Work of the Last Man to Search Universal Knowledge*, (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2009) Chapter 6 Antiquity Imagined, p. 99.





figure 36. Athanasius Kircher receiving two visitors in the museum of the Roman College. First image in: *Romani Collegii Societatis Jesu Musaeum celeberrimum*. Amstelodami, Ex Officina Janssonio-Waesbergiana Anno 1678. The catalogue depicts obelisks and exotic animals and other objects that were part of Kircher's museum. Original source: Getty Research Institute. Image: archive.org.

The first part of *China Illustrata* includes a description and interpretation of the Sino-Syrian monument. Kircher provided in the book for the first time a reproduction of the tablet with the Chinese and Syriac characters.<sup>432</sup> Titled *De Variis Itineribus in Chinam Susceptis*, the second part of *China Illustrata* narrates travels undertaken to China since the Apostle Thomas and includes textual and visual descriptions of the customs, dress, and habits of China's inhabitants. As Adriano de las Cortes's book, Kircher includes an ethnographical section describing Chinese customs and social types designed through different dresses (part II, chapter nine). At the end of this section (chapter ten), Kircher explains the methods of conversion developed by the Jesuits in China. As we saw in the previous chapter, these methods were mainly based on the interaction with science. Kircher explicitly approaches the conversion question and argues that science is the only path to conversion in China:

If he speaks in public, he will betray suspicious foreign customs, which will raise the possibility of undergoing torture. Not only does his Chinese pronunciation give him away, but also his appearance and physiognomy and the European shape of his whole body, which is quite different from the Chinese. [...] There is no place for metaphysical speculations or study of scholastic subtleties or the ostentation of sublime theories. They [the Jesuits] study the physical world and mathematics, which are unknown to the Chinese, to excite admiration and to create a good reputation for Europe.<sup>433</sup>

In this passage, Kircher argues in favor of the accommodation approaches that had been developed and improved since the first experiences of Matteo Ricci, Diego de Pantoja and the founders of the Jesuit mission in China. Moreover, Kircher incorporated a series of illustrations

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<sup>432</sup> Athanasius Kircher, *Romani Collegii Societatis Jesu Musaeum celeberrimum*. Amstelodami, Ex Officina Janssonio-Waesbergiana Anno 1678.

<sup>433</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 110.

before this chapter depicting the Supreme Monarch of the Sino-Tartar Empire, the German Jesuit Adam Schall, Matteo Ricci, and Lij Pauls, in addition to four illustrations of costumes of social types in China and two images of Chinese ladies of the noblesse. Kircher observes in this chapter that the Chinese elites are now closer to the West, which the Emperor considered better than his own servants and people. Kircher wrongly associates the Qing dynasty (1644-1912) and the recently enthroned second Manchurian Emperor with the Tatars, arguing that the Tatars were now closer to the "Far West" than to their own Chinese subjects.

As we observed in the previous chapter, the Jesuits developed strategies for displaying the superiority of European science in China. In *China Illustrata*, this scientific dominance is also promoted by Kircher, who characterizes the second Emperor of the Ch'ing (Qing) Dynasty, Shunzhi (1638-1661), as close to the West. As we saw in the previous chapter, the promotion of these strategies impacted the formation of a European Jesuits identity. As Kircher mentions in the passage above, above Christianity the Jesuits promoted first the reputation of Europe and Europeans.

In the second book, Kircher summarizes a "catalogue of books written by our fathers for the Growth of the Church of China."<sup>434</sup> Unlike the first section devoted to the Nestorian Stone (part I), which concentrates on demonstrating the authenticity of the stone, the section devoted to idolatries (Part III), and the one describing nature and the arts (Part IV), the second book displays the polemic strategies of the Jesuits, presented it under the topic of "journeys undertaken to China by various preachers of the faith since the Apostle Thomas." The interaction between science and conversion is only presented at the end of the ten chapters of the second book, just following a series of images that captured the interest of readers. As many other authors did

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<sup>434</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 111.

before, Kircher used Marco Polo as an authority and as the first traveler to China. According to Kircher, "At the time of Marco Polo, in 1286. A.D., there were many Christians in Tartary. The use and veneration of the cross flourished, as the eye-witness Polo himself testifies.<sup>435</sup> From these medieval sources, Kircher moves directly to the works of Jesuits without never mentioning the contributions of the Augustinians Juan González de Mendoza and Martín de Rada.

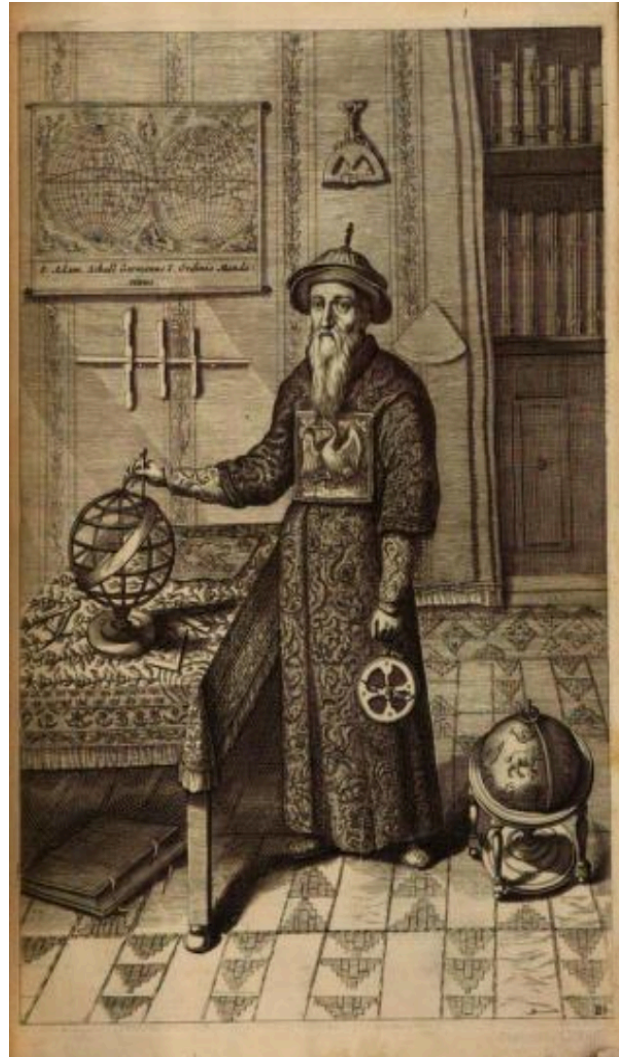


Figure 37 and 38. Left Side: Emperor Shunzhi (1638-1661) of the Manchurian Dynasty. Described as friend of the Jesuits and closer to the West. Right Side: Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666) dressed as a

<sup>435</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 32.

Mandarin of the first order and surrounded by scientific instruments, spheres, maps, and books.  
Collection: europeanlibraries. Image: archive.org.

Kircher's choice of sources is mainly related to the necessity of vindicating the work of Jesuits in China. As we saw in previous chapters, José de Acosta's *Natural and Moral History of the Indies* (1590) was one of the first histories that integrated a synchronic and global narrative by comparing idolatries, ways of writings, and cultures of Asia and the New World. Athanasius Kircher also compared forms of writings and cultures from China, the New World, and the Mediterranean world. In this last section of *China Illustrata*, the Chinese characters and Egyptian hieroglyphs work as visual evidence allowing Kircher to trace a history back to a common and universal origin of forms of writing. Kircher emphasizes the Christian elements of Chinese history, proposing that the Chinese descended from the sons of Cham, that Confucius was Hermes Trismegistus and that the Chinese characters were abstracted Egyptian hieroglyphs: "At the same time the elements of writing were instituted by Father Cham and Hermes Trismegistos, the son of Nasraimus. Although they learned them imperfectly, they were able to carry them to China. The old Chinese characters are a very strong argument for this, for they completely imitate the hieroglyphic writings."<sup>436</sup>

As reflected in the previous passage, Kircher also argues that the Chinese characters were first invented by imitating things in the world and then gradually they became more abstract: "First, the Chinese constructed the characters from things of the world. Then the chronicles teach, and the form of the characters amply demonstrate, that like the Egyptians they formed their writing from pictures of animals, birds, reptiles, fishes, herbs, branches of trees, ropes,

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<sup>436</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, Part VI, chapter 1. 214.



threads, points, then later developed a more abbreviated system, which they use right down to the present date."<sup>437</sup> Before Kircher, José de Acosta's *Natural and Moral History of the Indies* had also provided a similar consideration of the Chinese characters, which he also called *figuras*, considering that the Chinese system of writing was more a way of painting than a writing technique:

Many think (and indeed it is the common opinion) that the forms of writing employed by the Chinese are letters such as those we use in Europe; I mean that words and terms can be expressed with them and that they differ from our letters and writing only in the fact that the characters are different, as Greek characters differ from Latin ones and from those of the Hebrews and Chaldeans. And for the most part this is not true; for they neither have an alphabet nor do they write any letters, nor does the distinction lie in the characters. Rather, their writing consists chiefly of making pictures or signs, and their letters do not signify parts of words like ours but are pictures of things such as sun, fire, man, sea, and so on.<sup>438</sup>

After describing the Chinese characters, Acosta included a chapter devoted to the writing of Mexicans. In this chapter, Acosta condemned those priest [*doctrineros*] who had burned and destroyed the books of Mexicans, because they had considered them witchcraft. Acosta considered that "although they [the Mexicans] did not possess the care and refinement of the Chinese and Japanese, still they did not lack some genre of letters and books."<sup>439</sup> Like fray José

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<sup>437</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, 214.

<sup>438</sup> José de Acosta, *Natural and moral history of the Indies*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2002. Chapter 5 Of the kinds of letters and books that the chinese use. Spanish: Del género de letras y libros que usan los chinas: Las escrituras que usan los chinas, piensan muchos y aún es común opinión, que son letras como las que usamos en Europa; quiero decir, que con ellas se puedan escribir palabras o razones, y que sólo difieren de nuestras letras y escrituras en ser sus caracteres de otra forma, como difieren los griegos de los latinos, y los hebreos y caldeos. Y por la mayor parte no es así; porque ni tienen alfabeto ni escriben letras, ni es la diferencia de caracteres, sino en que principalmente su escribir es pintar o cifrar, y sus letras no significan partes de dicciones como las nuestras, sino son figuras de cosas, como de sol, de fuego, de hombre, de mar y así de lo demás.

<sup>439</sup> José de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, chapter VII, p. 322. "Aunque no tenían tanta curiosidad y delicadeza como los chinas y japones, todavía no les faltaba algún género de letras y libros con que a su modo conservaban las cosas de sus mayores."

de Sigüenza, Antonio de León Pinelo, and Athanasius Kircher, Acosta used the word *figura* and *figurar* or *pintar* for describing the glyphs as well as the writing practices of the Chinese, Mexicans, and Egyptians: "For they had their figures and hieroglyphs with which they painted things in the following way: things that had shapes were painted in their own image, and for things that did not have actual shapes they had characters signifying this, and they represented [*figuraban*] hence whatever they wanted."<sup>440</sup>

In the works of José de Acosta and Athanasius Kircher, Mexican and Chinese writings both reflect the interaction that figures and images had with the sensible world: fire, man, sea, animals, fishes, etc. Acosta also mentions that this way of writing could not easily import foreign names and concepts: "It is more difficult to understand how they can write proper names, especially foreign ones, for these are things that they have never seen, nor could they have invented a picture for them."<sup>441</sup> Kircher imported similar ideas into his comparative work. According to him, the writings of the Chinese, the Egyptian hieroglyphs as well as the writings of Mexicans were all different manifestations of a proto-naturalistic form of representing the sensible world with images that progressively became more abstract signs:

We said in the preceding chapter that the Chinese formed their first characters from everything that they saw in nature, and that they expressed their thought with the arrangement of these characters. Therefore, when they are describing

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<sup>440</sup> José de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, Chapter VII, p. 322. "porque tenían sus figuras y jeroglíficos con que pintaban las cosas en esta forma, que las cosas que tenían figuras las ponían con sus propias imágenes, y para las cosas que no había imagen propia, tenían otros caracteres significativos de aquello, y con este modo figuraban cuanto querían."

<sup>441</sup> José de Acosta, *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, chapter V, Más dificultad tiene entender cómo pueden escribir en su lengua, nombres propios, especialmente de extranjeros, pues son cosas que nunca vieron ni pudieron inventar figura para ellos.

things with a fiery nature, they use serpents, asps and dragons which by their particular arrangement will indicate a particular word."<sup>442</sup>

The shared opinion that both Egyptian hieroglyphs and Chinese characters were a sort of picture writing was maintained until 1822, when Jean-Francois Champollion argued that they were not a picture-writing, but a "visible language." As Jan Assmann has shown, "the only difference between "hieroglyphs and common alphabets lies in the fact that the writing does not operate exclusively on the level of phonological articulation, but on the level of semantic articulation as well."<sup>443</sup> For early modern scholars, the assumption that the Chinese and Mexican writing systems were a picture-writing system was inscribed into a form of categorizing and creating hierarchies among cultures. As mentioned in the first chapter in relation to Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, the language and letters of Iberians and Europeans were a better system that could be learnt by everyone: "among all their sciences, an Indian from Peru or Mexico who has learned to read and write know more than the wisest Mandarin among them."<sup>444</sup>

In *China Illustrata*, Kircher introduces a series of visual examples of "The Anatomy of the Ancient Characters of the Chinese" and their evolution, and he explains how Chinese characters reproduce natural forms. In these illustrations, Kircher shows the evolution of Chinese characters from original images that depicted insects, plants, and fishes to a more sophisticated and abstract system of signs. Moreover, Kircher also includes an illustration representing a "universal" way of writing: *modus scribendi*. In this image, we see a Chinese writer-painter with a paint brush and a monkey reading a paper. On the walls of the room, Chinese characters are

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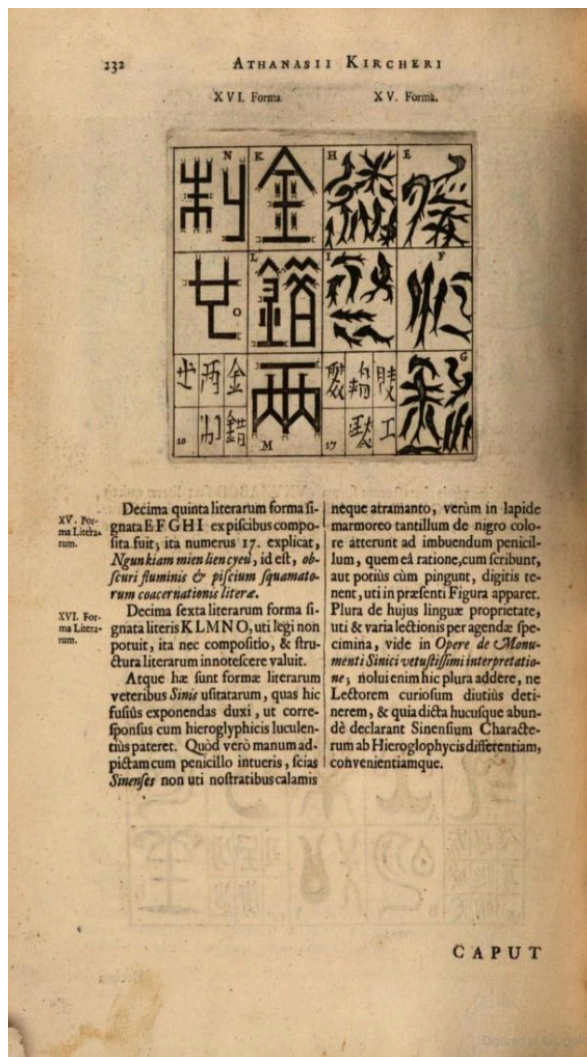
<sup>442</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, Book VI, Chapter 2, p. 216.

<sup>443</sup> Jan Assmann, "Ancient Egypt and the Materiality of the Sign, Materialities of Communication," (Stanford, 1994)

<sup>444</sup> José de Acosta, *Historia Naatural y Moral de las Indias*, p. 322, "De toda su ciencia, sabe mas un Indio del Piru o de Mexico, que ha aprendido a leer y escribir, que el mas sabio mandarin de ellos."



combined with Latin letters. As Kircher observes in the introduction that follows this illustration, "I have already said it is likely that the descendants of Cham started Colonies all the way to China, and that they spread their writing also."<sup>445</sup> According to him, the Egyptian did not bring the hieroglyphs, but only a concept that is "necessary for expressing the thoughts of the mind."<sup>446</sup>



Figures 39 and 40. 232-233. Left Side. Images showing ancient Chinese figures depicting fishes and its evolution. Right Side, Chinese room with *scriba*. In the table, the inscription *Modus Scribendi* between the monkey and the man. Collection: europeanlibraries. Image: archive.org.

<sup>445</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 222.

<sup>446</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 222.

For Kircher, it is not just the particularities of each sign and its relation to the sensible perceptions of nature that had to be reconstructed by investigating the production of "figures" in China, Mexico, Egypt, and other worlds. It is rather the *conceptus mentis* or "mental concept" behind the activity of writing-painting. Under the illustration depicting the *modus scribendi* included above, Kircher observes that the Egyptians exported the art of writing to China. However, they did not export their specific system of writing to China, but only the mental concept that was necessary to develop this universal art:

I have already said it is likely that the descendants of Cham started colonies all the way to China, and that they spread their writing also. Not that they brought along the Egyptian hieroglyphs with all of their mysteries, but they brought the concepts which are necessary for expressing the thoughts of the mind.<sup>447</sup>

This form of universal writing originates not in the relation between sounds and letters, but rather in the interactions between images and things in nature. In doing so, he proposes a form of universalism that is attached to the synchronic analysis of systems of writing. Although far from the sophistication of historical approaches developed by philologists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Kircher's perspective is already addressing questions that emanate from the synchronic and global comparisons of forms of writing. Instead of reconstructing history and the origins of the Orient by reading and interpreting ancient texts, he compares an intellectual activity or an art from a synchronic perspective in order to propose a form of universalism and an ideal cultural hierarchy. Kircher's approach is similar here to fray José de Sigüenza's comparative history applied to the observation of book and their materiality. In both cases, the object-book and the

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<sup>447</sup> *China Illustrata* by Athanasius Kircher, p. 222.

system of writing are operations that opened the way to a new and rudimentary synchronic approach of reconstructing the past.

In addition to the Egyptian and Chinese writings, Kircher's comparative system includes the writings of Mexicans, which he considered a lower figurative model. In the first tome of *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, Athanasius had already analyzed the writing of Mexicans. Among other materials, the artist of Kircher's books adapted images from Samuel Purchas's *Hakluytus Posthumus* (1625), originally copied from the Mendoza codex. Kircher's artist also included an image of a Mesoamerican Temple based on Hernán Cortes's descriptions as well as an illustration of a Mexican deity, which is included on the last page of the survey of the world's deities. For this last image, the artist used a Mexican book that may have reached the Vatican Library between 1565-70, when Cardinal Marcantonio Amulio (1506 –1572) was the chief librarian.<sup>448</sup> As Jocelyn Godwin has commented, Kircher offered his readers an image and a description designed to disgust and horrify them: "This loathsome and extremely deformed idol has a head like a basket, blazing eyes, ass's ears, teeth in its nose and mouth. In each hand it holds sacrificial vessels, and the rest of the idol is decorated with various animal's heads [...] It has elephant feet, and the rest, for modesty's sake, I decline to describe."<sup>449</sup>

Unlike the western vindications of Antonio de León Pinelo, Kircher's situates the deities and antiquities of the New World in a lower and uglier perspective than the Oriental divinities. However, in his comparative model, the Chinese characters are inferior to the Egyptian hieroglyphs because they refer to specific ideas rather than to mysterious enigmas. Moreover, he

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<sup>448</sup> Kircher probably consulted the *Codex Vaticanus No. 3773* (Codex Vaticanus B), an old Mexican pictorial manuscript in the Vatican Library. [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_5W16AAAAMAAJ](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_5W16AAAAMAAJ) For this image in Kircher's work see: Jurgis Baltrusaitis, *La quete d'Isis, Essai sur la légende d'un myth*, Paris: O. Perrin, 1967.

<sup>449</sup> See Jocelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher Theatre of the World, The Life and Work of the Last Man to Search Universal Knowledge*, (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2009), Chapter 13 Exotica, p. 255.

maintains that the signs of the Mexicans were yet lower pictograms which referred only to objects. As Umberto Eco has observed, this idea supported the ethnocentric European attitude toward the Chinese and Native American civilizations. However, unlike the indigenous people of the Americas, the Chinese were perceived as an advanced society that also had its roots and origins in a lost Christian civilization: "Even the connection he posited between China and Egypt was part of the Imperial dream. China was presented not as an unknown barbarian to be defeated but as a prodigal son who should return to the home of the common father."<sup>450</sup> Kircher's attitude towards the deities of the Orient and the West also reflects a distinction imbricated in the necessity of creating hierarchical historical models. However, unlike Juan González de Mendoza and Antonio de León Pinelo, Kircher does not vindicate for an Atlantic and Western narrative, but he situates the idealized origins of humanity in the Mediterranean world.

Unlike Pinelo, who searched in the silent ruins of the New World for a forgotten antiquity, Kircher was obsessed with the enigmas of the Egyptian hieroglyphs. For Kircher, these hieroglyphs were not just the proof of a picture-writing system. They also housed the secrets of the universal *modus scribendi*. Kircher esteemed the Egyptian hieroglyphs more than the Chinese or Mexican figures because, for him, they were closer to the natural and universal origin in which the beginnings of writing appeared in history. They represented the beginnings of picture-writing from whence the rest of the signs originated. According to Kircher, these Egyptian beginnings represent a more pure and original evidence of the universal and mental concept of writing.

In Athanasius Kircher's work, the universal definition of exotica and/or of vernacular ways of writing and disseminating histories, however, are always in tension with universalism.

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<sup>450</sup> Umberto Eco, *Serendipities, Language and Lunacy, A Brilliant Illumination of Intellectual History* (Columbia U Press, 1999), p. 69.

Although wrong and disparate, Antonio de León Pinelo and Athanasius Kircher's returns to the past each project a particular tension between the necessity of going back to antiquity and the necessity of integrating exotic modern forms of circulating and producing narratives. Unlike the writings of Martín de Rada, Juan González de Mendoza, the *relaciones* of the Boxer codex, and Adriano de las Cortes' manuscript relación, fray José de Sigüenza, Antonio de León Pinelo and Athanasius Kircher's writings were not simply connecting contemporary sources to describe remote worlds, they also projected modern forms of synchronizing contemporary narratives and artifacts that construct a new idea of the past, proposing new ways of exporting histories to the activity of thinking about the origins and antiquities of the world.

## CONCLUSION

### The Far East and the Iberian Globalization

What I have shown in this dissertation is a part of the long evolution of global history through the writings of the Iberian travelers and missionaries who began to explore and write about the Far East during the first age of transpacific interactions. By building a corpus of *relaciones*, letters, codices, and printed books, I have revealed that the creation of transoceanic systems of communication are an essential part of the articulation of a global history that departed from the ancient tradition of universal histories. In this work, I have remained more attached to the words, narratives, and its material support with the purpose of signaling how the production of new methods of composing global histories in the early modern period is primarily involved in the changeable meaning of words and the evolution of techniques that codified modes of writing. By examining the configuration of transpacific dynamics of circulation and the interrelated dialogue between literary accounts (*relaciones*, letters, diaries, codices) and global histories, this dissertation signals the limits of narratives that considers the New World to be a naked space that did not contribute to the transformation of modes of writing the world.

In the writings and maps of late 16<sup>th</sup> century scholars, the coexistence of narrative spatial configurations that belong to different periods of time shows that the transition towards a real awareness of globalism dealt primarily with the long process of separating the writings of ancient and medieval authors from the experience of moderns. By expressing the desire of joining ancient and modern worlds [*juntando lo antiguo con lo modern*], Francisco Hernández was intuitively signaling a process that irreversibly went in the opposite direction: the inevitable irruption of a global spatial configuration of the world was separating the writing methods of moderns from the prism of ancients. More than the effect of a duplication or plurality of time, it

was from this process of spatial-narrative disjuncture that global history emerged as a new form of narrating the space that only refers to the contemporary experience of traveling and writing about an Orient that became progressively a world discovered and narrated by moderns.

In the early modern period, the transition towards new forms of composing global histories that is separated from the tradition of ancient universal histories and medieval travel narratives motivated new forms of re-thinking the tension between vernacular forms of writings and global history. Unlike the ancient tradition of universal histories, which persisted during the 16<sup>th</sup> century through the imitation and/or adaptation of ancient narrative models, Juan González de Mendoza, José de Acosta, and Antonio de León Pinelo brought to their narratives new forms of re-thinking the past by integrating the circulation of *relaciones*, texts and material that opened a range of possibilities for historical production. As seen in the fourth chapter, these methods of writing were not simply applied to the description of remote worlds, they also transformed the spatial representation of ancient narratives. Through the interpretation of natural histories of *exotica*, Antonio de León Pinelo relocated the paradise and the Orient in the New World. Pinelo's relocation of the paradise is not simply attesting to the desire of vindicating a superior antiquity of the New World, it is also an evidence of the transition towards new forms of composing global histories that emphasized integration and connectedness.

In this dissertation, I have defined how the appearance of methods of historical writing participated in the formation of a global consciousness by combining the narratives of central figures who wrote from the centers of the Iberian Empire with the writings and compositions of travelers and native artisans. The circulation of texts, images and material transformed individual forms of writings by codifying modes of exchange and circulation. To use Athanasius Kirchers's words, the invention of codified techniques of writing and composing global histories represent a

new *modus scribendi*. However, the *modus scribendi* of global history that emerged in the early modern Iberian world do not reflect the ideal universalism of a *conceptus mentis* that moved during antiquity from Egypt to China, as Kircher suggests in his work; it is primarily a codified technique that emerged from the idea that an actual contemporary report produces a more reliable and productive knowledge than the classic writings of ancients.

Rather than by adapting ancient narratives, global history emerged when historians placed at the center of their activity the practice of interpreting a diversity of vernacular writings. Letters, *relaciones*, and codices produced in the New World and Asia played an essential role in this operation by becoming the instrument which made possible to interpret artifacts that were constantly in movement through the routes of the Iberian worlds. Through the circulation of letters, the Cathay of Marco Polo could be related to the early modern China, the Far East was closer to both Europe and the New World, and a consciousness of globalism emerged as the distinctive sign of modern historians and writers. These global literary compositions represent the element that linked the individual writer to the entire world. Like in the statement of the Jesuit Jerónimo Nadal, the journey made it possible that "the whole world becomes our house."<sup>451</sup> This new form of domestic globalism is particularly attached to the individual forms of writing and exchanging narratives. As Jesuit Bento de Goës expressed at the end of his travel, the letter is the intimate object that gives sense to the isolated experience of the traveler: "he took the letters that were offered to him, lifted them up toward heaven and, with tears in his eyes and his soul overflowing with joy, he broke forth into the hymn, *Nunc dimittis*. He felt that his orders

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<sup>451</sup> Florence C. Hsia, *Sojourners in a Strange Land*, chapter 2, quoted from ÓMalley, "To travel" (1984), 6 and 17, n. 9: "Notandum diversa esse in Societate mansionum seu habitationum genera. Est enim domus probationis, collegium, domus professorum, peregrinatio; et hac ultima totus mundus nostra fit habitatio."



were fulfilled and his pilgrimage at the end. After reading the letters he kept them near his hearth all that night."<sup>452</sup>

At the end of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, the unreachable Far East of medieval writers became a crossable region connected to the rest of the world. During this period of time, new methods of narrating the unreachable Far East emerged in dialogue with the histories of the New World. As we have seen in this dissertation, the Far East was not simply a remote world inscribed in ancient texts, it was also a region of discoveries, a new world in the world. Beyond the desire of conquest and evangelization, the Iberian writings also attested to the necessity of bringing closer the remote world and inventing new forms of writing that interconnected the isolated experience of travelers. As seen in the work of Adriano de las Cortes, the experience as a missionary with the Visayans of the Philippines islands of the West is applied to descriptions and experiences dealing with a remote region in China. Adriano's narrative reflects an experience that situates him closer to the Indians of the Philippines and to the heterogeneous group of captives in China than to the Jesuits who visited the Imperial palace in Beijing. Unlike Matteo Ricci, Diego de Pantoja, and Nicolas Trigault, Adriano develops an accurate history that made visible a new and completely hidden China.

In devoting this study to the Iberian writings of the Far East in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, I have emphasized the crucial differences between European reactions to the cultures of the Far East and the transpacific dynamics that connected narrative forms developed in the New World and Asia. What I have elucidated in this dissertation is the very beginnings of the long evolution of connected histories in the early modern Iberian world. For many scholars and historians, European's interactions in the Far East during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries remain an

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<sup>452</sup> Nicolas Trigault, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610*, p. 518.

area that is mainly associated with the trade dynamics of the Dutch and English world. Similarly, many scholars separate the history of the Spanish expansion in the New World from the explorations and discoveries in the Far East. This dissertation signals how the connection of the New World to Asia made possible and shaped new forms of narrating the world.

Through the global circulation of Iberian narratives, the histories of the West and East Indies were gradually transformed by producing a mutual dialogue that referred only to the experience of narrating the world with the words and narratives of modern travelers and scholars. The writings of Iberians transformed the Far East and the New World by projecting new methods of composing global histories and a new way of thinking the world. Completely detached from ancient narratives, these Iberian writings made visible a form of globalism that produced its own language and projected its own words and signs. As in Baltasar Gracián's chef-d'oeuvre, from the Baroque disillusion of completely decrypting the world, we learnt that the globe constantly redefines its symbolic form. In the dialogue between Andrenio and Critilo, the world becomes a sign for Andrenio only after having explored all its regions and parts: –"How is that?" – Andrenio replied –"the whole world is encrypted?" To what Critilo answered: –"Well, do you recall now this? Is it now that you see such an important true, after having walked all around the world? You must have done an excellent concept of things!"<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> Baltasar Gracián, *El Criticón* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2016), III Crisi Cuarta. EL Mundo Descifrado. p. 612 –¿Cómo es eso –replicó Andrenio–, que el mundo entero está cifrado? –Pues ¿agora recuerdas con eso? ¿Agora te desayuna de una tan importante verdad, después de haberle andado todo? ¡Qué buen concepto habrás hecho de las cosas!

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