

ASIANS TO NEW SPAIN

**ASIAN CULTURAL AND MIGRATORY FLOWS IN MEXICO IN THE EARLY STAGES OF
“GLOBALIZATION” (1565-1816)**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses early modern Asian migration to the Americas on the Manila Galleon. Its main focus is to bring forth the experience of individuals that crossed, or were forced to cross the Pacific to settle in mainland New Spain between 1565 and 1815. The aim is to highlight long-lasting effects of the early stages of globalization on the lives of these individuals and the society they migrated into. This research contributes to the growing literature on the subject by including analysis of ritual kinship relations, a comprehensive case study of the Asian population of the city of Puebla de los Ángeles, and an epidemiological hypothesis for the disappearance of Asian migration from historical records. The thesis also broadens the scope of research about the wider cultural implications of the Manila Galleon by presenting a study of the manifestations of the transpacific trade route in New Spanish literature.

The growing interconnectedness of a global economic network manifested itself in New Spain as the first enduring demographic and cultural links between Asia and the Americas developed and consolidated. Between 10.000 and 20.000 Asians settled in New Spain, mostly in the area along the Pacific coast, in the towns and villages along the route inland from the American terminus of the Manila Galleon, Acapulco, in Mexico City, and in Puebla de los Ángeles. Many of them were slaves, primarily employed in domestic service, textile manufacture, and, in the coastal region, in coconut plantations. The rest were free individuals who made a living in a wide range of occupations, from militia soldiers, to bakers, to street vendors, to muleteers, to barbers. A few chinos managed to overcome ethnic restrictions to their aspirations and etched for themselves a place in New Spanish society, amassing considerable wealth and achieving a relatively preeminent position in racially stratified social spectrum. Others rose to social notoriety by other means, most famously, Catarina de San Juan, a slave girl from India who eventually became an important religious figures in the city of Puebla.

The thesis explains why people with noticeable Asian heritage eventually disappeared from historical record. Transpacific slave trade ended as a 1672-73 prohibition of Asian slavery was gradually enforced. Partially as a result of this phenomenon the number of recognizably Asian people in central New Spain diminished. Asian migration was also affected during the eighteenth century by political and economic shifts, in particular growing British and French power and influence in Asia and the Pacific, and Spain's efforts, to link the Philippines directly to the Iberian peninsula, bypassing New Spain, which caused a decrease in the volume of Manila Galleon trade and, consequently, in the number of new arrivals of Asians to New Spain. Another factor was miscegenation as, throughout the entire period, their small numbers forced Asians to intermarry with people of other ethnicities. Asymmetrical resistance to epidemics may have also influenced this process.

Overall, the thesis explores how global processes influenced this understudied group of people. It also examines the ways by which an enduring connection between Asia and the Americas shaped New Spanish society. As the two continents were directly linked, the social stratification system of the viceroyalty changed. The correlated emergence of Asia and Asians in New Spanish literature shows that the influx of the Manila Galleon went beyond the realm of material culture.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this thesis I employ a variety of terms used in the sources to describe the provenance and, in some cases, the physical features of individuals. Rather than attempting clumsy and unhelpful translations, I decided to keep these terms as they appear in the sources. I employ *chino*, *indio chino*, *china*, and *india china* throughout this thesis to refer to Asian immigrants and their descendants. I am aware of the complexity of this nomenclature. I dedicate a section of the introduction to discuss it in-depth. I render these appellations, along with others such as *indio*, *negro*, and *mulato* in Spanish, as they appear in the sources with the original spelling. I employ regular typography for these concepts and for lengthy citations in Spanish, reserving italic type for other short place names and expressions, languages, book titles, and emphasis.

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INTRODUCTION

Some time around 1683, a young man called Alonso Cortés de Siles, “natural de la ciudad de Cibu [Cebu in the Philippines], chino libre de cautiberio”, left his homeland and embarked on one of the vessels that sailed across the Pacific from Manila to Acapulco, following the famous route known as the Manila Galleon or *Nao de China*. After enduring the grueling and perilous transoceanic voyage, Alonso left Acapulco and headed north on the mule route to Mexico City, across the *Sierra Madre del Sur* mountain range. The treacherous path passed through difficult terrain forcing Alonso to traverse thick woodlands, climb mountains, and wade rivers, sleeping mostly outdoors and finding only an occasional village where he could replenish his supplies.¹ Alonso stopped to rest in the town of Chilpancingo (present-day capital of the state of Guerrero). There he encountered two men who took him to the silver-mining town of Taxco. Once there, he entered in the service of Joseph Ruiz, who, six months later, “movido a compasión como muchacho que era,” took Alonso to Mexico City, so he would learn the trade of a barber. He remained with a master barber in the capital for a year and a half and then he returned to Taxco to set up his own shop. When he petitioned to marry Petrona Juana, an india orphan aged sixteen in 1688, the authorities demanded a series of testimony to prove he and his bride were not slaves. The accounts of the

¹ William Schurz vividly describes this route in his classic study of the Manila Galleon, William Schurz, *The Manila Galleon* (Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1985), 310-311.

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betrotted and their witnesses preserved the story of Alonso's journey and his successful integration into New Spanish society.²

Alonso Cortés de Siles was one of the thousands of Asians that crossed, or were forced to cross the Pacific to settle in central New Spain. In this thesis I reconstruct the history of hundreds of people with experiences similar to Alonso's in the interest of showing how global forces influenced the lives of this relatively small and understudied group of people and how they, in turn, induced change. It shows how Alonso and his peers faced daunting obstacles such as the arduous transoceanic voyage and the racially determined restrictions to work and social position characteristic of the Spanish colonial system. Being characterized with the generic label *chino*, used to refer to all Asian immigrants regardless of their precise provenance, Alonso was forced to find witnesses who could lend credence to the fact that he was a free man,³ because the majority of Asians or *chinos* that lived in New Spain were slaves, and had difficulties asserting their status. Like many other Asian immigrants, he managed to become a barber to earn a livelihood, and marry a local indigenous woman. Barbers in Mexico City, many of them Asians, were an immigration reception network that gave Alonso the skills he needed and support to prosper in his new home. Asians took advantage of this type of structures and often exploited the ambiguous place they had with regards to their judicial status.

Relevance of topic

It is hard to assert with certainty how many people were involved in the first wave of Asian migration to the Americas. Estimations proposed by scholars vary substantially: Floro Mercene argues, quite generously, that 60.000 Filipinos migrated to mainland New Spain; Jonathan Israel claims that 6.000 Asian slaves were introduced every decade prior to 1650, a total of 48.000; Pablo Guzmán-Rivas proposes 10.000 slaves, plus an undetermined number of servants,

² AGN, Inquisición, vol. 673, exp. 37, ff. 315-320 (1688). In reference to his age the document states that he was "muy mozo." One translation of "mozo" is "lad."

³ It is possible he was of Chinese descent as there was a sizeable Chinese community in Cebu. Junald Dawa Ango, "The Cebu-Acapulco Galleon Trade", *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 38, 2 (2010), 147-173, 157.

crewmembers, exiles, and stowaways.⁴ In studies published more recently, Edward Slack calculates between 40.000 and 100.000, while Déborah Oropeza, much more conservatively, estimates 7.200 Asians entered central New Spain between 1565 and 1700, out of which between 4.500 and 5.000, 20% female, never returned to the Philippines.⁵ Tatiana Seijas calculates that between 1565 and 1700 at least 8.100 Asian slaves were transported to New Spain.⁶ Based on these numbers and the data presented in this thesis, my own calculation is that between 10.000 and 20.000 Asians migrated to New Spain from 1565 to 1815. I argue that Asians and their immediate descendants represented around one percent of the population of Mexico City and Puebla de los Ángeles, the two largest cities of the viceroyalty in the seventeenth century. Although seemingly small when compared, for example, with the number of African slaves that entered New Spain in the seventeenth century, these figures are still considerable.⁷ Even the lowest estimates of the number of Asians who migrated to New Spain between 1565 and 1815 is comparable, for example, to the number of English that migrated to New England in the seventeenth century, the French immigrants to New France in the 1600s and 1700s, and Portuguese in Portugal's Indian Ocean and Pacific

⁴ Floro Mercene, "Filipinos in the New World", *Manila Bulletin* (2000), accessed 15/01/2011, <http://filipinokastila.tripod.com/FilMex.html>; Israel, *Race, class, and politics*, 76; Pablo Guzmán-Rivas, "Reciprocal Geographic Influences of the Transpacific Galleon Trade" (PhD diss. University of Texas, 1960), 44. Edward Slack argues that Guillermo Tovar estimates 40.000 to 50.000 Asian immigrants between 1600 and 1800, but states that Tovar provides no reference, Slack "Sinifying New Spain", 7, n. 1. An outrageous, almost unanimously dismissed estimate of four million Filipino slaves, which lacks backing from primary sources, is in Josemaria Salutan Luengo, *A History of the Manila-Acapulco Slave Trade, 1565-1815* (Tubigon, Bohol: Mater Dei Publications, 1996).

⁵ Edward Slack, "Sinifying New Spain: Cathay's Influence on Colonial Mexico via the *Nao de China*", *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 5 (1) (2009): 6-7; Déborah Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España: la inmigración de la Nao de China, 1565-1700" (PhD diss., El Colegio de México, 2007), 78-79, 186.

⁶ Tatiana Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico. From Chinos to Indians* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 83-84.

⁷ Colin A. Palmer estimated that between 110.000 and 150.000 were taken to New Spain between 1570 and 1650, the colony being surpassed only by Brazil in number of slave imports during the same period, Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 28-30, cited in Frank Proctor III, "Afro-Mexican Slave Labor in the Obrajés de Paños of New Spain, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", *The Americas* 60, 1 (2003): 33-58, 34. The population of Mexico City alone, for example, was said to be of 15.000 *españoles*, 80.000 *indios*, and 50.000 *negros* and *mulatos* around 1612; see Seijas, *Asian Slaves in New Spain*, 112, n. 8.

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colonies in the mid-to-late sixteenth century.⁸ The period of highest Asian migration to New Spain also coincided with the beginning of a drop in the inflow of Europeans to Spanish America from 1625.⁹ It is important to stress that the legacies of European migration in these places are drastically different from those of Asians in New Spain because the former generally assumed positions of social domination. However, the similarities in the volume of the migrations are relevant nonetheless, because they underscore the argument that the early Asian diaspora in the Americas cannot be discarded as a relevant topic based simply on numbers. Transcontinental migratory flows in the early modern period were numerically roughly equivalent, except for the introduction of African slaves to the Americas.

Traditionally the relevance of the presence of Asians in New Spain was dismissed because it was considered that the number of immigrants was too small. Marco Polo Hernández Cuevas recently asserted this idea arguing that “although Tagalog, Malay, Javanese, Papuans, Timorous, Mozambique-ans, etc., entered Mexico, at the end of the day they were ‘scarce.’”¹⁰ This statement falls flat, not only because their numbers were substantial when compared to other migratory movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but also because Asian contributions can be better ascertained in terms of their qualitative rather than their quantitative magnitude.

All these migrations configured the emergence of a global world in a process where the Manila Galleon played a fundamental role. Timothy Brook examines

⁸ Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *The Americas: A Hemispheric History* (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 102. Some detailed studies of New England migrations are Richard Archer, “New England Mosaic: A Demographic Analysis for the Seventeenth Century”, *The William and Mary Quarterly* 47 (4) (1990): 477-502; Clifford K. Shipton, “Immigration to New England, 1680-1740”, *Journal of Political Economy* 44 (2) (1936): 225-239. Allan Greer argues that “about 27000 French people came to Canada over the century and a half” before the British conquest of 1759-1760, in Allan Greer, *The People of New France* (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2003, originally published in 1997), 12. According to John Darwin, “between Sofala and Macao, there were only six or seven thousand Portuguese in the 1540s, perhaps twice as many fifty years later,” John Darwin, *After Tamerlane. The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400-2000* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), 54.

⁹ Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, 107.

¹⁰ Marco Polo Hernández Cuevas, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’ Is a Referent of Afrodescendant”, *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 5 (5) (2012): 137.

how the world became more rapidly increasingly interconnected from the late sixteenth century and argues that:

The sixteenth was a century of discoveries and violent encounters, of windfalls and errors, of borders crossed and borders closed, creating a web of connections that spread in all directions. The seventeenth century was something different. First encounters were becoming sustained engagements; fortuitous exchanges were being systematized into regular trade; the language of gesture was being supplanted by pidgin dialects and genuine communication. Running through all these changes was the common factor of mobility. More people were in motion over longer distances and sojourning away from home for longer periods of time than at any other time in human history.¹¹

Asia was fundamental in this process. Attraction towards China in particular played a remarkable role in catalyzing movement of goods and people. In this respect, Brook argues that:

The quest to get to China was a relentless force that did much to shape the history of the seventeenth century, not just within Europe and China, but in most of the places in between [...] The lure of China's wealth haunted the seventeenth century world.¹²

This thesis argues that this phenomenon manifested itself in New Spain in part in the form of Asian migration. Thus, the study of this small and understudied community of Asians provides insights into the history of New Spanish society as a whole and macroeconomic processes characteristic of the early modern globalization. To their contemporaries, the Asians of New Spain were living proof of the viceroyalty's interconnectedness with the rest of the world in the context of growing global awareness and interactions. I argue that the presence of Asia and Asian immigrants in literary works is evidence and the culminating example of this relationship.

¹¹ Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat. The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World* (New York and London: Bloomsbury Press, 2008), 19.

¹² Brook, *Vermeer's Hat*, 19.

Premise and objectives

This thesis is about Asian the earliest documented transpacific migration to the Americas. I explore the lives of members of this diaspora and their influence on New Spanish society as a whole. My fundamental premise is that a sizeable group of immigrants crossed the Pacific that, by leaving an enduring mark in New Spanish history, represent a human dimension to the early stages of globalization. Throughout this thesis, I show how the chino experience in New Spain highlights the growing interconnectedness of the early modern world triggered by increasing commercial, cultural, and migratory interaction across continents, reconstructing the experience of these Asians as harbingers of global changes affecting New Spain. Thus the first of the thesis' aims is to show how the Asians of New Spain embodied these changing patterns in global history, and how they left an indelible mark in the places where they settled, eliciting not only wariness and aggression, but also compassion and cooperation.

The second objective is to present a cohesive census of this population, discuss their provenance, occupations, and the way they took advantage of the racially determined social hierarchical system, by organizing into confraternities and guilds, and maintaining some degree of cohesion through ritual kinship. To accomplish this objective:

- I analyze how Asians lived in cities, towns, and villages of New Spain as, mostly acculturated, apparently Catholic, individuals that used Spanish names. To the Indigenous, European, and Africans they joined, the Asians were harbingers of an ever-growing system of exchanges, and the product of a proto-globalization that affected every aspect of life in New Spain.
- I argue that they developed strategies of integration with the other groups while preserving social bonds amongst themselves, through marriage and ritual kinship, participation in religious brotherhoods, common occupations, and money lending networks.

- I contend that although Asians were the smallest ethnic minority, and despite the fact that they comprised a heterogeneous group including South, South East, and East Asians, these *chinos* and *indios chinos* played a relevant role in their society. They took part in a wide range of occupations, from slaves, to servants, to artisans, to merchants, affecting various parts of the economy. Particularly interesting is their place in the complex process of *mestizaje*, arguably the most important social process that unfolded in New Spain throughout the colonial period.
- I claim that Asians left behind a heritage traceable not only in material culture and folklore, but also in the literary works produced in New Spain, appearing in texts that, in some cases, were milestones in the development of the distinctiveness of people of European descent born in the Americas and eventually Mexican identity.

By reconstructing the experience of this diaspora, I strive to achieve a third objective: to address a gap in scholarly literature in two large fields. The first is the literature about the Manila Galleon, to which I contribute by incorporating the demographic manifestations on the Manila to Acapulco vector. This was a sustained migratory flow from Asia to New Spain that preceded the better-known mid-to-late nineteenth-century migration, and therefore its study demands reconfiguring and reshaping the periodization of the second field of inquiry, that of the history of the Asian Diaspora in the Americas as a whole.

The fourth objective is to provide a global historical narrative of Colonial Mexico. The viceroyalty of New Spain sat on a crossroads of major global trade routes. This territory was a crucial commercial hub in the Spanish domains in the Americas, and it also connected Europe via Spain and Asia via Manila through the Manila Galleon. It is difficult to over state the importance of this trade route, which functioned between 1565 and 1815 linking the Philippines with Acapulco. Alonso Cortés' story illustrates the overall experience of thousands of people that driven

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by global macroeconomic, social, and political circumstances migrated east to the Americas. The Asians of New Spain shaped and were shaped by a world in a process of transformation driven by early-modern globalization. In this sense, the chapters that deal with Puebla show how this city's connectivity transformed the lives of its inhabitants.

A fifth aim is to provide an extensive examination of the term "chino" as an ethnic category, and understand its meaning and evolution through time. I accomplish this by providing an extensive etymological discussion of the word and discussing the treatment of hundreds of chino individuals in the sources. Throughout the thesis I move away from traditional views that argue that the word meant the offspring of people of Amerindian and African ethnic background, and aim to show its geographic nuances, and how the usage changed. With this examination as a basis, my sixth aim is to explain the process of gradual assimilation of the Asian minority into the larger African descended and "mestizo" groups.

Methodology

I have been most influenced by scholars of global or world history.¹³ The selection of the topic of this thesis is due in large part to my interest in transcultural, transcontinental, and transnational interactions and their place in broad global historical narratives. This historical perspective is ideal to reconstruct processes such as early modern globalization.¹⁴ My approach is also informed by cultural

¹³ I am aware of debates about the differences between world and global history. I situate myself among those who see no difference. Global and world history are one and the same approach to history from a transcultural, transnational, perspective that highlights the interconnectedness of human societies across the globe through time. The literature on this historiographical approach is extensive. Two useful texts are Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Peer Vries, ed., *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften. Global History* 20 (2) (2009). See also Peter Stearns, *World History. The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2011); John McNeill and William McNeill, *The Human Web. A Bird's-Eye View of World History* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003); Pamela Crossley, *What is Global History?* (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 2008).

¹⁴ A.G. Hopkins, ed., *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002); C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (Malden MA, Oxford and Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 41-48; Robbie Robertson, *The Three Waves of Globalization: A History of*

history.¹⁵ Due to the nature of the sources I employed, I was unable to take Patrick Manning's linguistic approach employed in his work about the African diaspora.¹⁶ Instead of assigning ethnic categories, Manning groups people according to the language they spoke. As they contain no information of this nature, the sources available about the Asian diaspora in New Spain force me to categorize people in the same way as the producers of the sources did. This presents a terminological problem, most importantly with respect to the use of the term *chino*, which I discuss in the last section of this introduction.

Throughout the thesis I highlight the lives of individuals in an effort to populate the history of the Manila Galleon, a trade route that has been mostly studied in its economic and political dimension. Thus I respond to Tonio Andrade's call for world historians to "populate" their models and theories of the development of global historical structures and processes with "real people", in order to write what he calls "global microhistory," where world historians "experiment with stories of individual lives in global contexts" and "bring alive [...] some of the people who inhabited those structures and lived those processes."¹⁷ With this goal in mind I build and expand upon the work of previous scholars. My purpose and approach is similar to Tatiana Seijas' effort to "piece together the history of a previously understudied group of people," looking broadly at their social organization, interaction with other groups, and their development of strategies to navigate life in central New Spain, while also "recovering the experiences of individuals."¹⁸

My method was to search for, locate, read, analyze, and categorize as many documents as I could find from various archives in Mexico and Spain. While some

a Developing Global Consciousness, (London: Zed Books, 2003); Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Peterson, *Globalization: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Peter Stearns, *Globalization in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

¹⁵ Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

¹⁶ Patrick Manning, *The African Diaspora: A History Through Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

¹⁷ Tonio Andrade, "A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory", *Journal of World History* 21 (4) (2010): 591.

¹⁸ Tatiana Seijas, "Transpacific Servitude: The Asian Slaves of Mexico, 1580-1700" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2008), 20-21.

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of the databases overlap with those collected by previous scholars, I present new data from Puebla and baptismal records from Mexico City. These sources challenge some of the assumptions regarding the chino community put forth in earlier works, and present a wider framework of analysis that takes into account an expanded geographic and chronological scope.

This thesis is also an attempt at methodological broadening our understanding of the repercussions of the Manila Galleon. My approach is different and innovative in that it incorporates the parallel approximations of historical epidemiology and literary studies to explain the process of dilution of the Asian diaspora and the legacies of the Manila Galleon in continental New Spain, respectively. To complement existing arguments that the main cause of assimilation of chinos with people of African and Amerindian descent were increased exogamy and geopolitical shifts in the Pacific ocean, I propose that asymmetrical resistance to diseases such as malaria and yellow fever may have contributed to phenotypical association with people of different ethnic backgrounds. For this purpose I relied on accounts of epidemics from the seventeenth and eighteenth century and analyzed them using literature on historical epidemiology, historical climate, and biology of mosquitoes that carried the diseases as a framework.

As for the literary focus of the last chapter, I concluded that our understanding of the nature of the cultural repercussions of the Manila Galleon is incomplete if one disregards the literary manifestations sprouted by it. Literary sources provide further insights into the lives, the social position, and the reception of the Asian diaspora in New Spain. Additionally, they clearly show that Asia was constantly present in the mind of the inhabitants of the viceroyalty. By incorporating these new sources and putting them alongside the archival ones, I aimed to achieve a deeper analysis of these phenomena.

All these inquiries are directed at demonstrating the many ways in which the study of the Asian diaspora in New Spain can enrich a variety of fields and challenge traditional views that this migratory phenomenon was too small to be relevant. The methodology thus is directed at highlighting the life of individuals within

global historical processes, reconstructing the history of the earliest Asian communities in continental New Spain, explaining their assimilation into other groups, and ascertaining their cultural legacies, by exploring a wide and diverse range of sources.

Sources

My primary sources come from various parochial, notarial, and administrative documents from the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) and the Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal (AHDF) in Mexico City, the Archivo General Municipal de Puebla (AGMP) in Puebla, the Archivo General de Indias (AGI) in Seville, and the Archivo de la Provincia Agustiniense Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas (APAF) in Valladolid.¹⁹ In terms of sources, this thesis provides description and discussion of hundreds of new sources about the chino community in Puebla from parochial and notarial records, as well as baptismal information from Mexico City, and eighteenth century sources from across New Spain. For the most part, the sources utilized are brief and provide little detail about the individuals they discuss. Often they merely mention the name and place of origin of an individual, or the less useful term chino. Because Asians were a small minority, the sources available about them are relatively scarce. In the Puebla parochial records, for example, less than two in every hundred entries in marriage registries referenced an Asian or chino. This fact increased the difficulty of finding and compiling the sources. Unfortunately sometimes the records were insufficient to reconstruct aspects of the experience of the Asian immigrants in New Spain without resorting to “educated guesses.”

For Mexico City and most places across New Spain, the main source were marriage, vendor, and artisanal licenses and permits, most dated between 1590 and 1700. Several scattered records made by the Inquisition also mentioned Asians or chinos. The majority of the post-1700 sources were also marriage licenses, which have remained largely unexplored by scholars. For Puebla I relied primarily on

¹⁹ I describe these sources in more detail in each pertinent chapter.

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parochial records. Almost all the sources in the Puebla survey were unknown to scholarly inquiry prior to this thesis. Pueblan marriage records were the richest sources of data, as they generally include information about ethnicity. Burial registries were also helpful, albeit to a much lesser degree, while no records of Asians, indios chinos, or chinos were located in the baptismal registries of Puebla.

For the chapter on literature I relied on print and online catalogues of New Spanish publications, and as many pertinent original print and manuscript literary texts I was able to access. I present and discuss a canon of texts of various genres alluding to Asia, the Manila Galleon, and Asian immigrants circulated, printed, or composed in New Spain between 1565 and 1831. I also incorporate and discuss ideas from various academic analyses of specific texts included in the canon.

Structure

I contribute to existing literature on the first Asian Diaspora in the Americas in three major ways and structure the thesis accordingly, organizing the chapters in pairs of two, each section aimed at addressing one of the three areas of inquiry.

First, I complement and challenge studies about Asians in New Spain by setting them in broad macroeconomic and cultural processes through a review of the extensive literature on the Manila Galleon. This outline of the economic and cultural repercussions of the transpacific trade route serves to contextualize the settlement and occupational patterns of the diaspora in New Spain. I discuss and reassess case studies elaborated by previous scholars and expand upon the question of the development of an Asian commonality through an exploration of patterns of ritual kinship using previously unexplored sources.

The first two chapters contextualize and outline the history of the Asian diaspora in New Spain and transpacific exchanges, and serve as a critical discussion of the pertinent literature. Chapter one considers the economic and artistic aspects of the Manila Galleon. I survey the relevant literature to outline the context in which the first Asian diaspora to the Americas took place. Changes in fiscal policies in Ming

China elicited dramatic changes in the value of silver in Asia. This process, in combination with the Iberian conquests in the Americas, and in particular, the creation of the viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru, large silver production in these new domains, and exploration of the Pacific facilitated the establishment of the Manila Galleon after the discovery of the return journey from the Philippines to the Americas in 1565 and the conquest of Manila in 1571. The subsequent entry of large quantities of Asian products to New Spain drove the adoption of Asian motifs in decorative and practical arts in the American viceroyalty. Asian artisans, while not directly responsible, may have contributed to this process, although not in the production of enameled ceramics, as has been assumed by several authors. The chapter also discusses how Asian immigrants shaped local Mesoamerican customs and practices.

In chapter two I survey Asians throughout New Spain. Some of the *chinos*—as Asians were generically called in New Spanish sources—that settled in Acapulco, were drafted or volunteered into the local militia and helped defend the area from the growing threat of pirates. Others contributed to repairing, building, and maintaining the ships. In coastal areas Asians were employed as pearl divers and slaves in coconut plantations. Mexico City concentrated the largest numbers of transpacific immigrants. There they worked as street vendors, muleteers, silversmiths, and textile mill and household slaves, among other occupations. Asians navigated a complex and ambiguous legal system, sometimes accessing to certain privileges like wearing a sword by highlighting their Asian ancestry, other times hiding their heritage to avoid being characterized as a slave. In this context Asians formed cohesive social bonds. A certain “chino commonality” arose through familial, occupational, and religious networks. Patterns of selection of godparenthood among chino parents serve as evidence of active formation of ritual kinship bonds among *chinos*. In the last section of the chapter I survey sources about *chinos* living in other territories controlled by Spain in the Americas, dated in the seventeenth century in Peru and, from the mid-to-late eighteenth century in California, Louisiana, and Río de la Plata. I suggest these areas are potential case studies for future analysis.

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Chapters three and four reconstruct the history of the Asian diaspora in Puebla de los Ángeles, the second largest city in New Spain, boasting the second largest number of Asian inhabitants, after Mexico City. Chapter three is about the specific connections the city of Puebla had to the Manila Galleon and transpacific exchanges. I briefly summarize the history of this city founded in 1531 and discuss its rise during the 1500s as an important agricultural, manufacturing, administrative, and cultural hub. This city concentrated a sizeable wealthy elite that was able to participate in the Manila Galleon trade as soon as it was established, contributing to its profitability, as it became a market for Asian goods. Puebla also facilitated the logistics of the trade by supplying *bizcocho* or hard tack and various other foodstuffs for the crews and passengers that set on the voyage across the Pacific. City officials also raised militias for service in the Philippines and arranged for celebrations in honor of missionaries who died in Asia. In this chapter I also analyze the most popular and enduring bond between Puebla and the history of Asian migration to the Americas: the life of Catarina de San Juan. Also known as the *china poblana* she was captured in India and sold as a slave in Manila, and finally transported to Puebla where she became an important religious figure, as news of her piety and visions spread. I briefly outline the life story of this person, who became the most famous Asian denizen of New Spain, and inspired the longest biography ever published in the viceroyalty. My primary interest in Catarina de San Juan and the justification for this inclusion is that the passages of her biographies inform about perceptions and the social status of all *chinos*.

Chapter four consists of a survey of the lesser-known Asian population of Puebla de los Ángeles. The city's wealth and transpacific connection facilitated the consolidation of a sizeable number of *chinos* that, as in Mexico City, employed themselves in a variety of occupations. I highlight examples of free Asian individuals and families of particular interest, for example, the family history of Antonio de la Cruz, a *chino* merchant who amassed considerable wealth and prestige in the parish of Analco. However, I also show how the majority worked as slaves often in the *obrajes* or textile mills that produced the woolens that were a staple of the Pueblan economy. My analysis disproves the assumption that Asian artisans influenced the development of the Pueblan ceramics industry, which, to a

certain extent, imitated Asian decorative elements. I located no sources linking Asians to this particular occupation. I also discuss patterns of settlement and marriage, and provide extensive charts and tables summarizing archival findings. The last section describes the conditions that led to Puebla's downfall in the eighteenth century and proposes hypotheses linking this process to the decrease of Asian population.

The third contribution is the incorporation of an epidemiological hypothesis to explain the process of assimilation of the Asian population element into the Amerindian and African population, and an assessment of the literary repercussion of the transpacific bond between Asia and the Americas, by extending of the period of analysis to include the eighteenth century. Previous scholars have largely ignored this period because the rate of Asian migration during this time shrunk drastically. The exploration of sources from this period explain how and why Asian presence vanished and explicate the presence of Asian migration in New Spanish literature toward the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The last two chapters are about the disappearance and legacies of the Asian diaspora and the Manila Galleon in New Spain. These chapters focus on the last decades of the transpacific trade route and show how the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries featured the last migrations from Asia both in physical and literary forms. Chapter five discusses sources from the eighteenth century and explores the fate and dissolution of the Asian group. While Déborah Oropeza and Tatiana Seijas, two of the foremost specialists on the subject, limited their analyses to the seventeenth century, I cover migration in the eighteenth century, and the first decades of the nineteenth century. The result is an outline of the last stages of Asian migration in the colonial period, which involved mostly free Filipino migrants. Even though they arrived in smaller numbers, they continued to settle throughout New Spain. This drop in new arrivals, caused by the abolishment of chino slavery and disruptions in transpacific trade, catalyzed exogamy, accelerating the process of *mestizaje* and blending the Asians with other elements of New Spanish society. As a result chino became increasingly a term used to designate a variety of Afrodescended racial categories or *castas*. I propose that

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asymmetrical resistance to diseases such as malaria and yellow fever may have contributed to this process, as children born of Asian and Amerindian unions were more likely to perish in epidemics of these diseases, than *chinos* with genetic heritage from people from regions where malaria and yellow fever were endemic.

Chapter six explores the traces left by the Asian migratory phenomenon and the Manila Galleon in the literature of New Spain. I argue that there is a visible continuum of works dealing with, or alluding to these processes, which needs to be considered as a central aspect of Asian cultural heritage in the Americas. I use José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi's *El Periquillo Sarniento* as a narrative thread to organize the discussion of the various texts because it represents the culmination of the cultural input of 250 years of New Spanish awareness and concern about events in Asia. The canon includes epic poetry, *relaciones*, documents of geographic and historical nature, journals, panegyric sermons about missionaries and martyrs in Asia, pamphlets, proto-novels, and novels.

State of the Art

Despite the importance of this phenomenon, relatively little research exists on migration through the Manila Galleon in general. Some scholars have studied migration on the trade route from Acapulco to Manila. María Fernández de los Arcos, Rafael Bernal, Antonio García-Abásolo, and Ostwald Sales Colín published works about recruits, soldiers, merchants, and convicts that crossed the Pacific from mainland New Spain to the Philippines.²⁰ More recently, Andrew Peterson showed how vital Asians were in the building and navigation of the Manila galleons themselves, aiding in the construction and reparation of the ships, preparing the

²⁰ María Fernanda García de los Arcos, *Forzados y reclutas: los criollos novohispanos en Asia (1756-1808)* (Mexico: Potrerillos Editores, 1996); Rafael Bernal, *México en Filipinas: estudio de una transculturación* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1965); Antonio García-Abásolo, "Formación de las Indias Orientales españolas: Filipinas en el siglo XVI", in *Historia general de Filipinas*, ed. Leoncio Cabrero (Madrid: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 2000), 169-206; Ostwald Sales Colín, *El movimiento portuario de Acapulco: el protagonismo de Nueva España en la relación con Filipinas, 1587-1648*, (Madrid: Plaza y Valdés, 2000).

supplies they needed for their journey from Manila to Acapulco, and being employed as sailors and cabin boys on the transpacific voyages.²¹

The dearth of academic literature is also evident regarding Asians in New Spain. Some authors of general histories of colonial Mexico mention Asians immigrants in passing.²² Asian immigrants are also briefly discussed in classic academic works about race issues in New Spain, such as Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán's research about slavery and the African population of New Spain, Silvio Zavala's study on Indigenous slavery, Jonathan Israel's analysis of ethnic relations and power, and Colin MacLachlan and Jaime Rodríguez study on the development of Mexican identity.²³ Some studies about Chinese migration from the second half of the nineteenth century include brief discussions of the Manila Galleon Asian migration as background.²⁴ A few scholars published articles about certain groups of Asian

²¹ Andrew Peterson, "What Really Made the World Go Around? *Indio* Contributions to the Acapulco-Manila Galleon Trade", *World History Bulletin* 28 (2) (2012): 58-67.

²² Demetrio Ramos Pérez, "Nueva España, hacia la plenitud", in Luis Suárez Fernández, Demetrio Ramos Pérez, José Luis Comellas, José Andrés-Gallego, *Historia general de España y América. Vol. 9, parte 2: Los reinos indios en el siglo XVII* (Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 1990), 15; Serge Gruzinski, *La Ciudad de México: Una historia* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004, originally published in 1996), 356-357.

²³ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, "The Slave Trade in Mexico", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 24, 3 (1944), 412-431, 420-421; Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810: estudio etnohistórico* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1972, originally published in 1946), 41; Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *El negro esclavo en Nueva España: La formación colonial, la medicina popular y otros ensayos*, (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994), 37, 61; Silvio Zavala, *Los esclavos indios en Nueva España* (Mexico: El Colegio Nacional, 1981, originally published in 1967), 237-238; Jonathan Israel, *Race, class, and politics in colonial Mexico, 1610-1670* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 76; Colin M. MacLachlan and Jaime E. Rodríguez, *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: A Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 222-223.

²⁴ Robert Chao Romero, *The Chinese in Mexico, 1882-1940* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2010); Julia María Schiavone, *Chinese Mexicans: Transpacific Migration and the Search for a Homeland, 1910-1960*, (Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Grace Delgado, *Making the Chinese Mexican: Global Migration, Localism, and the Exclusion in the US-Mexico Borderlands* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012); José Luis Chong, *Hijo de un país poderoso. La inmigración china a América (1850-1950)* (Mexico: Palabra de Clío, 2008); Juan Hung Hui, *Chinos en América* (Madrid: MAPFRE, 1992); Dong Jingsheng, "Chinese Emigration to Mexico and the Sino-Mexico Relations Before 1910", *Revista de Estudios Internacionales* 38 (152) Número especial: Chile y China, (2006) 75-88; Nicolás Sánchez Albornoz, *La población de América Latina. Desde los tiempos precolombinos hasta el año 2000*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial 1977, 95, cited in Fernando Iwasaki Cauti, *Extremo Oriente y el Perú en el siglo XVI* (Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2005, originally published in 1992).

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immigrants in specific regions of New Spain. Homer Dubs and Robert Smith's brief analysis of the chino barber controversy of 1635 in Mexico City.²⁵ Thomas Calvo studied the lives of Japanese immigrants in Guadalajara, in present-day state of Jalisco.²⁶ Virginia González Claverán published a study about the promulgation in 1672 of a mandate to free Asian slaves issued by the *Audiencia de Guadalajara*.²⁷ Paulina Machuca studied how the presence of Asians in the Colima region prompted the creation of the office of "alcalde de los chinos."²⁸ García-Abásolo discussed Asian migration in the Jalisco-Colima coastal region in a brief chapter of a study about Chinese migration in the Spanish empire, which focuses primarily on Manila.²⁹ María Fernández de los Arcos briefly analyzed a series of Filipino individuals living in various parts of the Spanish empire.³⁰ Comprehensive and detailed studies on this Asian migration in mainland New Spain as a whole only started in the last decade. Although Floro Mercene's study of Filipino migration to New Spain, which primarily employs an ethnographic approach, is a valuable contribution, it is sparsely cited, and therefore it can be considered to be more suitable to general audiences than scholars.³¹ Most of the research can be attributed primarily to three authors: Déborah Oropeza, Tatiana Seijas, and

²⁵ Homer H. Dubs and Robert S. Smith, "Chinese in Mexico City in 1635", *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 1 (4) (1942): 387-389. I discuss this conflict in chapter 2.

²⁶ Thomas Calvo, *Japoneses en Guadalajara: "Blancos de honor" durante el seiscientos mexicano* (Madrid: Instituto Fernández de Oviedo, 1983); Thomas Calvo, "Japoneses en Guadalajara: blancos de honor durante el seiscientos mexicano", *Revista de Indias*, 43 (172) (1983): 531-547.

²⁷ Virginia González Claverán, "Un documento colonial sobre esclavos asiáticos", *Historia Mexicana* 38 (3) (1989): 523-532. Audiencias were administrative and judicial courts that aided in governing territorial demarcations in the Spanish empire.

²⁸ Claudia Paulina Machuca, "El alcalde de los chinos en la provincia de Colima durante el siglo XVII: un sistema de representación en torno a un oficio", *Letras Históricas* 1 (2009): 95-115.

²⁹ Antonio García-Abásolo, *Murallas de piedra y cañones de seda: chinos en el Imperio español (siglos XVI-XVIII)* (Cordoba: Servicio de Publicaciones, Universidad de Córdoba, 2012), 229-253.

³⁰ María Fernanda García de los Arcos, "Filipinas y su gente de mar. La vuelta al mundo de cuarenta y dos 'chinos.' 1770-1774", in *España y el Pacífico*, ed. Antonio García-Abásolo (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 1997), 55-66.

³¹ Floro Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World. Filipino Migration to Mexico and the Americas from the Sixteenth Century* (Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 2007).

Edward Slack, whose research has provided part of the methodological template for this thesis.³²

The seminal study on Asian migration to New Spain is Déborah Oropeza's PhD dissertation presented in 2007 at the Colegio de México.³³ Her research is mostly directed at determining the Asians' position in New Spanish society in terms of their social, legal, cultural, and labor status. Oropeza uses geographic criteria to organize her discourse. After proving context about the colonization of the Philippines and the development of the Manila Galleon trade in chapter one, she discusses the immigrants that settled in Acapulco in chapter two, those that settled along the Pacific coast—on a 650 km strip of land running Northwest from Acapulco and its environs to the Colima region—in chapter three, and the Asians in Mexico City in chapter four. Oropeza analyses the “*influencia oriental*” in New Spanish material culture and folklore in chapter five. Lastly, she presents a rich database of hundreds of Asians, *indios chinos*, and *chinos* that sailed as crewmembers and passengers on the galleons, and individuals living in Mexico City and elsewhere in the viceroyalty between 1565 and 1700 in six appendixes. Oropeza's thesis is based on records from the Archivo General de Indias, the Archivo General de la Nación, the Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Colima, and records from the Consejo de la Crónica de la Ciudad de México.

Oropeza's chief argument is that the Asians were a sizeable group that took on a wide variety of occupations, and skillfully navigated the legal ambiguities that their

³² Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”; Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”; Seijas, *Asian Slaves in New Spain*; Edward Slack, “The Chinos in New Spain: A Corrective Lens for a Distorted Image”, *Journal of World History* 20 (1), (2009): 35–67; Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 5-27. The second article by Slack was subsequently published as a book chapter in Edward Slack “Sinifying New Spain: Cathay's Influence on Colonial Mexico via the *Nao de China*”, in *The Chinese in Latin America and the Caribbean*, eds. Walton Look Lai and Tan Chee-Beng (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 7-34. The page numbers in following citations of this work correspond to the original 2009 article. Other important works by these authors cited throughout this thesis are Déborah Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática en el virreinato de la Nueva España, 1565-1673”, *Historia Mexicana* 61 (1) (2011): 5-57; Tatiana Seijas, “The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish Manila: 1580-1640”, *Itinerario* 32 (1) (2008): 19-38; and Tatiana Seijas “Native Vassals: Chinos, Indigenous Identity, and Legal Protection in Early Modern Spain”, in *Western Visions of the Far East in a Transpacific Age, 1522-1657*, ed. Christina Lee (Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2012) 153-164.

³³ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”.

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provenance conferred them. For the coastal region, Oropeza argues that the transpacific migratory phenomenon was closely linked to the development of a coconut plantation economy, while some individuals engaged in pearl diving. The author also demonstrated how prominent Asian carpenters, shipbuilders, artisans, and soldiers in the local militia were in Acapulco, without whose contributions the maintenance of the galleons would have been a more difficult prospect. She describes the variety of occupations they engaged in Mexico City, focusing on slaves and barbers. Oropeza suggests that the arrival of Asians added complexity to the Mesoamerican world, which had been utterly transformed since the conquest. To the Mesoamerican Amerindian, she argues, after the initial arrival of Europeans and Africans, a third new element arrived in less than half a century since Hernán Cortés' landfall. Oropeza thus argues that the Asian populace in New Spain was the "cuarta raíz" of Mexican society.³⁴ Oropeza further developed her special interest in Asian slavery in an article published in 2011. There she discusses the volume of the transpacific slave trade, and analyzes the dynamics surrounding this venture, as well as the conditions that lead to the abolishment of indio chino slavery in a process that started in 1672-73.³⁵

Conducting her research concurrently with Déborah Oropeza, Tatiana Seijas completed a PhD thesis presented at Yale University in 2008, published in book form in 2014.³⁶ Focusing primarily on Mexico City, Seijas revisited some areas previously explored by Oropeza, but compiled a database with more than double the amount of chinos by exploring Mexico City's Archivo General de Notarías. Seijas is most interested in Asian slavery in the viceroyalty. As introduction, Seijas examines the life of Catarina de San Juan, an Asian slave who became an important religious figure in the city of Puebla in the seventeenth century in chapter one. She analyzes the diversity and scope of the Manila slave market and the history of transpacific slave trade in chapters two and three, and their activities in Mexico City in chapter four. She discusses free Asians in chapter five. In chapter six she

³⁴ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 186.

³⁵ Oropeza, "La esclavitud asiática".

³⁶ Seijas, "Transpacific Servitude"; Seijas *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*.

explicates the relationship between Asian slaves and ecclesiastical authorities, and the end of slavery among this population in chapter seven.

Seijas' chief argument is that Asian or chino slaves, as they were called in New Spain, acculturated more quickly than their African counterparts, and therefore sought to join the *República de indios*, primarily through marriage, in order to escape stigmas related to their provenance and servitude. Spanish colonial authorities in New Spain divided the populace in two large groups or *repúblicas*. Non-Indigenous (i.e. people of European and African descent) were excluded from the *República de indios* and formed the *República de españoles*, receiving separate prerogatives and obligations. Asians were placed in an ambiguous position, as they were technically considered indios, but since many of them were slaves, and slavery was prohibited among indios, they were increasingly related to people of African descent. Seijas argues that chino slaves successfully navigated this ambiguity to achieve their freedom. Essentially, Seijas argues that “despite their relatively small numbers in comparison to other ethnic categories, the Asian slave experience provides a lens for examining the experience of other subaltern groups in New Spain,” and adds that studying this group of people “recovers the experiences of people whose lives were forever altered by global economic forces.”³⁷

Edward Slack published two detailed and carefully researched articles in 2009.³⁸ Relying primarily on records from the AGN, in these articles he discusses demographics and occupations of Asians and their relationship with church authorities and status in colonial society. Slack proposes the existence of a “Chinatown” in Mexico City and that the work of Asian artisans was a vector for the introduction of Asian motifs in New Spanish textiles and ceramics. He provides a detailed analysis of the barber controversy and the participation of Asians in colonial militias. Slack conceptualizes the process of assimilation into Afrodescended *castas* in the eighteenth century as the “Africanization” of the Asian

³⁷ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 10.

³⁸ Slack, “The Chinos in New Spain”; Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”.

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diaspora, and explains it was the result of growing inter-ethnic marriage coupled with decreasing numbers of new Asian arrivals.

Slack's chief argument is that this understudied portion of the population of New Spain provides new insights into the viceroyalty complex social organization. He shows how:

Asian immigrants, their adaptations to a foreign cultural milieu, their roles in both viceregal society and economy, and the social amnesia that emerged in the late [seventeenth] century regarding the origins of the *chino* caste are vital missing pieces of the enormous colonial puzzle that [social scientists specializing in colonial Mexico] have been attempting to reconstruct.³⁹

The work of these authors reveals the growing academic interest of this group of people, and adds complexity to current models of racial and social stratification in the Spanish empire. Traditionally, historical inquiry about ethnicity in New Spain has been primarily focused on the relations between native Mesoamericans and Europeans to the point that it became a fundamental basis for Mexican nationalism.⁴⁰ Scholars have increasingly shifted away from this paradigm, as the growing literature on people of African descent in colonial Mexico shows.⁴¹

³⁹ Slack, "The Chinos in New Spain", 29.

⁴⁰ Mexican sociologists in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Andrés Molina Enríquez, in particular, proposed that "los mestizos de México [...] fundamentalmente [...] quienes poseen un linaje mixto hispano-indígena, son los mexicanos por antonomasia, los auténticos depositarios de la mexicanidad", Agustín Basave, *México mestizo. Análisis del nacionalismo mexicano en torno a la mestizofilia* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2011, originally published in 1992), 13.

⁴¹ Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México*; Ben Vinson and Bobby Vaughn, *Afroméxico: el pulso de la población negra en México ; una historia recordada, olvidada y vuelta a recordar*, (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, 2004); Ben Vinson III and Mathew Restall, eds. *Black Mexico: Race and Society from Colonial to Modern Times* (Albuquerque NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2009); Frank Proctor III, "African Diasporic Ethnicity in Mexico City to 1650", in *Africans to Spanish America: expanding the diaspora*, eds. Sherwin Bryant, O'Toole, and Vinson, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 50-73; Frank Proctor III, "Damned Notions of Liberty": *Slavery, Culture, and Power in Colonial Mexico* (Albuquerque NM: University of New Mexico, 2010); Mathew Restall, *The Black Middle: Africans, Mayas, and Spaniards in Colonial Yucatan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); María Elisa Velázquez Gutiérrez, *Mujeres de origen africano en la capital novohispana, siglos XVII y XVIII* (Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2006); María Elisa Velázquez

Terminology: The meanings of chino and china

Terminology represented the biggest challenge in writing this thesis. In particular, the precise meaning of the term chino lends itself to a wide variety of interpretations that warrant clarification. In this section I briefly discuss terminology issues, synthesize the various meanings for chino proposed by previous scholars and, provide my working definition.

The least problematic aspect of this complication is in regards to place names and usage of Chinese and Japanese terms. For the sake of simplicity, I use “New Spain” in reference to the American territories of the viceroyalty, and “Philippines” in reference to the Asian territories. Similarly, I use “Puebla,” instead of “Ciudad de los Ángeles,” or “Puebla de los Ángeles,” even though I am aware that it is slightly anachronistic. I prefer the terms “India de Portugal” or “Estado da India” over “Portuguese India,” as they better reflect the fact that the sources refer to a polity that, in addition to Portuguese outposts in the Indian subcontinent, included Mozambique, Ceylon, Malacca, Macau, and Nagasaki, and thus it cannot be discarded that people from “la India de Portugal” could have come from any of those territories.

A far more complicated issue is the matter of the terminology employed to refer to ethnic categories. Rather than attempting awkward and unhelpful English translations I render the descriptions as they appear in the sources, unless I cite them from another author. Thus I avoid using “Creole” and use “español” instead, as this is the term that people of European descent born in the Americas most widely used to refer to themselves. Similarly, I employ “indio,” “negro,” “mulato,” “pardo,” etc. In regards to Asians I refrain from using the term “oriental” to refer to the Asian denizens of New Spain. Déborah Oropeza uses it in her dissertation because the word does not carry such a strong negative connotation in Spanish as

Gutiérrez and Ethel Correa Duró, eds., *Poblaciones y culturas de origen africano en México* (Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2005).

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it does in English, when she states that her objects of study are the “orientales en la Nueva España.”⁴² Not only am I aware that this term has long been deemed inappropriate in scholarly language in English;⁴³ I also consider it historically inaccurate for this thesis, as the vast majority of Asians in New Spain actually came from the West. During the colonial period the Philippines were known as the “Islas de poniente” or “Islas de occidente,” reflecting their position in relation to New Spain.⁴⁴ Thus I would argue that it is a mistake to use the term “oriental” even in Spanish. It would be more accurate to state that almost all the chinos of New Spain came from “the Far West.”

The terms chino and china are critical concepts in this thesis and thus they warrant an extensive explanation. In this last introductory section, I briefly summarize how other authors have conceptualized this word, and then present an etymological analysis of chino and china using sources from the *Corpus Diacrónico de la Lengua Española* (CORDE) published by the *Real Academia Española*.⁴⁵ Lastly, I argue that during much of the period under study, this term was used in New Spain to designate Asian geographic provenance, even though it underscored ethnic connotations. This is the definition I use in this thesis. This would be a very clear-cut definition were it not for the shifts in meaning and slight nuances in the usage of the words, having to do with gender and ethnicity that emerged throughout the long history of the Manila Galleon.

⁴² Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 13.

⁴³ Edward Said famously elicited this debate in *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

⁴⁴ One example from a primary source is King Philip II’s 1561 letter to Urdaneta where he approves the latter proposal “to go to the Western Islands”, English translation in Emma H. Blair and James A. Robertson (1903-1909), *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 2, 1521-1569*, ebook digitized by Project Gutenberg, 2004, accessed 21/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/13280/pg13280.html>. Ricardo Padrón states that after the signing of the treaty of Zaragoza in 1529, “North America becomes ‘las Indias del Norte,’ South America, ‘las Indias del Mediodía,’ and the parts of Asia and the Pacific inside the demarcation become ‘las Indias del Poniente,’ the ‘Indies of the West’” in “A Sea of Denial: The Early Modern Spanish Invention of the Pacific Rim”, *Hispanic Review* 77 (1), (2009): 1-27, 15. See also Sales Colín, *El movimiento portuario de Acapulco*, 18.

⁴⁵ “Corpus Diacrónico de la Lengua Española (CORDE),” Real Academia Española, accessed 17/02/2013, <http://corpus.rae.es/cordenet.html>.

Chino and china were the basic terms employed in New Spain throughout the period under scrutiny to refer to people of Asian provenance. It seems that the majority were natives of the Philippines; however, much in the same way as what happened with objects imported via the Manila Galleon, people from a variety of places in East, South East, and South Asia were given this collective moniker. In this sense, Gustavo Curiel's concept of "the Greater China Continuum" applies to Asian immigrants, both free and forced.⁴⁶ This concept, "whose aim was to help visualize the difficult problem of the points of origin of the high-quality utilitarian goods imported into New Spain from different places on the Asian continent," applies to people as well.⁴⁷ As Curiel argues:

A perusal of any *Inventory of Possessions* of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries shows that everything that arrived in the cargoes transported by the Manila galleons was regarded by the inhabitants of New Spain as coming "from China." Thus the fine cottons of Bengal, the sumptuous porcelains of Arita that the Japanese traded from the port of Imari, the Japanese *Namban* export lacquers, the boxes lined with a fine lamina of mother-of-pearl from Gujarat in Portuguese India, and even the merchandise produced in the Spanish enclave of the Philippines by a variety of groups of diverse ethnic origins with very different cultural features were all regarded as "Chinese." When the epithets "Chinese" or "from China" appear in reference to place of origin of an object, we should not regard this as a trustworthy *appellation d'origine*.⁴⁸

Just as with the luxury items described by Curiel, to people living in the American territories of New Spain, the distant lands that laid west across the Pacific: China, the Philippines, Japan, Siam, Cambodia and the various other polities in South East

⁴⁶ Gustavo Curiel, "Perception of the Other and the Language of 'Chinese mimicry' in the Decorative Arts of New Spain", in *Asia and Spanish America, Asia and Spanish America. Trans-Pacific Artistic and Cultural Exchange, 1500-1850. Papers from the 2006 Mayer Center Symposium at the Denver Art Museum*, eds. Donna Pierce and Ronald Otsuka (Denver: Frederick and Jan Mayer Center for Pre-Columbian and Spanish Colonial Art at the Denver Museum, 2009), 25. See also Gustavo Curiel, "Al remedio de la China: el lenguaje 'achinado' y la formación de un gusto artístico dentro de las casas novohispanas," paper presented at the *XXVI Coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte. Orientes-Occidentales.* *El arte y la mirada del Otro* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 2007).

⁴⁷ Curiel, "Perception of the Other", 25.

⁴⁸ Curiel, "Perception of the Other", 25.

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Asia, the archipelagos of present-day Indonesia, and even the territories of “la India de Portugal,” were all collectively referred to as “China.” Thus the people that arrived to central New Spain from the west were logically called “de la China” or simply *chinos* or *chinas*. For instance, according to Francisco de la Maza, sailing across the Pacific there were Filipinos, Chinese from Canton, Java islanders, natives from Coromandel and Malabar, all generically called *chinos* by the Spaniards because everyone “that came from Luzon and Mindanao was *chino*.”⁴⁹ Thus, as Manel Ollé argues:

En Nueva España a través del topónimo de China se designaba con frecuencia de manera sinecdótica todo el ámbito de Asia Oriental, del mismo modo que los *indios chinos* de México podían ser tanto austronesios de Filipinas como japoneses o propiamente *chinos*.⁵⁰

This is the reason for Virginia González Claverán’s understanding of the term *chino*:

El término “chino,” hasta cierto punto peyorativo, engloba a todos los habitantes de sudeste asiático [...] Bajo el rubro de *chinos* se agrupa, pues, a varios pueblos de Oriente, aunque suponemos que en su mayoría eran isleños [de Filipinas]. A veces se especifica cuando se trata de japoneses (“de nación xapon,” japon o japonés), pero los españoles, por ignorancia o comodidad, no se tomaron la molestia de establecer matices étnico-culturales al referirse a las diferentes étnias filipinas y a otros grupos.⁵¹

The phenomenon of grouping together people from vastly different cultural

⁴⁹ Francisco de la Maza, *Catarina de San Juan, princesa de la India y visionaria de Puebla* (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1990, originally published in 1971), 21.

⁵⁰ Manel Ollé, “La proyección de Fujian en Manila: los sangleyes del parián y el comercio de la Nao de China”, *Un océano de seda y plata: el universo económico del Galeón de Manila*, ed. Salvador Bernabéu Albert and Carlos Martínez Shaw (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2013), 155.

⁵¹ González Claverán, “Un documento colonial”, 526. The term had a subtext of insult and condescension that stands out, for example, in the biographies of Catarina de San Juan when they mentioned how some people called her “*perra china embustera*.” See Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 47.

backgrounds is not unique to New Spain. Whether motivated by a lack of interest, cultural sensibility, or knowledge, people have grouped immigrants in such ways in many places and times across the globe. In this sense, it is worth citing Mark Kurlansky's observation that:

In England, Caribbeans, especially Jamaicans, became the core of the black population. Before they started coming in large numbers, in the years after World War II up until [Jamaican] independence [1962], there were very few black people in England. Some Africans have migrated, but Caribbeans dominate. Caribbean-African tension has a subtle dynamic, and there have also been tensions between blacks and Asians, large—and small— island Caribbeans and between domineering Jamaicans and everyone else. But the white English do not usually make these distinctions. In popular British jargon they are all blacks—even people from India and Hong Kong are sometimes referred to as black.⁵²

There is another issue regarding the terms *chino* and *china* that has to do with a more complicated question of identity centered on the practices surrounding ethnicity and legality in New Spain. According to Seijas, "Asians did not develop communities of their own, nor retain a unique Chino identity" due in part to their "propensity to acculturate."⁵³ She argues that "Asians did not acquire an identity by calling themselves or being called Chinos or Indios Chinos—they were simply words that facilitated interactions." According to her, these "categories" were nothing more than "expedient legal classifications."⁵⁴ Seijas claims that "the process of creolization or Hispanization did not destroy their Asian 'identity' because they never had one."⁵⁵ I discuss new evidence from chino baptismal records from Mexico City that are the basis for my disagreement with this idea in chapter two.

Another question is whether there was a difference between *chino* and *indio chino*. Seijas suggests that "the term *Indio* connoted freedom, while *Chino* was associated

⁵² Mark Kurlansky, *A Continent of Islands. Searching for the Caribbean Destiny* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, Perseus Books, 1992), 235.

⁵³ Seijas, "Transpacific Servitude", ii.

⁵⁴ Seijas, "Transpacific Servitude", 14.

⁵⁵ Seijas, "Transpacific Servitude", 17.

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with slavery.”⁵⁶ However, there were other concurrent usages. Even though the word was gradually charged with undertones that suggested slavery, it also remained a designation of geographic provenance. The usage was arbitrary, and even a woman of European descent born in the Philippines, María Ignacia Herrera Cruzat, was dubbed “la china Herrera” upon her arrival in Mexico in 1701.⁵⁷ Therefore, I agree with Paulina Machuca when she argues that:

Definir con precisión el concepto de “indio chino” es una tarea difícil. Si bien es un vocablo con fuerte arraigo colonial, los españoles lo empleaban para referir a los nativos de las Filipinas, Bengala, Camboya, Ceilán, China, Japón, India, Malasia, Papúa, Siam, entre otros muchos lugares del Sudeste asiático. En este sentido, el término “indio chino” no define un origen étnico sino geográfico.⁵⁸

I argue that *indio chino* and *chino* were interchangeable, contrary to Seijas' assertion that “scholars who group together free and enslaved *chinos*, using the terms ‘*indio chino*’ and ‘*chino*’ interchangeably, ignore critical difference and detract from our understanding of these people’s experiences in distinct historical periods.”⁵⁹ While I agree with Seijas that *indio chino* was used much less frequently and almost exclusively during the first decades of Asian migration, I do not think that the compound term designated free people, while the latter alluded to slaves, as I encountered multiple examples of slave *indios chinos* and free *chinos*. I find Oropeza’s argument that sometimes *indio chino* was used to differentiate Asians from native people designated “*indio natural*” or “*indio mexicano*”⁶⁰ convincing. Seijas’ assertion that “the term *Chino* was ascribed to vastly different people who did not become an ethnic group” also applies to the use of the term *indio* to refer to very different peoples in Mesoamerica and elsewhere in Spanish America.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 14; Seijas, “Native Vassals”, 153.

⁵⁷ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 21.

⁵⁸ Machuca, “El alcalde de los chinos”, 98.

⁵⁹ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 6.

⁶⁰ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en Nueva España”, 102. For the definition of *indios* as natives see Robert H. Jackson, *Race, Caste and Status: Indians in Colonial Spanish America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 5.

⁶¹ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 18.

I strongly disagree with Marco Polo Hernández Cuevas' assertion that the term *chino* was used exclusively to talk about descendants of Amerindian and African parents in New Spain.⁶² I found no clear examples of *chinos* who were children resulting from these unions in parochial records; in other words, there are no *chino* children of negro and indio parents with no connection to Asia in these sources. The basis for this confusion is that in the eighteenth century the association of the term *chino* with people of mixed African and Amerindian descent did become more prevalent. Scholars such as Cuevas have mistakenly interpreted this fact to support the argument that, throughout the entire colonial period, Asian migration was an insignificant phenomenon. In chapter five I clarify the processes that triggered this "Africanization" process, but for now I note my agreement with Seijas' assertion that "to contemporaries, *chino* slaves were similar in their physiognomy to the indigenous people of Mexico, [...] much more so than to African slaves."⁶³ Therefore, asserting that *chino* was a term that consistently implied a specific phenotype is exceedingly problematic and unhelpful. As Seijas argues:

From the perspective of Spanish masters, *chino* slaves had skin colors that were too varied to be the marker of slavery. They described *chinos* as white (*blanco*), brown (*moreno*), dark (*prieto*), and the color of quince (*amembrillado*), among others. The same *chino* would often be described differently at separate occasions, suggesting that there was no real consensus regarding what he or she looked like.⁶⁴

Moreover, Hernández asserts that scholars that highlight reference to Asian provenance are unaware of the many meanings of *chino* in Spanish, and that consequently they base their usage of the term in a translation error. Hernández

⁶² Hernández, "The Mexican Colonial Term 'Chino'". As Hernández states, this view has also been articulated in several studies, for example Luis Castillo Ledón, "La China Poblana", in *Bibliografía de Catarina de San Juan y de la China Poblana*, ed. Rafael Carrasco Puente (Mexico: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1950), 192; and Nicolás de León *Catarina de San Juan y la China Poblana: Estudio etnográfico-crítico* (Puebla: Ediciones Altiplano, 1971): 94-99.

⁶³ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 166.

⁶⁴ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 164.

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argues that chino derived specifically from the term *cochino* (dirty, or pig) denoting the understanding that their blood was “tainted” by intermarriage with people of African descent.⁶⁵ The essential sources used to back this type of argument are the uses of chino as an ethnic category portrayed in the famous *casta* paintings, which warrant some discussion.

Chino appears alongside other appellations such as *tornatrás* or *tente en el aire* in *casta* paintings in the eighteenth century further complicating the matter of finding a definition for chino. In these eighteenth-century paintings, chino designates children resulting of several combinations of African and Amerindian parents, lending support to the definition of the term as proposed by scholars like Hernández. However the use of these paintings as sources is complicated because most of the categories they represent, as Patricia Seed observes, “were never used in ordinary communication” and most likely did not reflect real-life.⁶⁶ Furthermore, they cannot be taken as an accurate representation of sixteenth and seventeenth-century New Spanish society, because they were created at a later period. As I discuss in detail in chapter five, the fact that in the 1700s some of the people who were still called chinos were equated to people of Afro-Amerindian descent, with no trace of Asian heritage, resulted from a process of “Africanization” of the Asian diaspora as proposed by Slack. This process was propelled in part by growing intermarriage and a drop in new arrivals from Asia. Slack argues that “the waters became increasingly muddied by colonial authorities who began to lump chinos with the African mixed-race castes by the middle of the 17th century.”⁶⁷ To these explanations I add disease as a third factor in chapter five; descendants of Asian and Amerindian parents were more vulnerable to diseases like malaria and yellow fever. People born in places in Africa where malaria is endemic inherited the resistance to their children, further decreasing the proportion of malaria-vulnerable people of Asian and mixed Asian and Amerindian descent in New Spanish population as a whole.

⁶⁵ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”.

⁶⁶ Patricia Seed, “Social Dimensions of Race: Mexico City, 1743,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 62, 4 (1982): 572-573.

⁶⁷ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 21.

The following etymological analysis of sources from various regions of the Spanish empire fails to reveal the African connection in every case. I searched the *Corpus Diacrónico de la Lengua Española* for the terms chino and china in order to determine their geographic and earliest usage for each region. I present the result for the masculine and feminine separately, as I found important differences between the two in the records.

The data contained in the CORDE show two distinct meanings of chino employed in Mesoamerica and the Andean region respectively. In New Spain both the term associated to people from Asia and the Andean usage denoting an indio servant coexisted since the 1540s. A document listing the possessions of the first bishop of New Spain, Juan de Zumarraga, mentions his cook, a slave called Juan Núñez noting that he came from “Calicut or China.”⁶⁸ As hard as it is to determine the origins and exact meanings of these words, it is safe to assume that there were two meanings in New Spain: one deriving from Quechua designating maids and servants, the other from Spanish, a generic term for the entire South Asia and Asia-Pacific region and as an adjective for immigrants and goods from that area. The first use of the Quechua usage in New Spain, according to Tibón, is dated in 1553.⁶⁹ Both were used around the same time, and they surely overlapped until, in a process that started in the eighteenth century, the South American meaning gradually displaced the other one as migration and trade from the Philippines decreased and the process of mestizaje intensified. Changes in policies regarding intercolonial trade between New Spain and Peru likely affected the evolution of the meaning of the term chino in the former. While trade between the Philippines diminished in eighteenth century, trade with Peru increased as reformers began to allow intercolonial trade.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Joaquín García Icazbalceta, *Fray Juan de Zumárraga: primer obispo y arzobispo de México* (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1952), 221; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 6.

⁶⁹ Gutierre Tibón, “Las dos chinas, Catarina de San Juan y la atractiva mestiza”, in *Artes de México* 66 (2003): 13.

⁷⁰ These are the so-called Bourbon Reforms, which I further discuss in chapter five.

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In the records stored in the CORDE, the term “china” appears in eighty-six documents written in Spanish between 1521 and 1600. The majority appeared seventy-six times in documents published in Spain, nine times in Peru, and only one in Mexico.⁷¹ Additionally, CORDE registers sixty-seven examples of usages of the word chino in texts dated between 1500 and 1600. Sixty-four are classified as originating in Spain, and one from present-day Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, respectively. CORDE contains sixty-five instances where the word chino occurs in documents dated between 1600 and 1700. Forty-two appeared in Spain, seventeen in the Philippines, three in present-day Colombia, two in Mexico, and one in Peru.⁷² There are fewer examples dated in the eighteenth century. Between 1700 and 1800, chino occurs thirty times in documents included in CORDE: twenty from Spain, seven from the Philippines, two from Argentina, and one from Mexico.⁷³

China (*čina*) is a Quechua term used originally to refer to female animals and later denominated a female maid or servant, indigenous or mestiza of lowly social status.⁷⁴ This is the reason why “in some Latin American countries today, particularly in Chile, young Indian women are still called *chinillas*.”⁷⁵ It has been suggested that the usage for *china* spread to New Spain from the Andean region. According to de la Maza, *china* was synonymous with servant or slave in a ameliorative or tender sense, while in South America it meant concubine as well.⁷⁶ One of the earliest examples appears in *Visita de los valles de Sonqo en los yunka de coca de la Paz*, an inventory written by an anonymous author in Peru between 1568 and 1570. When recording the population affected by disease in the region, the author noted an india called María Osquito, and described her as the “china de Ysavel Cayuma.”⁷⁷ Here *china* seems to mean *criada* or servant. The same document mentions “una yndia que es china de la mujer de don Juan Chuchuncaya

⁷¹ CORDE. Query for “china” between 1500 and 1600.

⁷² CORDE. Query for “chino” between 1500 and 1600.

⁷³ CORDE. Query for “chino” between 1700 and 1800.

⁷⁴ Tibón, “Las dos chinas”, 13.

⁷⁵ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude,” 1, n. 2.

⁷⁶ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 21-22.

⁷⁷ Anonymous, *Visita de los valles de Sonqo en los yunka de coca de la Paz* (Madrid: John V. Murra, Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, Instituto de Estudios Fiscales, 1991, originally written in 1568-1570), 34, f. 20.

que no es cristiana.”⁷⁸ In a 1582 letter Fray Martín de Medrano informed Corregidor Francisco de Mendieta that the wife of a certain licenciado Marañón asked him to look for a china for her service in the valleys near Huarmey,⁷⁹ a town 290km north of Lima. Inca Garcilaso de la Vega wrote that *china* was a term used for “la doncella muchacha de servicio.”⁸⁰ In *El cautiverio feliz*, Francisco Núñez de Pineda y Bascuán’s famous account of his experiences as a captive of the Mapuches of Southern Chile written in 1673, the author uses the word *china* to describe young unmarried women. The most interesting of them is the daughter of one of his captors who, on her father’s command, washed some clothes for Pineda y Bascuán to wear.⁸¹ In these sources *china* appears also in reference to China and products of Chinese or Asian origin. A reference to Chinese textiles appears in a Memorial written in 1595.⁸² An anonymous author described cultivation of sarsaparrilla root “de la China” in Panama in 1607.⁸³ Diego Rodríguez Docampo documented the cultivation of “raíces de la China” in a *relación* about the bishopric of San Francisco de Quito in 1650.⁸⁴

The terms chino and china have evolved into thirteen different terms in various Spanish American countries, according to its current entry in the dictionary of the *Real Academia Española*. Antiquated usages in various Spanish American regions referred to phenotype or ethnicity, a person with slanted eyes, or of “indian-like” features while in Peru, *chino cholo* meant a person of African and Amerindian descent. In Venezuela it still means, colloquially, a hairless or naked person; in Colombia it was used to refer to an “uncivilized” indigenous individual, and

⁷⁸ Anonymous, *Visita de los valles*, 83, f. 77.

⁷⁹ Martín de Medrano, *Carta de Fray Martín de Medrano al corregidor Francisco de Mendieta* (Madrid: Germán de Granda, Real Academia Española, 1993, originally written in 1582), 127.

⁸⁰ Inca Garcilaso, *Comentarios Reales de los Incas*, vol. 1 (Caracas: Ayacucho. 1991, originally written in 1609), 116.

⁸¹ Francisco Núñez de Pineda y Bascuán, *El cautiverio feliz* (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta del Ferrocarril, 1863, originally written in 1673), 104.

⁸² Cristóbal de Mendieta, *Memorial de Cristóbal de Mendieta, vecino de la Villa de Ica* (Madrid: Germán de Granda, Real Academia Española, 1993, originally written in 1595).

⁸³ Anonymous, *Descripción de Panamá y su provincia, sacada de la relación que por mandado del Consejo hizo y embió* (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1607), 149.

⁸⁴ Diego Rodríguez Docampo, *Descripción y relación del estado eclesiástico del Obispado de San Francisco de Quito* (Madrid: Pilar Ponce y Leiva, 1992, originally published in 1650).

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presently it means child, servant, or a member of the common people, the latter two are also current in Chile, while the last meaning also applies in Ecuador. Among the Argentinean gauchos it meant woman, and in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, nanny.⁸⁵ The RAE dictionary entry does not include specifically Mexican usages of the term; however, it is used in Mexico today to describe the curliness of hair or, in an antiquated usage, as a term of endearment for a peasant woman.

I determined that since terms *chino* and *china* can be interpreted in a variety of ways, the most objective alternative is to employ them ambiguously as terms denoting provenance from Asia, which later acquired their current meanings. I use these terms to characterize Asian immigrants and their children born in New Spain, as contemporaries did. I reject the notion, particularly for sources from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that *chino* and *china* were categories employed mostly to describe children of people of Amerindian and African descent. The other more nuanced more complex ethnic, gender, and legal connotations surrounding these concepts developed gradually and heterogeneously across various regions of Spanish America. Therefore, considering the approach and types of sources I employ in this thesis, these connotations are largely unhelpful. In an effort to specify as much as possible the exact descriptions of origin of the individuals, I render them as they appear in the sources.

⁸⁵ *Diccionario de la lengua española*, Real Academia Española, (22nd ed.), 2001. Entry for “*chino*”, accessed in 07/01/2014, <http://lema.rae.es/drae/?val=chino>.

CHAPTER 1

TRANSPACIFIC INTERACTIONS: NEW SPAIN AND THE MANILA GALLEON

In this chapter I review the literature about the Manila Galleon. I divide this corpus in its two major distinct thematic divisions: literature about the economic implications of the transpacific trade route; and literature about the cultural influences it triggered in the Americas. The purpose is to provide a general State of the Art of the Manila Galleon while outlining the macro-economic context and cultural framework in which Asian migration to mainland New Spain took place. The chapter explains the reasons for the consolidation of the transpacific trade route, outlines its early history, and analyzes the process of adoption of Asian motifs in New Spanish decorative and utilitarian arts. Lastly, it discusses the immaterial heritage of the trade route and Asian migration by outlining the customs and traditions imported from Asia to mainland New Spain. This chapter is meant to provide context for the case studies of Asian migration discussed in the rest of the thesis, and narrate the establishment of the trade links that enabled this migration.

The first sections cover the economic aspects of the history of the Manila Galleon. I start by briefly describing the history of Spanish exploration in the Pacific, leading up to the consolidation of the trade route. The survey covers the major Pacific expeditions from 1513 to 1565. It continues with an explanation for the selection of Manila and Acapulco as terminals of the transpacific trade, and the economic

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and commercial context in Asia that made silver a highly priced commodity, affording the Spaniards the opportunity to benefit from transpacific commerce. Additionally, I discuss the people involved in this process. I highlight the role of Portuguese merchants and Fujianese immigrants and analyze how the Chinese community of Manila affected the history of Asian migration in New Spain.

Next I tackle the complicated issue of what was the correlation between adoption of Asian artistic techniques, products, and motifs in New Spain, with Asian immigration in the viceroyalty. To do so, I review a second corpus of academic literature, that which discusses the influence of the Manila Galleon in the development and commerce of textiles, ceramics, lacquerware, paintings, ivory sculptures, and furniture in New Spain. The most relevant aspect of this process is the evolution of a unique artistic style that imitated Chinese and Japanese decorative elements while remaining different from European *chinoiseries*. I situate my argument in the middle ground between authors who maintain that these aesthetic transformations were the direct result of the influence of Asian artisans working in mainland New Spain, and others that contend that Asians were completely irrelevant. I argue that while there is no causal relation between the two phenomena, there was some correlation between Asian migration and the evolution of the aesthetics of utilitarian arts in New Spain. Although their contributions should not be exaggerated, *chinos* played a role in the process as merchants trading in goods that inspired New Spanish artisans. Additionally, there were Asian gold and silversmiths, and painters working in the viceroyalty. *Chino* artisans, however, as discussed further in chapter four, were not necessarily responsible for the appearance of Asian motifs in Puebla enameled ceramics.

The last section of this chapter is devoted to a brief survey of what I call immaterial aspects of the Manila Galleon's cultural influence in New Spain. By this I mean influences in gastronomy and folklore. I will review suggestions by Déborah Oropeza and Floro Mercene about the specific traditions imported from the Philippines, such as cockfighting, coconut alcohol (*tuba*) production and consumption, and building and cooking techniques. I will add an explanation on my own hypothesis that the tradition of divinatory birds, visible in Mexico and

other Latin American countries today, could have been imported to the Americas from China via Manila through the Manila Galleon.

1.1 Early Pacific explorations and the establishment of the Manila Galleon

The Manila Galleon, or *Nao de China*, was one of the most enduring long-distance trade routes in history.¹ It linked Manila and Acapulco between 1571 and 1815. William Schurz pioneered scholarly work on Spanish colonial efforts in the Pacific and wrote a monograph about the Manila Galleon in 1939.² It is still perhaps the most often cited general overview of the trade route. Schurz describes its itinerary, the nature of its crews, the organization of commerce in these ships, as well as the dangerous nature of the journey. Since then, historians have been increasingly aware of the importance of the *Nao* in the configuration of the global economy. Pierre Chaunu described the Manila Galleon as a maritime “silk road” in 1951, and in 1960 he analyzed the trade route in the context of an emerging early-modern global economy.³ Mexico and Philippines declared in 1965 the “Año de Amistad Filipino-Mexicana” to commemorate the quadricentennial of Miguel López de Legazpi’s expedition to the Philippines. The organizing committee published a series of paper presented for the occasion.⁴ The same year, Rafael Bernal wrote a comprehensive history of the Pacific Ocean featuring the Manila Galleon, and studied the cultural exchanges between New Spain and the Philippines.⁵ In 1979, Oskar Spate wrote *The Spanish Lake*, a history of the Pacific Ocean where he

¹ Manel Ollé, “El imperio chino ante los ibéricos de Asia oriental”, in *Las vecindades de las Monarquías Ibéricas*, ed. José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2013), 315; Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 7.

² William Schurz, “The Manila Galleon and California”, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 21 (2) (1917): 107-126; William Schurz, “Mexico, Peru, and the Manila Galleon”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 1 (4) (1918): 389-402; William Schurz, “The Spanish Lake”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 5 (2) (1922): 181-194; Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*.

³ Pierre Chaunu, “Le galion de manille: Grandeur et décadence d’une route de la soie”, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 4 (1951): 447-462; Pierre Chaunu, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques (XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1960).

⁴ *Filipinas y México: Colección de colección de discursos y conferencias pronunciados con ocasión de la celebración del Año de Amistad México Filipina en el cuarto centenario de la llegada de la expedición mexicana en Filipinas* (Manila: Comité del Año de Amistad Filipino-Mexicana, 1965).

⁵ Bernal, *México en Filipinas*; See also Rafael Bernal, *El gran océano* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2012).

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explained the process by which trade and commerce grew in the region until “the greatest blank on the map became a nexus of global, commercial, and strategic relations.”⁶ Carmen Yuste is one of the foremost Manila Galleon scholars. Among her many contributions, she highlighted the importance of the Manila Galleon in providing merchants in New Spain an arena to act beyond the direct control of the Spanish monarchy.⁷ Interest on the matter peaked gradually as the Asia-Pacific region in general and China in particular became increasingly influential actors in the world economy. In 1981 Ernesto de la Torre Villar published a collection of studies on Asian influence in colonial Latin America.⁸ In 1992 the state of Guerrero, Mexico, financed the publication of a monograph about the Acapulco-Manila trade.⁹ In 1998 Lothar Knauth and Vera Valdés published a study where they assessed the development of New Spain into a hub of world trade thanks in part to the Manila Galleon.¹⁰ Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giráldez wrote a very influential article about how the consolidation of the Manila Galleon trade route from 1571 can be seen as the beginning of a process of early globalization.¹¹ In 2001 Flynn, Giráldez, and Sobredo discussed the history of the galleon in *The Pacific World: Lands, People and History of the Pacific*.¹² In 2003 Dolores Elizalde edited a volume on Spanish-Philippine relations from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, which includes Pedro Pérez’s general overview of the Manila Galleon and its centrality in

⁶ Oskar Hermann Khristian Spate, *The Spanish Lake* (Canberra: The Australian National University Press, 2004, originally published in 1979), ix.

⁷ Carmen Yuste, *El Comercio de la Nueva España con Filipinas, 1590-1785* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Departamento de Investigaciones Históricas, 1984).

⁸ Ernesto de la Torre Villar, ed., *Asia and Colonial Latin America* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 1981).

⁹ Fernando Benítez, ed., *El galeón del Pacífico. Acapulco-Manila. 1565-1815* (Mexico: Gobierno del Estado de Guerrero, 1992).

¹⁰ Lothar Knauth and Vera Valdés Lakowsky, *Los galeones de la plata. México, corazón del comercio interoceánico, 1565-1815* (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Museo Franz Mayer, 1998).

¹¹ Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “Born with a ‘Silver Spoon’: The Origin of World Trade in 1571”, *Journal of World History* 6 (2) (1995): 201-221.

¹² Dennis Flynn, Arturo Giráldez and James Sobredo, *European Entry into the Pacific: Spain and the Acapulco-Manila Galleons. The Pacific world: lands, people and history of the Pacific, 1500-1900. Volume 4*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2002).

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the configuration of the world economy.¹³ Among other publications, Elizalde also wrote a detailed description of the Galleon's role in making the Philippines a profitable colony for the Spanish Empire.¹⁴ More recently, the contributors to a volume edited by Carlos Martínez Shaw and Marina Alfonso Mola have provided an updated analysis of many aspects of the Manila Galleon trade, including Spanish exploration and domination of the Pacific, the Spanish image of China in the sixteenth century, China in the Iberian globalization, the role of silver, and Spanish scientific exploration in Asia.¹⁵ Salvador Bernabeu and Carlos Martínez Shaw co-edited another anthology focused on the economic aspects of the Manila Galleon in 2013.¹⁶

All these investigations have shown that the Manila Galleon was a relevant factor in a process that increasingly connected the economies of East Asia with the rest of the world. Most relevantly, this trade route helped consolidate an early modern or proto-globalization by providing a vector for silver flow into China. Its origin and long history were made possible by the conjuncture of two main factors: one, the process of Iberian entry into the vast commercial networks of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, and exploration of the Pacific; and two, the socio-economic consequences of changes in Ming maritime and fiscal policies. I will briefly outline the history of this conjuncture to contextualize the history of Asian migration in New Spain in this broader frame, and review the most relevant scholarship at the same time.

The establishment of the Manila Galleon was the culmination of half-a-century of Spanish exploration in the Pacific. It is worth noting that this process was

¹³ Pedro Pérez, "Nueva España, Filipinas y el Galeón de Manila, siglos XVI-XVIII", in *Las relaciones entre España y Filipinas. Siglos XVI-XX*, ed. Dolores Elizalde (Madrid-Barcelona: Casa Asia, CSIC, 2003), 49-74.

¹⁴ Dolores Elizalde, "Sentido y Rentabilidad. Filipinas en el marco del Imperio español", in *Repensar Filipinas. Política, Identidad y Religión en la construcción de la nación filipina*, ed. Dolores Elizalde (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2009), 45-78.

¹⁵ Carlos Martínez Shaw and Marina Alfonso Mola, *La Ruta española a China* (Madrid: El Viso, 2007).

¹⁶ Salvador Bernabeu and Carlos Martínez Shaw, eds., *Un océano de seda y plata: el universo económico del Galeón de Manila* (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2013).

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significant not only for this outcome, but also because, as Ricardo Padrón argues, the exploration of the Pacific,

Involved nothing less than the emergence of a global consciousness through the extension of the notion of the *oikumene* or *orbis terrarum* to encompass the whole of the terraqueous globe, rather than just its known, inhabited portion.¹⁷

After Columbus' attempt to reach Asia following a westbound trajectory from Europe, the famous Treaty of Tordesillas divided the Earth at a line 370 leagues west of Cape Verde islands between Spain and Portugal in 1494. But this treaty did not account for the spheres of influence on the as yet undiscovered Pacific Ocean. The problem became the projection of the Tordesillas line on the other side of the globe. There were disputes about the position of its antemeridian.¹⁸ Specifically, the issue of whether the Moluccas fell within which monarch's sphere of influence was not settled until the signing of the Treaty of Zaragoza in 1529.¹⁹ However, the technology to measure longitude at the time was still inaccurate, allowing for the archipelago that would become the Philippines to eventually fall into Spanish domain.

Spain began its bid to control the Pacific when Balboa "took possession of the 'Mar del Sur,' and all its lands" in 1513.²⁰ Shortly afterwards, the first Spanish and other European sailors to reach the archipelago, which would later come to be known as the Philippines, sailed with Ferdinand Magellan in 1519.²¹ This first ill-fated but successful attempt to circumnavigate the globe lost its leader when Magellan died at the battle of Mactan allegedly at the hands of chieftain Lapulapu, who would later become a heroic figure in the Philippines.²² Less than four months after

¹⁷ Padrón, "A Sea of Denial", 8.

¹⁸ Spate, *The Spanish Lake*, 56.

¹⁹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640", *American Historical Review* 112 (5) (2007): 1359-1385; Padrón, "A Sea of Denial", 14.

²⁰ Spate, *The Spanish Lake*, 33.

²¹ See analysis of the expedition in Spate, *The Spanish Lake*, 37-53.

²² Spate, *The Spanish Lake*, 50-51. See collection of essays in *Philippine Studies. Battle of Mactan* 55 (1) (2007); and Resil B. Mojares, "Lapulapu in Folk Tradition", *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 7 (1979): 59-68.

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Magellan's demise in 1521, Mexico-Tenochtitlan fell to Hernán Cortés. The recently conquered territories would become a base for future explorations in the Pacific. All the expeditions—with the exception of García Jofre de Loaysa's (1490-1526) expedition in 1525—set sail from the west coast of the territories that would become the core territory of the viceroyalty of New Spain.²³ Loaysa's expedition failed to establish Spanish domain over the Spice Islands. Both Loaysa and his most famous companion, Juan Sebastian Elcano, who had previously led survivors of Magellan's expedition back to Spain, died during their journey in 1526.²⁴ Meanwhile, as Spate describes, "high on [Cortés'] priorities was the extension of [the territories newly acquired from the Mexica] to, and over, the South Sea."²⁵ To this end, in 1527 he commissioned Álvaro de Saavedra Cerón to set sail from Zihuatanejo, in present-day state of Guerrero. Saavedra crossed the Pacific, landed in Moluccas, and died at sea trying to find the route back to the Americas.²⁶ Cortés gave Saavedra "un indio natural de Calicut" to serve as an interpreter in Asia.²⁷ This man was one of the few Asians present in Mexico before the establishment of the Manila Galleon. A little over a decade later, after incorporating Guatemala into the Spanish empire, Cortés' lieutenant in Tenochtitlan, Pedro de Alvarado, died crushed by his own horse while fighting chichimecas in Jalisco before he was able to set sail on his own expedition to the Pacific in 1541.²⁸ After his untimely death, the following year the first viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Mendoza (1495-1552), commissioned Ruy López de Villalobos (ca. 1500-1544) to take over

²³ See collection of primary sources of these expeditions, including *relaciones* in Emma H. Blair and James A. Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 2, 1521-1569* (Cleveland, Ohio: A.H. Clark Co., 1903-1909, digitized by Project Gutenberg, 2004), accessed 21/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/13280/pg13280.html>.

²⁴ Leoncio Cabrero Fernández, "Las vicisitudes de la expedición de García Jofre de Loaysa", in *Estudios sobre Filipinas y las islas del Pacífico*, ed. Florentino Rodao García (Madrid: AEEP, 1989) 5-8.

²⁵ Spate, *The Spanish Lake*, 62, 65-66.

²⁶ Martín Fernández de Navarrete, *Viajes y descubrimientos españoles en el Pacífico: Magallanes, Elcano, Loaysa, Saavedra* (Madrid: Maxtor, 2011, originally published in 1919), 204-254. See also Ione S. Wright, *Voyages of Álvaro de Saavedra Cerón, 1527-1529* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1951).

²⁷ Juan Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente en la Sevilla del Siglo de Oro* (Seville: Biblioteca de Temas Sevillanos, 2011), 150-151.

²⁸ Mónica del Villar, "La muerte de Pedro de Alvarado", *Arqueología Mexicana* 2, 9 (1994): 50-54.

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Alvarado and lead the transpacific exploration and colonization expedition.²⁹ Departing from Navidad, in present-day state of Jalisco, in the course of the voyage, Villalobos named the islands of Samar and Leyte in Visayas the “Islas Filipinas.” After being driven away by the islanders, they were captured in the Moluccas by the Portuguese. Villalobos died in the Moluccas under their custody.³⁰

After these failed attempts to establish a permanent settlement in Asia, former civil governor of Mexico City, Miguel López de Legazpi (c. 1502–1572), received instructions from viceroy Luis de Velasco and the *Audiencia de México* to sail from Navidad to the Spice Islands.³¹ They reached the Philippines and established the settlement of Santísimo Nombre de Jesús in Cebu in 1565.³² A member of the Loaysa expedition, Augustinian friar Andrés de Urdaneta, whom Legazpi ordered to find the route back to the New Spanish mainland, accompanied him. Urdaneta succeeded in that endeavor³³ and sought to establish Acapulco as the American terminus of the route that would later be known as the Manila Galleon. Urdaneta argued that Acapulco was the best choice because it had a large and safe harbor, had good access to timber, and was relatively close to Veracruz on the Atlantic,

²⁹ Antonio de Mendoza, “Instrucción que dió el Virrey de Nueva España Don Antonio de Mendoza á Ruy Lopez de Villalobos para el descubrimiento de las Islas de Poniente que le encargó por fallecimiento del Adelantado Don Pedro de Alvarado, en cumplimiento de la capitulación hecha con éste sobre el descubrimiento del mar del Sur, é Islas de Poniente”, in *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de ultramar. Tomo 2, I, De las Islas Filipinas* (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1886, originally published in 1542), 29-46.

³⁰ Martín J. Noone, *General History of The Philippines. Part I. Vol. 1. The Discovery and Conquest of the Philippines 1521-1581* (Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1986); Horacio de la Costa, “The Villalobos Expedition 1542-1546”, *The Bulletin of the Philippine Historical Association* 5 (1958).

³¹ José Sanz y Díaz, *López de Legazpi, alcalde mayor de México, conquistador de Filipinas* (Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1967). Founded in 1527, the *Audiencia de México* was one of the courts and administrative assemblies which, derived from similar institutions in the Iberian Peninsula and Italy, were implemented in the Americas to help govern the Spanish territories. Upon Velasco’s death, the Audiencia took over the organization of the transpacific expedition.

³² Leoncio Cabrero Fernández, “Miguel López de Legazpi i la conquista de las Filipinas”, in *En memoria de Miguel López de Legazpi*, ed. Juan Pérez de Tudela y Bueso (Taravilla: Real Academia de la Historia, 2004), 97-154, 112.

³³ Vera Valdés Lakowsky, *De las minas al mar: Historia de la plata mexicana en Asia, 1565-1834* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987), 86; Bernal, *El Gran Océano*; Enrique Cárdenas de la Peña, *Urdaneta y ‘El Tornaviaje’* (Mexico: Secretaría de Marina, 1965); Padrón, “A Sea of Denial”, 8.

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which was reachable from Acapulco by a route that passed through Puebla de los Ángeles.³⁴ Ostwald Sales Colín argues that Urdaneta, being an Augustinian, forced the selection of a longer route from Manila to Acapulco—compared to a shorter route to Navidad, for example—because fellow members of his order exerted “un cierto dominio sobre Acapulco” from their nearby convents of Chilapa and Tlapa.³⁵ Several galleons used the newfound route to sail from Cebu to Acapulco.³⁶ Cebu, however, was quickly substituted as the Asian terminus of the route after Legazpi seized Manila without a shot being fired and made it the capital of the archipelago in 1571.³⁷

Manila offered key advantages for settlement and development into a commercial hub. Not only did it have a good harbor and ready access to lumber and labor for the construction of ships, it also had, in the words of the first bishop of Manila, Domingo de Salazar,

The best possible location [...] For on the east, although quite distant, yet not so far as to hinder a man from coming hither, with favorable voyage, lie Nueva España and Perú; to the north, about three hundred leagues, are the large islands of Japón; on the northwest lies the great and vast kingdom of China, which is so near this island that, starting early in the morning with reasonable weather, one would sight China on the next day; on the west lie Conchinchina, the kingdoms of Sián and Patany, Malaca, the great kingdom of Dacheu (the ancient Trabopana), and the two Xavas [Javas], the greater and the smaller; and on the south lie the islands of Maluco and Burney. From all these regions people come to trade in this city.³⁸

³⁴ “Derrotero muy especial hecho por Fray Andrés de Urdaneta, de la navegación que había de hacer desde el puerto de Acapulco para las islas de Poniente”, cited in Ostwald Sales Colín, *El movimiento portuario de Acapulco*, 57.

³⁵ Sales Colín, *El movimiento portuario de Acapulco*, 58.

³⁶ Dawa, “The Cebu-Acapulco Galleon Trade”.

³⁷ “Conquistó pacíficamente a Manila el 18 de junio de 1571, y fundó la ciudad para que fuera cabeza y corte de todas las islas a 24 de junio del mismo”, Juan S. Delgado, *Historia General Sacro-profana, política y natural de las Islas del Poniente llamadas Filipinas*, Manila, 1892, cap. XVI, cited in Cabrero Fernández, “Miguel López de Legazpi”, in *En memoria de Miguel López de Legazpi*, ed. Tudela, 97-154, 110.

³⁸ “Letter by Domingo de Salazar to Philip II”, 1590, in Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 7, 1588-1591*, 209-210, accessed 27/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13701/13701-h/13701-h.htm#d0e2045>.

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In this sense, Schurz considers the city to have been better situated than the Portuguese and Dutch outposts at Macau, Malacca or Batavia, being located roughly midway between the sources of two of the great commodities of Asia: silks from China and spices from Moluccas.³⁹ Manila also benefited from access to silver with which to trade in these valuable products.

The Manila Galleon would have never consolidated as a viable trade route if it had not been for the uncanny coincidence that the Spanish started to settle in the Philippines and discovered a return route to New Spain (in 1565), and took Manila (in 1571), virtually at the same time as the Ming state lifted its bans on maritime trade (in 1567).⁴⁰ It was thanks to this conjuncture that the Spaniards of the Philippines were able to participate in an already old Asia-Pacific-Indian Ocean trade route network complex.⁴¹ A little bit by accident, they came to control a pre-existing route between China and the Philippines which, Etsuko Miyata Rodríguez argues based on archaeological data, “had existed as early as the Tang dynasty (618-907).”⁴² The newcomers to the Philippines were also able to take advantage of the high value that silver had in Asia in relation to gold and copper.⁴³ In 1572, when describing to Philip II the products that the Chinese brought to Manila, “silks

³⁹ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 30-31.

⁴⁰ Ollé, “El imperio chino ante los ibéricos de Asia oriental”, 315; William Atwell, “Ming-China and the emerging world economy, c. 1470-1650”, in *The Cambridge History of China. Volume 8. The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644. Part Two*, eds. Frederick W. Mote and Denis Twitchett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 406.

⁴¹ Manel Ollé articulated this argument writing: “No hay que olvidar que fueron los juncos chinos que acudían a Manila los que abrieron y consolidaron esta ruta, y que los españoles no llegaron a Asia a vender plata, sino compitiendo con los portugueses buscando especias o quiméricas islas ricas de plata y de oro, y prácticamente sin tener noticia alguna de lo que China significaba. China se convirtió a principios del siglo XVII en un formidable mercado y una válvula de succión de un ingente flujo de plata,” in Ollé, “La proyección de Fujian en Manila”, 160. Ander Gunder Frank’s influential work analyzes this topic in a broader perspective: how Europeans in general accessed an already established Afro-Asian trade network in *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). For the formation of this trade network complex see Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

⁴² Etsuko Miyata Rodríguez, “Early Manila Galleon Trade: Merchants’ Network Market in 16th-and 17th-Century Mexico”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 39.

⁴³ Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1999), 204-205; Charles P. Kindleberger, *Spenders and Hoarders: The World Distribution of Spanish American Silver, 1550-1770* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1989), 73.

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of all sorts; wheat, flour, and sugar; many kinds of fruit, iron, steel, tin, brass, copper, lead, and other kinds of metals,” Manila alderman Juan Pacheco Maldonado wrote that “the prices of everything are so moderate, that they are to be had almost for nothing.”⁴⁴ This asymmetry in the value of precious metals allowed them to purchase large amounts of Asian luxury goods, transport them across the Pacific, and sell them to consumers in New Spain, Peru, and Europe, and still make large profits.

The high purchasing power of silver in Asia made the Manila Galleon a highly profitable trade route, as merchants traded silver mined in the Americas for Asian luxury goods, primarily silk and cotton textiles, Chinese porcelain, Chinese-Filipino ivory statues, Japanese lacquerware pieces of furniture, and spices.⁴⁵ Thus it is widely acknowledged among historians that silver played a crucial role in this moment of global integration, to the point that silver has been called the “raison d’être for the Manila trade.”⁴⁶ As Ming fiscal policies generated a great demand for silver in China, foreign traders started to supply this demand, in a process that tightened commercial links and added complexity to the preexisting trade networks.⁴⁷ The Ming state aimed at solving the problems generated by the collapse of their paper money system in the 1400s, by initiating a tax collecting

⁴⁴ Juan Pacheco Maldonado, “Carta de Maldonado, Panay 1572”, AGI, Patronato, 24, in *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803 Vol. III*, trans., Emma H. Blair and James A. Robertson, (Project Gutenberg, 2004), accessed 15/10/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13616/13616-h/13616-h.htm#d0e4243>, 272. Spanish version in *La China de España: elaboración de un corpus digitalizado de documentos españoles sobre China de 1555 a 1900*, ed. Dolors Folch Fornesa and Carles Brasó Broggi (Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2000-2006), accessed 15/02/2010, <http://www.upf.edu/asia/projectes/che/s16/maldo1572.htm>.

⁴⁵ Kindleberger argues: “China and India were sponges that soaked up the streams of silver flowing through Europe (and the Philippines) from Spanish America [...] Peru, Mexico, and Spain were what are called today ‘high absorbers,’ economies that spent heavily for private and public consumption”, in *Spenders and Hoarders*, 2. See also Carlo M. Cipolla, *La odisea de la plata española. Conquistadores, piratas y mercaderes* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1999).

⁴⁶ Katharine Bjork, “The Link That Kept the Philippines Spanish: Mexican Merchant Interests and the Manila Trade, 1571-1815”, *Journal of World History* 9, 1 (1998): 31.

⁴⁷ John Lee, “Trade and Economy in Preindustrial East Asia, c. 1500-c. 1800: East Asia in the Age of Global Integration”, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58, 1 (1999): 2-26.

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system that gradually shifted from rice to silver as form of payment.⁴⁸ In an effort to standardize the means of payment of taxes and ameliorate the finances of the state, from the early sixteenth century, China engaged in a “process of commuting fiscal levies from labor and kind to silver,” culminating in the “Single Whip Reform” or *yitiao bianfa* which was effectively imposed in 1581.⁴⁹ This led to an increase in the amount of circulating silver; depreciation in its value followed soon after.⁵⁰ William Atwell argues that, during the Ming dynasty, it became possible to purchase double the rice, or almost three times as much silk for the same amount of silver than what had been possible during the Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties.⁵¹ The high demand for silver in China elicited by these changes could not be met by internal production. This created the need of silver imports and consequently large quantities of silver from Japan, which were later supplemented by Spanish American bullion. Spanish American silver reached Asia also through Europe as Dutch and English merchants of their respective East India Companies used it to acquire their goods.⁵² Atwell argues that between the early 1570s and the early 1630s “at least 4.500.000 kilograms of silver (an average of 75.000 kilograms per year)” was imported to China, an amount that he considers to be “a very conservative estimate.”⁵³ Part of that silver entered China via Manila.⁵⁴ To a certain extent this meant a relative loss of Chinese sovereignty over

⁴⁸ There are many studies on the monetary policies in Ming China featuring discussion of the “Single Whip” tax reforms. See Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune: Money and Monetary Policy in China, 1000-1700* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996); Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, *Metals and Monies in an Emerging Global Economy* (Aldershot, UK and Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1997), 157, 169-170; Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “Spanish profitability in the Pacific: the Philippines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries”, in *Pacific Centuries. Pacific and Pacific Rim history since the sixteenth century*, eds. Dennis O. Flynn, Lionel Frost and A.J.H. Latham (New York: Routledge, 2003, originally published in 1999), 24; Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, xxi, 81, 89.

⁴⁹ Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*, xxi, 81, 89.

⁵⁰ Von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune*, 161.

⁵¹ Atwell, “Ming China and the emerging world economy”, 384. Atwell’s source is Ch’üan Han-sheng, “Sung Ming chien pai-yin kou-mai-li ti yen-pien chin ch’i yüan-yin,” *Hsin-yahsüeh-pao* 8, 1, (1967): 163-168.

⁵² Charles Ralph Boxer, “*Plata es Sangre*: Sidelights on the Drain of Spanish-American Silver in the Far East, 1550-1700”, *Philippine Studies* 18, 3 (1970): 457-478.

⁵³ William Atwell, “Another Look at Silver Imports into China, ca. 1635-1644”, *Journal of World History* 16, 4 (2005): 469, n. 4.

⁵⁴ The amount of silver transported in the Manila Galleon is a matter of debate. John TePaske estimates 517000 pesos annually between 1590 and 1660. Ward Barrett

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its monetary policy; in fact, according to Von Glahn, Zhang Juzheng, the Ming official most responsible for the reform, “expressed dismay at the loss of sovereign authority that accompanied the spread of uncoined silver.”⁵⁵ By controlling enormous silver deposits in the Americas and, to a certain extent, the trade routes between Japan and China, for the first time in history, Europeans—Spaniards and Portuguese in particular—had a highly prized commodity to trade for Asian luxury goods, such as silks, cottons, lacquerware, and porcelain. For this reason, the Manila Galleon was a fundamental component of this worldwide trade to the point that Flynn and Giráldez argue that globalization started in 1571.⁵⁶ Luke Clossey revisits this argument to show how transpacific mindsets and exchanges of colonial Spanish America can be said to parallel modern globalization.⁵⁷

One aspect of the way the Manila Galleon triggered an early modern globalization is that it facilitated transcontinental exchanges of plants and animals, accelerating the process collectively known as the “Columbian Exchange.”⁵⁸ From 1492, the biotas of the Americas and Afro-Eurasia started to combine for the first time since the end of the last Ice Age, initiating an irrevocable process of homogenization of

calculates 463281 silver pesos annually between 1581 and 1700. Flynn and Giráldez calculate that more than five million pesos were sent annually from Acapulco between 1580 and 1620. Mariano Ardash Bonialian disagrees with the above estimates considering TePaske’s and Barrett’s too low, and Flynn and Giráldez’s too high. John TePaske, “New World Silver, Castile and the Philippines, 1590-1800”, in *Precious Metals in the Later Medieval and Early Modern World*, ed. J.F. Richards (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 1983), 425-445; Ward Barrett, “World Bullion Flows, 1450-1800” in *The Rise of Merchant Empires (Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350-1750)*, ed. Tracy James (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 240-252; Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez, “China and the Manila Galleons”, in *Japanese Industrialization and the Asian Economy*, eds. A.J. Latham and Heita Kawakatsu (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 71-90; Mariano Ardash Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano: política y comercio asiático en el imperio español, 1680-1784 : la centralidad de lo marginal* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, 2012), 209-211.

⁵⁵ Von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune*, 146.

⁵⁶ Flynn and Giráldez, “Born With a ‘Silver Spoon’”, 201-221. With Sobredo, the same authors write: “it is essential to conceptualize Manila as the linchpin for Pacific Rim exchanges from 1571 until nearly 1815. For this reason, the Philippines Islands [sic] have played a crucial role in both Pacific and world history”, in Flynn, Giráldez, and Sobredo, *European Entry into the Pacific*, xxxviii.

⁵⁷ Luke Clossey, “Merchants, migrants, missionaries, and globalization in the early-modern Pacific”, *Journal of Global History* 1, 1 (2006): 41-58.

⁵⁸ The term was coined by Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange. Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport CT and London: Praeger, 2003, originally published in 1972).

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the world's biological landscape. In terms of this thesis this process is relevant because it facilitated the death of the majority of the native population of Mesoamerica, who lacked the antibodies to resist diseases common in Afro-Eurasia. This catastrophe created the need for labor supplied by slaves from Africa and Asia, as discussed in chapter two.⁵⁹ However, it is also worth noting that the Manila Galleon became an avenue of transpacific biota exchange. Asian coconut palm trees were introduced to mainland New Spain, transforming the economy of the Pacific coastal region. As discussed in chapter two, this process was also related to Asian migration occupational patterns, as Asian slaves were employed in coconut plantations. On the opposite direction, the transpacific trade route aided in the introduction of maize, potato, sweet potato, chile peppers, sunflower, tomato, squash, beans, and tobacco to Asia. Some of the earliest mentions of these American plants in China are dated in the century after the establishment of the Manila Galleon.⁶⁰ The introduction of these crops, especially chile peppers, maize, and sweet potatoes transformed Asian diets and contributed to population growth in the continent.⁶¹

1.2 Legal and demographic consequences of the Manila Galleon in Asia

Ruescas and Wrana described the itinerary that the galleons followed thus,

The galleon usually sailed once a year in each direction. The journey from Acapulco to Manila lasted about three months, including a short stopover in Guam. On the opposite direction it required four to five months, sometimes even six, due to the long detour it made to pick the eastward kuroshio winds near Japan.⁶²

⁵⁹ The number of Asian slaves was much smaller than those brought from Africa.

⁶⁰ Han Qi, "La influencia del Galeón de Manila sobre la dinastía Ming", in *Los orígenes de la globalización: El Galeón de Manila*, ed. Carles Brasó (Shanghai: Biblioteca Miguel de Cervantes de Shanghai, 2013): 67-104, 95-100.

⁶¹ Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*, 194-200; Susan V. Lawrence, "Miracle Strains", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 162 (15) (1999):

⁶² Javier Ruescas and Javier Wrana, "The West Indies & Manila Galleons: the First Global Trade Route" (paper presented at the International Conference The Galleon and the Making of the Pacific of the Intramuros Administration, Manila, November 9, 2009), accessed 12/03/20137, http://www.galeondemanila.org/images/stories/The_West_Indies_Manila_Galleons_Ruescas_Wrana_-_Revised_March_2010_con_cabecera.pdf.

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The ship left Manila approximately in September. They followed a Northwest trajectory passing several miles off the coast of Japan. Sometime in or around October, they turned east and plied across the Pacific, nearing the Southern California coast around January. They changed to a Southeast course until entering what are today Mexican waters, nearing their destination by February.⁶³ This last part of the voyage was the most dangerous. Having spent months at sea, the crews were normally demoralized and disease ridden. They were also most vulnerable to attacks from pirates who were a threat throughout the entire history of the galleon. In 1587 Thomas Cavendish captured the galleon *Santa Ana*, and Woodes Rogers repeated the feat in 1709 off Cabo San Lucas in present-day state of Baja California Sur. Some pirates used the Marias archipelago off Mexico's western shore as a refuge.⁶⁴ These difficulties notwithstanding, when the Manila Galleon approached Mexican shores, notices were sent to Mexico City, Puebla de los Ángeles, Valladolid, and other important cities in the interior. The bells of the churches in those cities rang to announce the event.⁶⁵ The local merchants would then depart or send envoys to the *feria* in Acapulco, where the precious goods from China, porcelain, textiles, etc. would be exchanged for silver and a few other products such as cochineal dye, mass wine, soap, and *bizcocho* from Puebla.

After entering Acapulco bay, the crew and passengers were allowed to disembark while the cargo remained on the ship. After merchants from Mexico City, Puebla, Valladolid (modern day Morelia, Michoacán) and other places arrived, officials inspected the merchandise to make sure it corresponded to the ship's register, although corruption was a constant feature of the Manila Galleon trade throughout its history. After the inspection, the merchants gather to set the prices for the goods. Then the cargo was finally unloaded and the *feria* ensued.⁶⁶ New Spanish merchants used silver to purchase the Asian luxury items. Cacao, mass wine, oil,

⁶³ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 76.

⁶⁴ Peter Gerhard, "The Tres Mariás Pirates", *Pacific Historical Review* 27, 3 (1958): 239-244. See also Yuste, *El Comercio*, 29; Atwell, "Ming China and the emerging world economy, 391.

⁶⁵ Slack, "Sinifying New Spain", 16.

⁶⁶ Carmen Yuste, *El comercio*, 21-23. See also Etsuko Miyata Rodríguez, "Early Manila Galleon Trade", 43.

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and cochineal dye were purchased and loaded on the ship to trade in the Manilan market.⁶⁷ When the negotiations were over, the New Spanish merchants left Acapulco, while the galleon was prepared for its long journey back to Manila.

When China's avid consumption of Spanish American silver threatened to disrupt Spain's Atlantic trade system with its colonies, the Spanish monarchy became concerned. Juan Gil argues that viceroy Luis de Velasco wrote to king Philip III stating that a large amount of the benefits generated "se quedan en este reino" and thus did not benefit the metropole.⁶⁸ Carmen Yuste argues that the Asian spices and textiles were sold in New Spain at such a low price that they facilitated "la creación de un espacio de circulación de artículos y caudales privados independiente del sistema atlántico que agradó muy poco a la Corona y sobre todo a los flotistas [Spanish cross-atlantic merchants]."⁶⁹ Additionally, between 1565 and 1593-1604 there was a commercial triangle linking the Philippines, New Spain and Peru.⁷⁰ Asian products, ideas and people circulated this triangle. In this period, roughly half of the silver transported to Manila from Acapulco was mined in Peru.⁷¹ The authorities were fearful that silver would be sidetracked from its ideal destination: Seville and the Iberian Peninsula.⁷² The Spanish crown attempted to curb both the participation of private merchants in the Manila Galleon and direct trade between Peru and the Philippines, trying to articulate a crown monopoly centered exclusively in Acapulco.⁷³ As a result, in a process that started with a *real cédula* issued in 1593, the Mexican merchants of the Manila Galleon were

⁶⁷ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 222.

⁶⁸ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 186.

⁶⁹ Carmen Yuste, "De la libre contratación a las restricciones de la *permission*. La andadura de los comerciantes de México en los giros iniciales con Manila, 1580-1610", in *Un océano de seda y plata* eds. Bernabéu Albert and Martínez Shaw, 87.

⁷⁰ For the rich history of the relationship between Asia and Peru in this period see Fernando Iwasaki Cauti, *Extremo Oriente y el Perú en el siglo XVI* (Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2005).

⁷¹ Ardash, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 79-80.

⁷² Fradera argues that the Spanish monarchy attempted to curtail private commerce in order to control the amount of silver that entered Asia, in Josep Maria Fradera, *Filipinas, la colonia más peculiar. La hacienda pública en la definición de la política colonial, 1762-1868* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1999), 59.

⁷³ Luis Alonso Álvarez, "E la nave va. Economía, fiscalidad e inflación en las regulaciones de la carrera de la Mar del Sur, 1565-1604"; Carmen Yuste, "De la libre contratación a las restricciones de la *permission*", in Bernabéu Albert and Martínez Shaw, *Un océano de seda y plata*, 25-84 and 85-106; and Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 189.

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“limitados por un cuerpo de leyes imperiosas y restrictivas.”⁷⁴ Commerce of Chinese merchandise from New Spain to Peru was expressly prohibited.⁷⁵ Spain’s prohibition of Mexico-Peru trade was aimed at diminishing the amount of silver that went to China, as well as trade of Spanish products from Mexico to Peru.⁷⁶ Schurz argues that the reiteration of prohibitions to Peruvian commerce in 1591, 1593, 1595, and 1604, “and the severe penalties [...] show the anxiety of Spanish authorities to maintain their monopoly.”⁷⁷ Despite regulations against it, ships from Peru continued to dock in Acapulco to trade after 1631, and there was much contraband between the two halves of Spain’s empire in the Americas.⁷⁸

The six decades of the so-called Iberian Union, the period of dynastic union between Portugal and the Spanish empire (1580-1640), seem to have been years of great commercial prosperity for the Manila Galleon. It is possible that the reason behind this was that, by sharing in a common monarchy, the Portuguese and the Spaniards found fewer obstacles against cooperation. For example, Etsuko Miyata Rodríguez noted that,

One of the wealthiest merchants in Mexico City was Simón Vaez Sevilla, born in Castelo Branco (Portugal), who had links in the Manila galleon trade. Another Portuguese man, Antonio Váez de Acevedo, became a commander of the city of Mexico in 1640, then a *Corregidor* (equivalent to a mayor) of Pampanga in Luzon.⁷⁹

The Iberian Union directly influenced the history of Asian migration in New Spain, because during this period the Portuguese played a vital role expanding transpacific slave trade by integrating Manila into their extensive Indian Ocean

⁷⁴ Carmen Yuste, “De la libre contratación a las restricciones de la *permission*”, 91. The *cédula* was announced publically in Lima in 1594, see Iwasaki Cauti, *Extremo Oriente y Perú*, 193.

⁷⁵ Schurz, “Mexico, Peru, and the Manila Galleon”, 396. There are sources that imply there was some trade of Chinese merchandise from Mexico to Peru: AGN, General de Parte, vol. 4, exp. 294, f. 82v (1591); vol. 5, exp. 27, f. 5v (1599).

⁷⁶ Ardash, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 82-83.

⁷⁷ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 295.

⁷⁸ Sales Colín, *El movimiento portuario de Acapulco*, 20, 33.

⁷⁹ Miyata Rodríguez, “Early Manila Galleon Trade”, 45.

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slave trade network.⁸⁰ Portuguese independence in 1640 had negative commercial consequences across the Spanish empire. Etsuko Miyata Rodríguez points out, for example, that in Mexico City,

In 1642, there was a bloodless coup against the Viceroy Duke of Escalona, who was said to support Portuguese merchants in Mexico, and thereafter, the Holy Office became much stricter than before, a crackdown that may have affected trade.⁸¹

William Atwell argues that the Manila Galleon silver flows decreased in the 1630s and 1640s, and that this phenomenon contributed to the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644.⁸² Etsuko Miyata Rodríguez argues that “the scarcity of excavated ceramic shards from the 1640s and throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century relates to the decline and possible economic depression of New Spain in this period.”⁸³ This archaeological data suggests that there was less Manila Galleon traffic in this decade.

But perhaps more so than the Portuguese, it was Fujianese immigrants to Manila who most transcendently influenced transpacific trade. Scholars have shown the vital importance the Chinese community had for the viability of Manila to function as a trade hub and the center of Spanish presence in Asia-Pacific.⁸⁴ The number of Chinese from Fujian in Manila grew rapidly from about 5,000 in 1586,⁸⁵ to 16,000

⁸⁰ Seijas, “The Portuguese Slave Trade”, 19-38; Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 49-61.

⁸¹ Miyata Rodríguez, “Early Manila Galleon Trade”, 45-46.

⁸² This is a polemic issue. Atwell summarizes this debate and defends the proposition in “Another Look at Silver Imports into China”, 467-489.

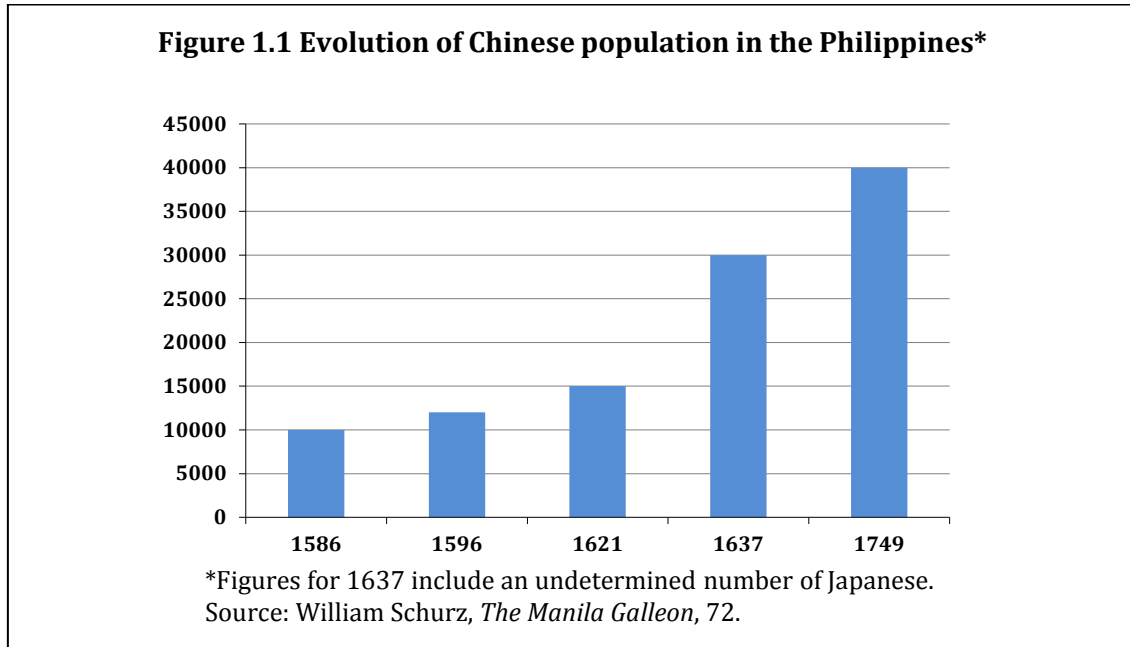
⁸³ Miyata Rodríguez, “Early Manila Galleon Trade”, 55.

⁸⁴ Ching-Ho Ch'en, *The Chinese Community in the sixteenth century Philippines* (Tokyo: The Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1968); María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, “Relaciones entre españoles y chinos en Filipinas: su regulación legal (siglos XVI a XIX),” *Libro Homenaje In Memoriam Carlos Díaz Rementería* (Huelva: Universidad de Huelva, 1998), 239-254. Most recently, Ollé, “La proyección de Fujian en Manila”, 155-178. Juan Gil published an impressive survey of a wide variety of sources dealing with the sangley community of Manila in *Los chinos en Manila, siglos XVI y XVII* (Lisboa: Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, 2011).

⁸⁵ Manel Ollé, *La empresa de China: de la Armada Invencible al Galeón de Manila*, (Barcelona: Acantilado, 2002), 233, n. 4.

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by 1603.⁸⁶ Schurz gives higher estimates for the Chinese population of Manila, which are reproduced in graphic form in figure 1.1.



The Chinese in Manila were called *sangley*, a term which, according to Schurz, “derived from ‘Seng-li,’ a word of the Southern Fujianese dialect (Minnanhua) meaning ‘trade.’”⁸⁷ More recently, Manel Ollé offered a more precise etymological explanation of the term:

Los chinos de Filipinas fueron bien pronto designados en las fuentes españolas como “sangleyes.” Encontramos tres interpretaciones del término: la que parece dirigirse a la de la expresión china de shanglai 商来, “los venidos a comerciar,” la que identifica el término *Sangley* como sengli 生理, que significa comercio en el dialecto fujianés minanhua 闽南话, es decir shengyi 生意 en mandarín, y la que apunta la posibilidad de que la etimología del término derive de la expresión china changlai 常来, es decir “los que vienen con frecuencia.”⁸⁸

⁸⁶ “Letter by Fray Bernardo de Santa Catalina”, 1603, in Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 12, 1601-1604*, accessed 23/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/15022/pg15022.html>.

⁸⁷ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 86.

⁸⁸ Ollé, “La proyección de Fujian en Manila”, 156-157, n. 2. See also Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 263.

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Manel Ollé supports the latter interpretation with a letter by Francisco de Sande, who in 1572 wrote “por todas estas islas los llaman sangleyes, que es nombre como quien dice gente que va y viene, por la costumbre que tienen de ir y venir cada año a estas islas a contratar,” and the title of a portrait of sangleyes from the Boxer Codex clearly entitled *chang lai* as shown in picture 1.1.⁸⁹ These sangleys were forced to live outside the city walls on the shores of the Pasig River in a district that came to be known as the Parián,⁹⁰ a community that, according to Manel Ollé, became the first “Chinatown” in history.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Ollé, “La proyección de Fujian en Manila”, 157, n. 2; *Sino-Spanish codex (Boxer codex)*, ca. 1590, Boxer mss. II. Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, f. 204.

⁹⁰ Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 234. Possibly from Tagalog *parian* “Chinese market”, *Diccionario de la lengua española* (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 2001).

⁹¹ Ollé, “La proyección de Fujian en Manila”, 161.

Picture 1.1 Image of *sangleyes* in Boxer codex



Detail of Boxer Codex illustration of a Manila Chinese or *sangleye* couple. The characters 来常 (*chang lai*, “often come”) appear on the top-left corner. Anonymous, *Sino-Spanish codex (Boxer codex)*, ca. 1590, Boxer mss. II. Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, f. 204.

The Parián gathered a critical mass of merchants, artisans, physicians, and people of various other occupations, which rapidly came to dominate the local economy of Manila, as well as its links to Fujian. In a letter to the king Philip II, Domingo de Salazar, the first bishop of Manila, described the Parián as follows:

This Parián has so adorned the city that I do not hesitate to affirm to your Majesty that no other known city in España or in these regions possesses anything so well worth seeing as this; for in it can be found the whole trade of China, with all kinds of goods and curious things which come from that country. These articles have already begun to be manufactured here, as quickly and with better finish than in China; and this is due to the intercourse between Chinese and Spaniards, which has enabled the former to perfect themselves in things which they were not wont to produce in China. In this Parián are to be found workmen of all trades and

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handicrafts of a nation, and many of them in each occupation. They make much prettier articles than are made in España, and sometimes so cheap that I am ashamed to mention it.⁹²

Salazar went on in his letter to mention the doctors and apothecaries, the “eating-houses where the Sangleys and the natives take their meals [and are] frequented even by Spaniards.” He explained to the king how “the handicrafts pursued by Spaniards have all died out, because people buy their clothes and shoes from the Sangleys, who are very good craftsmen in Spanish fashion, and make everything at a very low cost.” He also praised the sangleys for their beautiful work in gold and silver, and their skill as painters and embroiderers, and how they were able to produce items to the Spanish taste. Salazar noted that the churches in Manila were “beginning to be furnished with the images which the Sangleys make.” He mentions a sangley who secretly learned the art of book-binding from his master and set up his own shop, assuring the king “that he became so excellent a workman that his master has been forced to give up the business, because the Sangley has drawn all the trade.” He also talks about sangley gardeners, fishermen, bakers, and stonemasons and builders.⁹³ Salazar’s testimony is evidence that the sangleys became a fundamental part of the local economy of Manila. According to Schurz, the Chinese that migrated to the archipelago came to dominate the economy of the Philippines early on, monopolizing retail and manufacturing.⁹⁴

The symbiotic Spanish-sangley relationship was punctuated throughout its history by conflict and violence, for it was not long before the Chinese were perceived as a threat. As a consequence, the sangleys were on several occasions the target of aggressions from Spaniards, Japanese, and Filipinos throughout the colonial period. Schurz argues that Spaniards distrusted them because there were too many of them and that Filipinos “envied and hated” them because of “their superior

⁹² “Letter by Domingo de Salazar to Philip II”, 1590, in Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 7, 1588-1591*, 213, accessed 27/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13701/13701-h/13701-h.htm#d0e2045>.

⁹³ “Letter by Domingo de Salazar to Philip II”, 1590, in Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 7, 1588-1591*, 213-217, accessed 27/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13701/13701-h/13701-h.htm#d0e2045>.

⁹⁴ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 39, 59, 73.

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material lot that was the reward of their industry and skill.”⁹⁵ There were attempts to expulse the sangleys from Manila in 1596,⁹⁶ which generated tensions between the Spaniards and the sangleys.⁹⁷ The suspicions against the sangleys are reminiscent of the treatment of converted Jews and Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula. These frictions resulted in a series of sangley revolts, which met with harsh response. In 1603, upon rumors that the sangleys were the Fifth Column of an imminent invasion from China, the Spaniards of Manila with the help of Japanese and Filipinos attacked the Parián and massacred a large number of sangleys. The scene would repeat itself in 1639 this time after rumors from an invasion by the ruler of Taiwan, Zheng Chenggong, otherwise known as Koxinga.⁹⁸ Lastly, in 1686, a smaller uprising was similarly put down.⁹⁹ Despite these violent episodes, the population of Chinese in the Parián recovered quickly after each event.¹⁰⁰ The tense relationships did not always end in bloodshed, as all the parties involved realized that Manila depended on the sangleyes. They were able to retain some aspects of their culture and traditions, as attested by one interesting document; in 1652, the Inquisition issued autos to prohibit “los ritos gentilicos que los sangleyes acostumbran en las procesiones que hacen los días de plenilunios de marzo en Filipinas” likely in celebration of the Chinese New Year,¹⁰¹ which suggests they were able to hold these kind of celebrations before that date. There were several more uprisings throughout the eighteenth century and attempts to expel the sangleys from the archipelago. The last revolt occurred in 1819.¹⁰²

⁹⁵ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 83.

⁹⁶ Fray Bernardo de Santa Catalina recorded the objective was to limit their number to 3.000. “Letter by Fray Bernardo de Santa Catalina”, 1603, cited in Blair and Alexander Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1803, Vol. 12, 1601-1604*, accessed 23/06/2012, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/15022/pg15022.html>.

⁹⁷ Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 234, n. 8.

⁹⁸ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 76-79.

⁹⁹ The numbers of sangley deaths are disputed. Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel estimates a total of 40.000 Chinese migrants massacred in “Chinese Merchants, Silver Galleons, and Ethnic Violence in Spanish Manila, 1603-1686”, *Análisis. México y la Cuenca del Pacífico* 12, 36, (2009): 47.

¹⁰⁰ Shurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 80; Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 235.

¹⁰¹ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 442, exp. 11.

¹⁰² María Fernanda García de los Arcos, “Grupos étnicos y Clases sociales en las Filipinas de Finales del Siglo XVIII”, *Archipel* 57 (1999): 69.

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I included this discussion about the sangleys of Manila in this chapter because I want to explore the issue of whether they were counted among the chino immigrants in New Spain. That is to say, I argue that a sizeable number of the chinos of New Spain were indeed Chinese, sangleys that migrated forcibly or otherwise to the center of the American viceroyalty. The sheer proportion of sangleys in Manila makes it problematic to discard the possibility that many of the “chinos” or even “indios chinos” whose provenance in the sources is stated as “de Manila” found in New Spain were sangleys or *mestizos de sangley*, born of unions between Chinese and other inhabitants of the Philippines. Sangleys could plausibly have been taken as slaves in the aftermath of the revolts of 1603, and 1639.

Additionally, there were indeed people labeled as “sangley” living in New Spain. Débora Oropeza counted a sangley among a group of ten Asian merchants registered entering Acapulco between 1592 and 1595 called Juan Baptista de Vera.¹⁰³ It is possible he is the Juan Bautista de Vera, also known as Encang, who was the *gobernadorcillo* of the Manila Parián in 1603 and became one of the leaders of that year’s sangley revolt.¹⁰⁴ In 1631 a man called Antoni de Regil requested an admonition against his slave Simón “de casta sangley” for escaping and stealing forty gold pesos.¹⁰⁵ Tatiana Seijas located a case of manumission of a sangley slave in New Spain; in his last will Diego Sánchez manumitted his personal secretary, Juan Sánchez “a sangley, and his family,” and left him “a cattle farm in the town of Coyoacán [to the South, near Mexico City] and three slaves (including a Chino slave).”¹⁰⁶ Seijas located two cases of sangleys that bought slaves in Manila for sale in Mexico. The first is dated in 1683 when “don Pedro Quintero Fionio, a sangley, sold two African slaves to the admiral of the Manila Galleon for sale in Mexico.”¹⁰⁷ The second is the case of two sangley brothers living in New Spain selling African slaves:

¹⁰³ Déborah Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España, 75.

¹⁰⁴ Lucille Chia, “The Butcher, the Baker, and the Carpenter: Chinese Sojourners in the Spanish Philippines and Their Impact on Southern Fujian (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient. Maritime Diasporas in the Indian Ocean and East and Southeast Asia (960-1775)* 49, 4 (2006): 512.

¹⁰⁵ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 2173, exp. 10, fs. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 221; Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 120.

¹⁰⁷ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 72.

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In 1708 [...] don Santos de Tagle, a sangley, purchased a negro in the [Manila] Parián for 105 pesos and then sold him a year later in Mexico City for 300 pesos. His brother Francisco de Tagle, who lived in Mexico City, joined him in the trade. They sold numerous other African slaves to sugar plantations around the same time.¹⁰⁸

This document is remarkable, not only because it attests to the participation of sangleys in transpacific slave trade, but also because it suggests that sangleys maintained familial and commercial bonds across the Pacific.

Aside from these cases, I believe that many *chinos* not specifically labeled as such were sangleys. However, it is extremely difficult to determine how many among the *chinos* were sangleys. Francisco de la Cruz, a free *indio chino* who married an *india* in Puebla in 1604, may have been a sangley, because he said he came “del pueblo de Pasig en las islas Filipinas,” a place close to the Parián where Chinese merchants settled.¹⁰⁹ His may not be an isolated case, but the sources located thus far do not reveal much more than this.

The occupation of the *chinos* is another indication of their sangley origin. Edward Slack suggests that *chino* barbers in Mexico City “were either Chinese or Chinese mestizos, for the reason that Spaniards who spent time in Manila mentioned this profession as being dominated by Sangleys.”¹¹⁰ I agree with this idea, considering the contents of the aforementioned letter by Domingo de Salazar. There were Chinese goldsmiths in Mexico City, as Thomas Gage reported in 1648 that “the Indians, and the people of China that have been made Christians and every year come thither, have perfected the Spaniards in that trade.”¹¹¹ Slack expresses his

¹⁰⁸ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 72, n. 188. Seijas cites AGN, Hacienda, 1404, exp. 24 (1707).

¹⁰⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 148.

¹¹⁰ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 11.

¹¹¹ Thomas Gage, *A New Survey of the West-Indies being a Journal of Three thousand and Three hundred Miles within the main Land of America* (London: Benjamin Motte, 1711, Lavegne, TN: Eighteenth Century Collections Online Print Editions, 2011, originally published in 1648) chapter 12, 123; Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 11.

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suspicion that “undoubtedly, skilled chino embroiderers and weavers were employed in Puebla and other centers of textile production in New Spain.”¹¹² Records located by Seijas of Asian, indios chinos, and chinos who worked in textile mills or *obrajes* in Mexico City, together with those I located about chinos working in *obrajes* in Puebla—including weavers—, confirm Slack’s hypothesis.¹¹³ I found, however, no evidence to support Slack’s claim that “given the large number of skilled Asians in Puebla, Chinese and mestizo potters from Manila in all likelihood manufactured fine *Talavera*” ceramics.¹¹⁴ The complicated matter of what was the correlation between New Spanish material culture and Asian migration is the topic of the next section.

1.3 Chinos in the adoption of Asian aesthetics in New Spanish art

In this section I evaluate the transcendence of the cultural influence of the transpacific trade route through its repercussion in the evolution of aesthetics in New Spanish material culture. The purpose of its inclusion is to underscore how the objects transported in the Galleon shaped the development of handicrafts and artistic tastes in the viceroyalty. The craving for these products fueled the profitability of the Manila Galleon, which, at the same time, also influenced the want for everything Asian that led to chino slaves being employed in the houses of the wealthy. At the same time, the fact that these tastes consolidated the trade route enabled free Asians to settle in New Spain. Thus the Galleon had profound manifestations on the material culture of New Spain and Asian migration to the Americas was a correlated process to the development of this new aesthetic. Asian immigrants and sojourners played a role in the arrival of the many products that entered annually in Acapulco. However, the idea that they themselves made the New Spanish objects that incorporated Asian motifs is problematic. With the exception of ivory statues, which seem to have been made by the *sangleys* in Manila, local (i.e. Mesoamerican) hands made the majority of ceramics, the pieces of furniture, the paintings, and the textiles inspired by Asian art.

¹¹² Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 18.

¹¹³ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 18.

¹¹⁴ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 20.

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Before reconstructing the history of chino immigrants it is necessary to analyze these transpacific material exchanges. To this end, I review the considerable amount of literature written on this matter, which also serves to show the bias towards material culture and relative neglect of literary manifestations in the scholarship about the cultural influence of the Manila Galleon, addressed in the final chapter of this thesis.

Several authors have written about the artistic dimension of the Manila Galleon. Gonzalo Obregón pioneered this field when he wrote two articles about the influence of Asian art in New Spain, in which he discussed the commerce of Chinese, Japanese and Filipino textiles, porcelain, furniture, and ivory sculptures, catalogued and analyzed several pieces and collection of decorative arts in museums in Mexico, and commented on its influence on Mexican ceramics, paintings, and lacquerware.¹¹⁵ It is not my intent to simply summarize what has been written about this subject, but rather, I want to explore how importation of Asian goods and Asian migration relate to each other. For this section, I rely primarily on the recent research of scholars compiled in the volume by Donna Pierce and Ronald Otsuka, presented on the occasion of an exhibit about Manila Galleon at the Denver Art Museum.¹¹⁶ Marina Alonso Mola and Carlos Martínez Shaw edited a catalogue of a similar international exhibit organized by the Hospital de los Venerables, Seville, the Museo Franz Meyer, México City, and the Museo Histórico de Acapulco Fuerte de San Diego.¹¹⁷

Déborah Oropeza included in her dissertation a chapter on the artistic influence of the Manila Galleon in central New Spain. To a certain extent she implied that Asian artisans made the textiles, ceramics, and pieces of furniture that she discussed

¹¹⁵ Gonzalo Obregón, "Influencia y contrainfluencia del arte oriental en Nueva España", *Historia Mexicana* 14, 2 (1964): 292-302; "El aspecto artístico del comercio con Filipinas", *Artes de México. El Galeón de Manila* 143 (1971): 74-97.

¹¹⁶ Pierce and Otsuka, *Asia and Spanish America*.

¹¹⁷ Marina Alonso and Carlos Martínez Shaw, eds., *El Galeón de Manila: [Catálogo de la exposición]; Hospital de los Venerables, Museo Franz Mayer, México D.F., Museo Histórico de Acapulco Fuerte de San Diego, Acapulco* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2000).

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throughout the chapter. Jorge Rivas Pérez also defends this idea in the case of furniture:

Few records remain concerning the first Asian laborers who immigrated to Spanish America. However, clear evidence does emerge of a discreet presence towards the beginning of the seventeenth century. Many were artisans in the various trades. Given that they were a minority among the lowest classes and involved in a discipline as competitive and highly regulated, as was carpentry at the time, only specialized skills not known to European or native artisans could safeguard their positions in this field.¹¹⁸

Tatiana Seijas rejected Oropeza's hypothesis stating that it was the objects themselves and not Asian immigrants the source of inspiration for local artists. I situate myself between the two arguments. While I agree with Seijas that the main driving force behind the adoption of Asian motifs in New Spanish art were mostly Asian objects and not Asian people, I do not believe that the two phenomena were disconnected. While reviewing some of the latest works on the subject in this section, I argue that there was a correlation between the two and present evidence that Asians introduced Asian artifacts to New Spain. Additionally, I argue that the idea that Asian artisans made some of the objects cannot be discarded outright.

The great purchasing power of silver in Asia discussed in the previous section made it a very profitable enterprise to import Asian luxury goods to New Spain. According to Mariano Ardash Bonialian, there were such quantities of Castilian and Asian goods in Mexico that the prices of these commodities dropped considerably, and merchants in New Spain sought to re-export them to Peru.¹¹⁹ The exchange of silver for these precious commodities was the main driving force behind the Manila Galleon trade throughout its existence. As a consequence, for 250 years large amounts of Asian ceramics, ivory carvings, textiles, and furniture, among other products, entered Acapulco. This input to the material culture of the

¹¹⁸ Jorge Rivas Pérez, "Of Luxury and Fantasy: The Influence of Asia on the Furniture of Viceregal Spanish America", in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 119-121.

¹¹⁹ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 112.

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viceroyalty had profound and lasting effects, lending itself to a process of syncretism with local traditions. Gustavo Curiel explained it in the following way:

There are (...) numerous forms and decorations inspired by Asian art present in items such as trays, vases, cups and saucers for drinking chocolate, serving dishes, writing chests, chests, trunks and boxes, sewing cases, and a multitude of other examples of the utilitarian arts produced in New Spain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹²⁰

It was not only objects brought on the Manila Galleon but also Asian crafts and *chinoiseries* made in Europe introduced via Veracruz on the Atlantic coast, that triggered the mestizaje of styles that developed into uniquely New Spanish styles based on those models. In fact, George Kuwayama suggested that the popularity of *chinoiseries* in Europe might have stimulated the importation of Asian goods to New Spain through the Manila Galleon.¹²¹ Curiel describes these two vectors of Asian motifs as follows:

An enormous quantity of European luxury articles teeming with Chinese pagodas, bridges, and birds, palace ceremonies, figures in Asian dress clasping parasols, etc., entered through the port of Veracruz. (...) These recreations of “the Asian” expressed the way the Europeans imagined Asia. (...) At the same time, let us remember, via the Pacific coast the “original” pieces continued to flow into New Spain in the cargoes of the Manila galleons.¹²²

It is important to bear in mind, as Curiel does, that “both repertoires served to form a New World ‘China language’—very different from the European *chinoiserie*,” which he refers to as “the artistic language of ‘Chinese mimicry.’”¹²³

¹²⁰ Gustavo Curiel, “Perception of the Other and the Language of ‘Chinese mimicry’ in the Decorative Arts of New Spain”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 22.

¹²¹ George Kuwayama, “Chinese Porcelain in the Viceroyalty of Perú”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 172.

¹²² Gustavo Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 29.

¹²³ Gustavo Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 29.

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Porcelain was one of the main drivers of this process of aesthetic syncretism. Jean McClure Mudge and George Kuwayama have analyzed and compiled catalogues of Chinese porcelain imports to New Spain.¹²⁴ These pieces became a staple of the menagerie of the wealthy inhabitants of New Spain. There are many examples preserved in museums through the country, a few found during the excavation of the main Mexica temple in Mexico City.¹²⁵ Asian ceramics and its New Spanish imitations were exceedingly popular, to the point that, in 1802, there existed in the port of San Blas on the Pacific coast a contraband market for broken pieces of Chinese porcelain.¹²⁶ Broken pieces of Chinese porcelain were incorporated into distinctively Mexican baroque pieces. The finest example of this is the fountain at the Casa del Risco, built in the eighteenth century in what was then the township of San Ángel, today a neighborhood of south Mexico City. The two-story fountain adorns one side of the patio of the mansion, as can be seen in picture 1.2. It is decorated with teacups, saucers, plates, and broken pieces of Ming and Qing porcelain, as well as seashells and ceramics from Puebla. According to Armella the use of these Asian materials are “muestra del aprecio que se tenía por la porcelana china traída a México en el Galeón de Manila”.¹²⁷ Armella describes the Chinese and Japanese pieces as follows:

Entre las piezas que constituyen su decoración principal, encontramos obras monumentales de China y Japón. En la parte superior del muro, cerca del remate, se colocaron cinco platos hondos de porcelana china [Ming], decorados con azul delgado sobre fondo blanco [...] Hay también dos magníficos platos japoneses, de los llamados imari, decorados con color coral y azul marino sobre fondo blanquísimo; así como otros, amarillos, con letras y peces, propios del imperio del sol naciente.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Jean McClure Mudge, *Chinese export porcelain in North America* (New York: C.N. Potter, 1986); George Kuwayama, *Chinese Ceramics in Colonial Mexico* (Los Angeles and Honolulu: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, University of Hawai'i Press, 1997).

¹²⁵ Miyata Rodríguez, “Early Manila Galleon Trade”, 46-54.

¹²⁶ AGN, Marina, vol. 193, exp. 1, ff. 1-11v.

¹²⁷ Virginia Armella, “Notas sobre San Ángel”, in *Don Isidro Fabela y la Casa del Risco*, eds. Manuel Ramos Medina and Ana Luisa Valdés González Salas (Toluca: Fideicomiso Isidro Fabela del Gobierno del Estado de México, Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura, 2003), 53.

¹²⁸ Armella, “Notas sobre San Ángel”, 59.

Picture 1.2 Fountain at *Casa del Risco*



Image of the fountain at Casa del Risco (left) and detail of the decoration of the fountain featuring Chinese porcelain plates and teacups (right). Photo by Mariona Lloret.

The most famous consequence of the importation of Asian porcelain was the emergence of the so-called *Talavera poblana* enameled ceramics. Despite great differences in the materials they were made of, the organization of labor in their production, and the decoration between Chinese porcelain and Pueblan Talavera, Curiel asserts that Chinese art was the “original inspiration” for “eighteenth-century Puebla ceramics,” stating that “in fact reference has often been made to an ‘oriental style’ in the enameled ceramics of Puebla.”¹²⁹ Like Curiel, Ana Ruíz argues that this Asian influence on the Talavera poblana ceramics, in addition to the direct route from Asia, arrived from Europe, in particular from Portuguese and Dutch manufacturers who were already imitating Chinese porcelain.¹³⁰ There were imitators of Chinese porcelain outside Puebla as well, as attested by a 1777 document stating that Claudio Marioni, a potter in Texcoco, had the exclusive privilege to use a technique he invented “para fabricar loza parecida a la de China.”¹³¹ This relationship led Edward Slack to suggest that Asian immigrants worked in the Talavera poblana workshops of Puebla. However, as I shall discuss

¹²⁹ Gustavo Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 20.

¹³⁰ Ana Ruíz, “Influencias artísticas en las artes decorativas novohispanas”, in *Cruce de miradas, relaciones e intercambios*, ed. Pedro San Ginés Aguilar (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2010), 336.

¹³¹ AGN, General de Parte, vol. 59, exp. 258, ff. 252v-255. A related document is catalogued under AGN Civil, vol. 1670, exp. 1, 72 fs, “Sobre barros para fabricar loza como la de China” (1776).

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in chapter three, I located no evidence to support this claim. Thus the emergence of Asian motifs in Talavera poblana was not direct consequence of Asian migration into the heart of the viceroyalty.

In spite of this, Asians did participate in the process by trading some of the objects that inspired New Spanish artisans, and therefore a certain correlation between the two phenomena is undeniable. One of the earliest mentions of Asian immigrants is the record of payment of thirteen pesos as duties on Asian imports, when Filipino Tomás Pangasinan transported “ropa de china” on the galleon San Pedro in 1594.¹³² An even earlier account of Asian migration in connection to Asian commerce is Juan González de Mendoza’s claim that sometime in 1585 Chinese merchants travelled by their own volition to Mexico bringing “cosas muy curiosas” to trade.¹³³ I have located no other source to corroborate Mendoza’s affirmation but it is likely that a small group of Chinese merchants did travel from Manila to Acapulco to sell their wares. Moreover, other Asian vendors of Asian merchandise working in mainland New Spain are documented.

There are several extant seventeenth-century license petitions that document the presence of vendors of “géneros de la tierra de Castilla y de China” among other products on the streets of Mexico City, some of which do not give information about the ethnicity of the vendor.¹³⁴ Others, however, identify the petitioners as *chinos*. For instance, Juan de Soria “chino libre” sold “mercaderías de China, Castilla y de la tierra.”¹³⁵ Francisco Flores, “chino libre,” asked for a license to sell “alguna menudencia de ropa de Castilla, China y de la tierra en las plazas, calles y

¹³² AGN, Real Hacienda, Archivo Histórico de Hacienda, 8, vol. 1291, exp. 228, ff: 234vta (1594).

¹³³ “Ya la codicia los ha traído hasta México, donde llegaron el año pasado 85, mercaderes chinos con cosas muy curiosas y no pararon hasta llegar a España y aún a otros Reinos más remotos”, in Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia del Gran Reino de la China*, Libro tercero (Madrid: Miraguano Ediciones, Ediciones Polifemo, 2008, originally published in 1586), 102.

¹³⁴ AGN, General de Parte, vol 6, exp. 327, f. 125v (1602), “Francisco Sánchez”; vol. 8, exp. 125, f. 78v (1641); vol. 9, exp. 64, f. 39v (1643), “Luis Lobo”; vol. 9, exp. 8, f. 6 (1642), “Simón González”; vol. 9, exp. 18, f. 12v (1642), “Sebastian Rodríguez”; vol. 9, exp. 96, f. 61 (1643), “Pedro Torres” petitions that a slave of his property be allowed to sell the goods in his stead; vol. 16, exp. 69, f. 55 (1687), “Juan de Rosales”.

¹³⁵ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D35, exp. 254, f. 233v (1644).

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tianguis [outdoor markets].”¹³⁶ Francisco Matías “chino” also traded in “menudencias de China y de la tierra” according to a 1650 license petition where he requested permission to sell his goods and to “rescatar miel negra,” presumably to make pulque.¹³⁷ Juan Tello de Guzmán, “chino libre,” was granted a license to carry sword and dagger in 1651 to protect himself “cuando saliere fuera de la ciudad de Mexico a vender sus mercaderías y las que llevare de personas particulares.”¹³⁸ Also in 1651, Francisco García “indio chino natural de la India de Portugal” requested a replacement for his permits to sell “por los pueblos circunbesinos a esta Nueva España y en esta ciudad y por las calles ropa de la China y de la tierra de Castilla cintas y otras menudencias” after his original documents were torn after years “de traerlos en la bolsa.”¹³⁹ Finally, Antonio de la Cruz, “chino,” requested and was granted a confirmation of his license to sell “géneros de Castilla, China y de la tierra” in 1661.¹⁴⁰

Apart from the vendors, and despite the lack of evidence for their connection to Talavera poblana, Asian artisans made other types of objects, particularly gold and silver jewelry and ornaments. Thomas Gage reported in 1648 that “the Indians, and the people of China that have been made Christians and every year come thither, have perfected the Spaniards” as goldsmiths.¹⁴¹ Their presence is recorded also in the eighteenth century, for in 1750 the Inquisition tried a chino silversmith called Salvador Segismundo “por traer cierto librito en el pecho para librarse de sus enemigos.”¹⁴² It is plausible, but by no means necessary, that they used Asian motifs in the pieces they crafted.

It was perhaps the very presence of Asian artisans and vendors like them that gave its name to the large marketplace built on the main square of Mexico City after

¹³⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, 3681, exp. 45 (1644).

¹³⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 3456, exp. 21 (1650).

¹³⁸ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, cont. 11, vol. 19, exp. 172, ff: 90v - 91. (1651).

¹³⁹ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, cont. 9, vol. 16, exp. 28, ff: 27v-28v (1651).

¹⁴⁰ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, cont. 11, vol. 19, exp. 336, ff: 190 - 190v (1661).

¹⁴¹ Gage, *A New Survey of the West-Indies*, 123; Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 11.

¹⁴² AGN, Inquisición 61-999-6-ff. 335-336.

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1692: “el Parián.”¹⁴³ Named after the sangley or Chinese quarter in Manila,¹⁴⁴ this large construction, shown in the foreground of picture 1.2, was one of the main marketplaces of Asian and European imports to the city. The Parián stood at the center of the city until it was burnt down in the course of a riot in 1828¹⁴⁵ and finally demolished and dismantled in 1843.¹⁴⁶

Picture 1.3 The Plaza Mayor and the Parián under construction in 1695



Cristóbal de Villalpando, *Vista de la Plaza Mayor de México*, 1695, James Mathuen Campbell Collection. The Parián is shown in the foreground; street vendors occupy the plaza behind it.

¹⁴³ The *Diccionario de la lengua española* states that the word derives “del tagalo *parian*, mercado chino.” According to the same entry, its use in the Spanish language is limited to Mexico. Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, accessed 08/08/2011, <http://www.rae.es/>.

¹⁴⁴ Roberto Hernández, “El comercio exterior de China y su relación con México. Una perspectiva histórica”, *México y la cuenca del Pacífico* 8, 26 (2005): 124.

¹⁴⁵ Silvia Arrom, “Popular Politics in Mexico City: The Parian Riot, 1828”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 68, 2 (1988): 245-268; Richard A. Warren, *Vagrants and Citizens: Politics and the Masses in Mexico City from Colony to Republic* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 17, 90.

¹⁴⁶ María Dolores Lorenzo, “Negociaciones para la modernización urbana: La demolición del mercado del Parián en la ciudad de México, 1843”, *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México* 38 (2009): 105.

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The information about Japanese diplomatic missions to New Spain in 1610, and New Spain, Spain and Rome in 1614, sustains the idea that commerce of Asian goods and arrival of people from Asia were connected.¹⁴⁷ Recent research shows that some Japanese merchants immigrated to Mexico on the same ship as Japanese envoys in the seventeenth century.¹⁴⁸ The diplomatic missions certainly triggered “curiosity about Japan,” which in turn, according to Sofia Sanabris, “aroused local interest in Asian material culture in colonial Mexico, where artists translated this art form into a language that appealed to a Mexican audience.”¹⁴⁹ Gustavo Curiel argues that these two embassies “brought to New Spain *biombos* and other items of decorative arts as gifts” adding “that the viceroyalty also had its own Japanese population that became integrated into American society.”¹⁵⁰

Chalca chronicler San Antón Muñón Chimalpáhin (1579-1660) recorded both the 1610, and the 1614 visits in his *Diario*.¹⁵¹ He claimed that the Japanese brought

¹⁴⁷ There are several recent studies about this embassy and its place in the wider context of Japanese-Spanish relations and Japanese politics, and its itinerary from Sendai to Rome. See Escipión Amati, *Historia de la embajada de Idate Masamune al Papa Paulo V (1613-1615)*, eds. José Koichi Oizumi and Juan Gil (Aranjuez: Doce Calles, 2011); Ubaldo Iaccarino, “Comercio y diplomacia entre Japón y Filipinas en la era Keicho (1596-1615)” (PhD diss., Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2013), 284-293; and Brigit Tremml, “When Political Economies Meet: Spain, China and Japan in Manila, 1571-1644” (PhD diss., Universität Wien, 2012), 277-280. Classic works about early Euro-Japanese relations include Charles Ralph Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan: 1540-1650* (Manchester and Lisbon: Carcanet, The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, The Discoveries Commission, The Fundação Oriente, 1993, originally published in 1951); Lothar Knauth, *Pacific Confrontation: Japan Encounters the Spanish Overseas Empire 1542-1639* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1970); Juan Gil, *Hidalgos y samuráis. España y Japón en los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1991).

¹⁴⁸ Meiko Nagashima, “Japanese Lacquers Exported to Spanish America and Spain”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 115.

¹⁴⁹ Sofia Sanabris, “The Biombo or Folding Screen in Colonial Mexico”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 69.

¹⁵⁰ Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 27. I discuss individuals within this Japanese population in chapter two. Some Japanese were also labeled “chinos.”

¹⁵¹ Domingo Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, ed. Rafael Tena (México: Conaculta, Cien de México, 2001, originally published in 1605). I will further analyze the presence of the Manila Galleon, Asia, and Asians in his writings in chapter five. See Miguel León-Portilla, “La embajada de los japoneses en México, 1614. El testimonio en náhuatl del cronista Chimalpáhin”, *Estudios de Asia y África* 16, 2 (1981): 215-241.

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with them many iron objects, desks, and clothes to sell in Mexico City.¹⁵² While in reality the diplomatic mission was sent by daimyo Date Masamune from the city of Sendai, Chimalpáhin believed it was a gesture of goodwill from the emperor of Japan and commented on the ultimate commercial aim of these embassies.¹⁵³ Even though there were considerable frictions between the Spanish and the Japanese upon their arrival in Acapulco, after the Japanese relinquished their weapons and left a few of their companions behind, the diplomatic mission eventually entered Mexico City.¹⁵⁴ When the leader of the embassy, Hasekura Rokuemon Tsunenaga, left Mexico City for Spain he divided his group in two, “llevándose a unos consigo y dejando a los demás para que aquí [se quedaran] a mercadear como comerciantes.” In this entry Chimalpáhin claims that Hasekura took a man who lived in Mexico City as an interpreter because he had been in Japan as a soldier and, consequently, spoke Japanese.¹⁵⁵ This is further evidence that Mexico City was a center of distribution of knowledge and information about Asia. The ultimately purpose of both missions was to establish commercial links between Japan and New Spain. This process was stopped by Japanese politics, which would eventually culminate in virtual interruption of foreign trade, and Spanish reaction towards an increasingly hostile policy towards Christians in Japan. Chimalpáhin recorded that some of these Japanese merchants, and others that arrived in the earlier 1610

¹⁵² “Traían muchos [objetos] de hierro, escritorios y algunas vestimentas para vender acá [Mexico City],” cited in Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 365. See also Sofía Sanabraís, “The Biombo or Folding Screen”.

¹⁵³ “El emperador que gobierna en Japón le está demostrando amistad y paz, y constantemente le está proponiendo al dicho rey que reside en España que nos se hagan la guerra sino que siempre se estimen, a fin de que los japoneses puedan venir a México a vender y comerciar,” cited in Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 367-369. See translation of the “Carta del príncipe de Japón al virrey de Nueva España de 17 de julio de 1612”, AGI, Filipinas, 1, N.151d. Other objectives were to exclude the Dutch from Japanese trade, while the Japanese sought benefit from Spanish expertise in mining. See “Copia de las cláusulas que Rodrigo Vivero propuso al emperador de Japón para tratar con el rey de España”, AGI, Filipinas, 193, N.3 (1610). It is important to note that for Spanish missionaries and dignitaries, evangelization was another fundamental objective.

¹⁵⁴ “Copia de la orden y auto que dio el virrey sobre las armas que se han de quitar a los japoneses llegados a Acapulco y buen tratamiento que se les ha de hacer”, AGI, México, 28, N.17a; “Memoria de la gente xapona que lleva consigo el embaxador Faxecura Rocuyemon a la ciudad de México”, AGI, México, 1844, ff. 853v-855.

¹⁵⁵ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 377.

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embassy, eventually left the city, while the rest stayed “negociando y comerciando para vender las mercancías que habían traído de Japón.”¹⁵⁶

As previously stated, it is likely among the goods these Japanese diplomats and merchants sold and brought as presents were *byobu*,¹⁵⁷ *bimbos* or folding screens. These were the Japanese objects that triggered the most syncretism. Biombos became very popular in New Spain and locally produced items quickly emerged to compete with Japanese imports. New Spanish artisans were clearly inspired by the Japanese *Nanban* or *Namban* art, the decorative style employed in objects made in Japan for European markets.¹⁵⁸ Throughout the sixteenth century, as taste for Japanese lacquer grew among Europeans, Japanese merchants developed new kinds of products to cater for this new market, “arcas, cofres, escritorios tipo bagueño, atriles, oratorios portátiles, sagrarios, etc.,” which collectively came to be known as *Namban*.¹⁵⁹ Yayoi Kawamura suggests that some of these Japanese imports were further customized in New Spain, where inlaid silver decorations were added before the pieces were sent to their ultimate buyer in Spain.¹⁶⁰ Even though no direct evidence has been located to support it, it can be speculated that the previously mentioned Asian gold and silversmiths working in Mexico City could have refashioned these objects.

Most evident among the signs of influence of the *Namban* style in New Spanish art was the adoption of gold clouds as a decorative element in biombos. However, as Sofia Sanabrais points out, while “the use of gold clouds in Japanese screens often highlighted specific parts of the composition and eased the transition between panels,” in New Spain they were used “arbitrarily placed as a decorative element,

¹⁵⁶ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 389, 397.

¹⁵⁷ The literal meaning is “wind wall”. See Pilar Cabañas Moreno, “Huellas del arte japonés en Nueva España: Biombos, enconchados y maques”, in *Lacas Namban, huellas de Japón en España. Cuarto centenario de la embajada Keicho* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación Cultura y Deporte, Japan Foundation, 2013), 298.

¹⁵⁸ Yoshitomo Okamoto, *The Namban Art of Japan* (New York: Weatherhill, 1972); Rodrigo Rivero Lake, *Namban: Art in Viceregal Mexico* (Madrid: Turner, 2006).

¹⁵⁹ Yayoi Kawamura, “Laca japonesa *urushi* de estilo *Namban* en España. Vías de su llegada y sus destinos”, in *Lacas Namban, huellas de Japón en España*, 257.

¹⁶⁰ Kawamura, “Laca japonesa”, 288.

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often obscuring figures within the composition.”¹⁶¹ I show an example of this motif in picture 1.4.¹⁶²

Picture 1.4 Biombo View of the Viceroy's Palace in Mexico City



Anonymous. *View of the Viceroy's Palace in Mexico City*. c. 1660, Mexico, Eight-panel folding screen. Oil on canvas. 184x488cm. Museo de América, Madrid, Inv. 00207. [<http://www.mecd.gob.es/museodeamerica/coleccion2/seleccion-de-piezas2/colonial/biombo-mexico.html>]. Accessed 16/01/2013.

Another example of this type of Asian-American artistic syncretism are the New Spanish paintings on wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl, known as *enconchados*.¹⁶³ As Pilar Cabañas defines them, these were an artistic and decorative variety typical of New Spain “que utilizó como elemento peculiar el nácar, y que según las piezas conservadas, tuvo su desarrollo entre el último cuarto del siglo XVII y mediados del siglo XVIII.”¹⁶⁴ Once again, scholars have analyzed the possibility that Asian artisans were involved with their production. Curiel wonders whether decorative

¹⁶¹ Sanabrais, “The Biombo or Folding Screen”, 89.

¹⁶² Sanabrais shows and discusses this piece in “The Biombo or Folding Screen”, 69, and another example, *View of the Paseo de Iztacalco, the Alameda, the Viceregal Palaca and the Plaza Mayor of Mexico City*, c. 1660, Mexico four-panel folding screen, oil and gold leaf on canvas, from the Collection of Rodrigo Rivero Lake Antiquities, Mexico City, 88.

¹⁶³ Sonia Ocaña Ruiz, “Enconchado Frames: The Use of Japanese Ornamental Models in New Spanish Painting”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 129. See also Julieta Ávila Hernández, *El influjo de la pintura china en los enconchados de Nueva España* (Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1997).

¹⁶⁴ Cabañas Moreno, “Huellas del arte japonés en Nueva España”, 310.

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elements derived from *Namban* lacquers in the frames of *enconchados* were “the work of Japanese residents in Mexico City, or were they adoptions by the local craftsmen of the *Namban* repertoires?”¹⁶⁵ Curiel inclines towards the latter proposition. Similarly, Luis Islas García proposed the mostly disputed hypothesis that Japanese immigrants were the authors of the mid-seventeenth-century murals of the cathedral of Cuernavaca depicting scenes from the martyrdom of Franciscan missionaries and Japanese Christians in Nagasaki in 1597.¹⁶⁶ I see nothing in particular that would suggest that a Japanese hand painted these images and, therefore, I situate myself among other skeptics of this notion.¹⁶⁷

Several scholars have reflected upon the degree in which Asia influenced the culture of people of European descent in New Spain. Gustavo Curiel considers that ceramics, pieces of furniture—biombos in particular—, paintings, and various other utensils and decorative elements made in New Spain that imitated Asian models were,

Very peculiar artistic expressions that must be understood as constitutive essences of considerable weight in the discourse of Creole self-affirmation, and never as mere isolated influences or the result of repetitive or mechanical copying of motifs from foreign models.¹⁶⁸

In Curiel’s understanding, Asian motifs became a part of the imaginary of the privileged of New Spain. Eventually these elements became part of a distinctively New Spanish artistic language. Indeed, Curiel argues that these objects must be understood in the context of the formation of the idea of an “American difference”, whereupon New Spanish *españoles* developed an idea of themselves, which

¹⁶⁵ Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 28.

¹⁶⁶ Luis Islas García, *Los murales de la catedral de Cuernavaca, afrente de México y oriente* (Mexico: Charias Christi, 1967), 70. See also Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 534.

¹⁶⁷ María Elena Ota Mishima, “Un mural novohispano en la catedral de Cuernavaca: los veintiséis mártires de Nagasaki”, *Estudios de Asia y África* 16, 4 (1981): 692; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 13.

¹⁶⁸ Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 19.

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included procuring such forms of artistic expression.¹⁶⁹ Jorge Rivas Pérez posits a similar idea arguing that:

In the collective imagination of the time, the concepts of wealth and opulence were inextricably linked with Asia. From the sixteenth century, for Spanish and Creole society, objects brought to the New World from the Far East had been synonymous with riches and extreme refinement. This association would influence greatly the development of Latin American furniture for the next three hundred years.¹⁷⁰

The New Spanish rich developed a taste for pieces of furniture made of Chinese and Japanese lacquerware. It became customary for them to decorate their houses and palaces with these pieces, biombos, in particular.¹⁷¹ These “high-quality utilitarian goods”¹⁷² influenced artisans of *maque*, the local variety of lacquer, in Michoacan and Chiapas.¹⁷³ Curiel describes “a tray and a chest made in imitation of Asian lacquerware” made by a famous artist of the indigenous nobility working in Pátzcuaro, Michoacan, preserved in the Museo de América in Madrid.¹⁷⁴ His fame is attested by the fact that chronicler Francisco Ajofrín commented about Cerda’s pieces that they “exceeded in beauty and luster the maques of China.”¹⁷⁵

The input of these utilitarian art pieces was not restricted to the rich living in the main centers of power, or the most populous cities. For instance, rich people in far-off Merida, Yucatan, had access to Asian products.¹⁷⁶ Asian objects and articles

¹⁶⁹ Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 20.

¹⁷⁰ Rivas Pérez, “Of Luxury and Fantasy”, 119.

¹⁷¹ Ruíz, “Influencias artísticas en las artes decorativas novohispanas”, 341.

¹⁷² Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 25.

¹⁷³ Ruíz, “Influencias artísticas en las artes decorativas novohispanas”, 338-340.

¹⁷⁴ Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 22.

¹⁷⁵ “Hoy florece un célebre pintor, indio noble, llamado don José Manuel de la Cerda, que ha perfeccionado mucho esta facultad, de suerte que excede en primor y lustre a los maques de la China,” cited in Francisco de Ajofrín, *Diario de viaje que hizo a la América en el siglo XVIII el P. Fray Francisco de Ajofrín*, vol. 1, (Mexico: Instituto de Cultura Hispano Mexicano, 1964), 160. Translation by Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 22. See also María Concepción García Sáiz, *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990), 453.

¹⁷⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, 6688, 032, fs. 9. (1694), “Testimonio y certificación de los bienes inventariados y valuados que lleva Doña María de Ulibarri, mujer legítima del Sargento Mayor Francisco Guerrero, y que proceden algunos de Japón. Mérida.”

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crafted in Mesoamerica partly inspired by them, spread across the entire New Spanish territory, and were acquired by people from all the strata of New Spanish society. It was not only the rich, but also the middle and lower classes that fueled New Spain's demand of Asian products.¹⁷⁷ William Schurz, based on an encyclopedia by Vicente Riva Palacio,¹⁷⁸ argued that "all classes, from the Indians of the torrid Lowlands, [...] to the papered creoles of the capital, went dressed in the fabrics of the Far East—the cottons of Luzon or India, or the silks of China."¹⁷⁹ Schurz cites a text by viceroy Revillagigedo stating: "the Philippine commerce is acclaimed in this kingdom [New Spain], because its merchandise supplies the poor folk of the country."¹⁸⁰ This author also wrote, "All sorts of people wore Chinese silks in Mexico, regardless of their economic, social or ethnic background."¹⁸¹ The importation of these textiles virtually eradicated silk production in New Spain.¹⁸² The reason behind this is that in New Spain products from China were of better quality and cheaper than local or Spanish silks, as was the case in Peru.¹⁸³ Virginia Armella analyzed how the Manila Galleon influenced, above all, the clothing of the denizens of the American territories of New Spain because the ship transported different kinds of textiles, most importantly silks and cottons, as well as finished garments.¹⁸⁴ These textiles had an impact on the lives of the relatively poor, even those living in remote areas. Barbara Voss showed that, in the eighteenth century, wearing silk garments became a strategy to attain upward social mobility among

¹⁷⁷ See Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 79.

¹⁷⁸ Vicente Riva Palacio, *México a través de los siglos, Tomo II, Historia del Virreinato (1521-1807)* (Mexico: Ballesca y Compañía, Barcelona: Espasa, 1880).

¹⁷⁹ Schurz, "Mexico, Peru and the Manila Galleon", 389-390. See also Abby Sue Fisher, "Trade Textiles: Asia and New Spain", in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Donna Pierce and Ronald Otsuka, 179.

¹⁸⁰ "Instrucción que dejó a su sucesor", cited in Schurz, "Mexico, Peru and the Manila Galleon", 390, as AGI, estante 90, cajón 2, legajo 18.

¹⁸¹ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 292.

¹⁸² Virginia Armella de Aspe, "La influencia asiática en la indumentaria novohispana", in *La presencia novohispana en el Pacífico insular. Segundas Jornadas Internacionales celebradas en la ciudad de México, del 17 al 21 de septiembre de 1990*, ed. María Cristina Barrón (Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1992), 51-64, 56-57. See also Woodrow Borah, *Silk Raising in Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1943).

¹⁸³ Kuwayama, "Chinese Porcelain in the Viceroyalty of Perú", 165-174. Kuwayama cites viceroy of Peru Marqués de Cañete: "Chinese silks and other textiles were so cheap that Indian caciques and even commoners were using them for clothing instead of cloth of local manufacture", 165.

¹⁸⁴ Armella de Aspe, "La influencia asiática", 51-64.

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women of African descent in far-off San Francisco presidio. According to Voss, “these items would have particularly facilitated casta mobility and colonial ethnogenesis among women of African descent, who were previously prohibited from wearing such materials by sumptuary laws.”¹⁸⁵

Elaborate choir gates, made in Macau, and a luxurious lectern, made in the Philippines, both outrageously expensive, were placed in the Mexico City cathedral in 1730 and 1770, respectively.¹⁸⁶ However, Asian art also adorned much smaller and remote temples. The parish church of San Miguel del Milagro in Tlaxcala, where wooden paneling made in Japan adorns its pulpit,¹⁸⁷ as can be seen in picture 1.2. Clara Bergellini shows that Asian objects, ivory statues and porcelain jars, arrived to the remote churches of the Northern missions dated from the 1740s to the 1770s.¹⁸⁸ Ivory statues made in the Philippines by sangley craftsmen disseminated across the Spanish empire.¹⁸⁹ Beatriz Sánchez compiled a catalogue of the pieces preserved in Mexico.¹⁹⁰ As in the case of ceramics, laquerware, and furniture, the ivory statues from the Philippines are good examples of aesthetic syncretism that combine, according to Sánchez, New Spanish, Spanish, and Flemish motifs with a “tratamiento muy chino que se hace patente en el trabajo de nubes, telas, fajas, moños y otros diversos elementos.”¹⁹¹ Asian ivory statues also inspired local artist. In 1696 a New Spanish artist called Diego de Reinoso produced a faux ivory sculpture of Saint Dominic with a dog that resembles a *Fu dog*, or Chinese guardian lion.¹⁹² Jesuit chronicler Miguel del Barco (1706-1790) wrote that indios in Baja California offered one of the missions “un caudelero [*sic*] en figura de un

¹⁸⁵ Barbara Voss, “‘Poor people in silk shirts’: Dress and ethnogenesis in Spanish-colonial San Francisco”, *Journal of Social Archaeology* 8, 3 (2008): 418.

¹⁸⁶ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 15; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos en la Nueva España”, 172-173. The gates were made by a Chinese artisan called Quiauló Sangley.

¹⁸⁷ See Sanabraís, “The Biombo or Folding Screen”, 81.

¹⁸⁸ Clara Bergellini, “Asia at the Spanish Missions of Northern New Spain,” in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 191-199.

¹⁸⁹ Marjorie Trusted, “Propaganda and Luxury: Small-Scale Baroque Sculptures in Viceregal America and the Philippines”, in *Asia and Spanish America*, eds. Pierce and Otsuka, 153.

¹⁹⁰ Beatriz Sánchez Navarro, *Marfiles cristianos del Oriente en México* (Mexico: Fomento Cultural Banamex A.C., 1986).

¹⁹¹ Sánchez Navarro, *Marfiles cristianos*, 93.

¹⁹² See reproduction and discussion in Trusted, “Propaganda and Luxury”, 157.

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pequeño perro que, sobre su espalda, lleva el cubo para la vela: especie de candeleros que llevan los Filipinos a Acapulco.”¹⁹³ Archaeologists have located a bronze figure of a *Fu dog* in the wreck of a Manila Galleon found off the coast of Baja California.¹⁹⁴ Del Barco’s testimony and this finding are evidence that images of *Fu dogs* were imported on the transpacific galleons, perhaps in large quantities, and thus artisans in New Spain had access to this particular model.

Other manifestations of the cultural influence of the Manila Galleon are customs and traditions visible in Mexico today, most likely introduced through this trade route. Although it is impossible to connect these traditions to an Asian place of origin with absolute certainty, in the following and last section of this chapter I will briefly review the hypotheses that have been proposed concerning this issue.

1.4 Immaterial aspects of the cultural impact of the Manila Galleon in New Spain

Beyond the realm of aesthetics in prized artifacts, the Manila Galleon had repercussions in the evolution of Mexico’s immaterial heritage. One of the main aims of this thesis is to underscore the importance of forms of cultural exchange other than the well-studied repercussions discussed in the previous sections of this chapter. Chief among these exchanges is the presence of Asia and Asian migration in literature, analyzed in-length in chapter six. Additionally, despite having experimented a process of acculturation, the *chinos* that landed in Acapulco brought with them their culture, religious background, language, culinary preferences, technical expertise, that left a cultural imprint that can still be perceived. This section briefly discusses how Asian migration influenced the gastronomy, customs, and folklore of New Spain.

¹⁹³ Miguel del Barco, *Historia natural y crónica de la Antigua California*, ed. Miguel León Portilla (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1988, originally published in 1973), 252-253.

¹⁹⁴ Roberto Junco, “The Archaeology of Manila Galleons”, *The Museum of Underwater Archaeology Collection* (Online Museum of Underwater Archaeology, University of Rhode Island, 2011), 5, accessed 14/02/2014, <http://www.themua.org/collections/files/original/61b274c68e00272c5e50f0af53f5b140.pdf>.

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Filipino immigrants introduced certain culinary habits. According to Mercene, “Filipinos [...] imparted their know-how in making *ceviche* (seafood *kinilaw*) and other unique ways of broiling fish and shrimps.”¹⁹⁵ He also points out that mangos were introduced from the Philippines.¹⁹⁶ In Mexico today a variety of mango is known as “mango Manila.” It is possible Filipinos introduced *Tlatlanquaye*, a medicinal plant, to Mexico from the Philippines.¹⁹⁷ However, their most notable contribution was the introduction of and expertise with coconut palm trees.

Several scholars have shown that coconut palm trees and the products derived from them were introduced after 1500 to the New Spanish Pacific coastal region.¹⁹⁸ María Fernanda García de los Arcos argues that the constant journeys of the Manila Galleon facilitated the introduction of the technique of extraction of *tuba*, a refreshing beverage made from coconuts, which according to her, “se [...] vende aún en Acapulco y en Colima.”¹⁹⁹ Without providing a reference, Floro Mercene pinpoints the precise moment of introduction of the *tuba* into New Spain to a single instance in 1618, when “all but one of the seventy-five Filipino crew members of the galleon *Espíritu Santo* abandoned their ship [and] they were then asked by the local Indians to teach them how to make *tuba*.”²⁰⁰ The fermentation of *tuba* yields *vino de cocos*, an alcoholic beverage that became widely consumed throughout the Pacific coastal region. Seijas cites a source stating that the “‘natives of New Spain [...] a race inclined to drink and intoxication’ much preferred ‘the wine made by the Filipinos’ [...] over Spanish wine.”²⁰¹ Déborah Oropeza showed that Asian immigrants were involved in the production of *vino de cocos*, both as

¹⁹⁵ Floro Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 10.

¹⁹⁶ Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 10.

¹⁹⁷ Agustín de Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano: descripción breve de los sucesos e jemplares, históricos, políticos, militares y religiosos del Nuevo Mundo Occidental de las Indias*, Tomo I, Cap. XI (Mexico: Imprenta de I. Escalante, 1870), 170.

¹⁹⁸ An early article on the matter is Henry J. Bruman, “Early Coconut Culture in Western Mexico”, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 25, 2 (1945).

¹⁹⁹ García de los Arcos, “Grupos étnicos”, 61.

²⁰⁰ Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 9-10. Seijas cites the same incident but does not claim it was the exact moment *tuba* was introduced to New Spain. Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 97.

²⁰¹ Sebastián de Pineda, “Relation regarding Philippine Ships and Shipbuilding”, cited in Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 97.

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slaves in the coconut plantations and as planters themselves.²⁰² Paulina Machuca revisits this issue and argues that the production and consumption of *vino de cocos* influenced the evolution of how indios chinos interacted with New Spanish institutions.²⁰³ These researchers also showed that this product was a source of conflict with other groups, as officials tried to control the revenues generated from this activity.

Coconut palm trees were also used in construction. Filipino immigrants are credited with introducing a building technique using coconut fronds known as *palapa*. This technique was adopted in New Spain to build houses. As scholars such as Oropeza and Mercene show, “the Mexican term for a beach hut is *palapa*, which is the Filipino word for coconut fronds.”²⁰⁴ Oropeza argues that coconut fibers were also used for caulking ships to make them watertight, and describes evidence that shows that a type of large raft typical of the Philippines known as *barangay* was used in Acapulco in 1595.²⁰⁵ Floro Mercene asserts that the Mexican men’s shirt known as *guayabera* is said to have originated from the *barong Tagalog*, a roughly equivalent Filipino piece of clothing made of pineapple fibers.²⁰⁶ However, since the *guayabera* is typical of areas on the Atlantic coast of Mexico, such as Yucatán or Veracruz, it is likely that it was introduced from a shirt in Cuba—quite possibly as late as the nineteenth century—which itself may have drawn inspiration from the *barong Tagalog*.

There are other possible Asian contributions to Spanish American culture in the realm of leisure. Their Asian origin is much harder to demonstrate, as there are virtually no sources to clear doubts surrounding this issue. Oropeza notes how opinion is divided between those who think cockfighting was introduced to Mexico from Europe, and those who think this tradition came from Asia, including Jesuit

²⁰² Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 86-95.

²⁰³ Machuca, “El alcalde de los chinos”.

²⁰⁴ Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 10; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 158.

²⁰⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 158.

²⁰⁶ Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 126-127.

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historian Andrés Cavo. Oropeza cites Jesuit Pedro de Murillo's observations of the popularity of cockfighting in the Philippines in the mid-eighteenth century.²⁰⁷

Another traditional leisure activity that may have originated in Asia is the one performed by the so-called "pajaritos de la suerte" or fortune telling birds shown in picture 1.5.²⁰⁸ This is a fortune-telling method common in parks, markets, and squares throughout Mexico by which a caged bird is trained to randomly pick out a card from a drawer containing the customer's fortune. Apart from Mexico, these "oracle birds" can be found in other countries such as Brazil. However, it is likely that its existence in countries in Asia predates its existence elsewhere. In Japan, a trick known as *omikuji* is almost identical except in that it is generally performed in a religious setting.²⁰⁹ In China this trick is called *niaogua*, or bird hexagram, or prediction. This tradition was observed in the 1840s by a European observer in Fujian who claimed that "females and the lower classes of the populace largely patronize this kind of fortune teller."²¹⁰ It seems safe to assume that this tradition existed in Fujian long before this observation.

²⁰⁷ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 174. Mercene also asserts cockfighting arrived in Mexico from the Philippines in Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 126.

²⁰⁸ I presented an early version of this argument in Rubén Carrillo, "Birds and People. An outline of chinos in Mexico (1565-1700)", *Entremons: UPF Journal of World History* 1 (2011): 1-19.

²⁰⁹ Miyake Hitoshi, "Folk Religion", in *Religion in Japanese Culture. Where Living Traditions Meet a Changing World*, eds. Noriyoshi Tamaru and David Reid (Tokyo, New York and London: Kodansha International, 1996), 79-96.

²¹⁰ Richard J. Smith, *Fortune-Tellers and Philosophers: Divination in Traditional Chinese Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 244.

Picture 1.5 *Pajarito de la suerte* in Mexico City



A fortune telling bird in Mexico City picks a card containing a fortune. Photo by Rubén Carrillo Fabila.

The practice of this divination method in Fujian facilitates the possibility that it was introduced to the Americas on the Manila Galleon. Since Fujian was the area most closely associated with Manila, I feel confident to hypothesize that Chinese immigrants introduced this tradition to Manila, as there is evidence that the Chinese introduced birds to the Philippines. According to Antonio de Morga, the Chinese junks that sailed periodically to Manila carried “some caged birds, some of which talk, others sing, and they make them do a thousand tricks,” along with textile, ceramic, and other luxury imports.²¹¹ It is possible the fortune-telling gimmick was in those birds’ repertoire. From Manila some of these animals could have been introduced to New Spain. Different species of birds crossed the Pacific in each direction. Roderirich Ptak argued that there were types of birds described in eighteenth-century texts about aviculture in Macau that seem to have come from the Americas. Ptak cites references to several types of exotic, colorful birds,

²¹¹ “Pájaros enjaulados, que algunos hablan, y otros cantan, y les hacen hacer cien mil juguetes”, in Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007, originally published in 1609), 217.

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turkeys, and possibly even the large greater rhea (*Rhea americana*).²¹² Chronicler Agustín de Vetancurt described his encounter in New Spain with a type of small Filipino bird known as “manucodiata,” and wrote “algunos he tenindo en mi poder que traen de Filipinas,” suggesting their importation was a common occurrence.²¹³ Although these sources do not mention birds trained to perform the fortune-telling trick, they show that birds did cross the Pacific in both directions.

A comparison between Asian, Mesoamerican, and European divination techniques lends further support to an Asian origin hypothesis for the Mexican fortune-telling bird. First, there is no indication of a pre-Hispanic or Spanish avian divination tradition. For example, the legend of how Tezcatlipoca, a central deity in Aztec religion, tricked Quetzalcoatl, patron god of learning and knowledge, using a mirror, has been related to scrying, the prediction of future events through the use of reflecting objects, such as a crystal ball. Scrying it seems, was the most widespread divinatory practice in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica.²¹⁴ As for Europe, there are Biblical prohibitions to performing any kind of divinatory practices, in Deuteronomy 18:10-12 or Leviticus 19:26. However, divination was practiced despite them, but once again the most prevalent method was scrying. Second, this tradition also lacks antecedents in European divinatory practices. The use of bird flight patterns for divination was common practice in Ancient Greece and Rome, and there was also the practice of alectryomancy, a form of divination in which a cock would eat corn from the ground and reveal a pattern of letters previously laid on the ground.²¹⁵ This is, however, very different from the oracle birds, which renders a complete message instead of a random series of letters to be interpreted. By contrast, Asian divination practices have long relied on writing. In fact, the emergence of writing in China itself has been associated to divination as some of

²¹² Roderich Ptak, *Birds and Beasts in Chinese Texts and Trade* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2011), 85, 95, 102.

²¹³ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, 197-198.

²¹⁴ Mary Ellen Miller and Karl A. Taube, *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya: An Illustrated Dictionary of Mesoamerican Religion* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993).

²¹⁵ Darin Hayton, “Forms of Divination in Early Modern Europe” (2013), accessed 02/09/2013, <http://dhayton.haverford.edu/blog/2013/02/12/forms-of-divination-in-early-modern-europe/>.

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the earliest forms of Chinese characters have been found written on the so-called “oracle bones,” which are dated between 1400 and 1050 BCE.²¹⁶ Asian immigrants may have introduced the oracle birds as part of their folk religious practices, which later took root. Thus Asia contributed, albeit in this small way, to the development of folklore in the Americas through a custom still visible and popular to this day.

²¹⁶ Rowan K. Flad, “Divination and Power: A Multiregional View of the Development of Oracle Bone Divination in Early China”, *Current Anthropology* 49, 3 (2008): 403-437; Smith, *Fortune-Tellers*, 14-18.

CHAPTER 2

ASIANS, CHINOS, AND INDIOS CHINOS IN NEW SPAIN (1540-1700)

In this chapter I develop a survey of the history of Asian migration in New Spain as a whole in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most cases are associated with places along the Pacific coast, on the road from Acapulco to Mexico City, and in the viceregal capital itself. Tatiana Seijas, Déborah Oropeza, Edward Slack, and Paulina Machuca have previously studied these areas, and I approach these regions in order to contest or lend support to the arguments developed by these scholars. This chapter is necessary in order to properly frame my following discussions on the chino group in the city of Puebla, and the presence of Asia and Asians in New Spanish literature. I incorporate new sources from parochial records in Mexico City to discuss the chino godparenthood networks in the mid-seventeenth century. I argue that these sources suggest that the chinos formed enduring social bonds that configured a distinguishable chino commonality.

I rely on parochial, notarial, and various other sources taken primarily from the AGN in Mexico City, in addition to extensive databases compiled by Oropeza, Seijas, and Slack. The majority of the records are marriage and vendor licenses, permits, inquisitorial procedures, and chronicles, to which I incorporate baptismal registries from the parish of the cathedral of Mexico. These are mostly short administrative documents that rarely provide more than the classification of a person as chino or indio chino, and seldom describe the specific provenance of

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individuals. These sources, however, do illustrate many aspects of the lives of the Asian immigrants, in particular, the way they constructed their networks, their access to privileges and occupations, and the obstacles they faced when dealing with colonial authorities.

In this chapter, I first describe some of the few instances of Asian migration before the establishment of the Manila Galleon. Then I follow the flow of immigrants from Acapulco to other places in New Spain to analyze their patterns of settlement, occupation, and marriage. In the last section I deal with the strategies Asians, indios chinos, and chinos developed to navigate New Spanish society. I consider the various ways these immigrants managed to overcome the hurdles imposed on them by the groups already established in the viceroyalty. This is also the point where I have the most discrepancies with previous scholars. I counter Seijas' argument that chinos were unable to develop their own community by analyzing their relationships through institutions such as guilds, religious brotherhoods (*cofradías*), and godparenthood. To analyze the networks of ritual kinship I compile a database of new materials from the baptismal records of the Mexico City cathedral from 1637-1642. This period is representative because it corresponds to the height of Asian migration in New Spain. While the results from this database cannot be extrapolated to the rest of the period of Asian migration, it is a good starting point to reconstruct the patterns of ritual kinship of the Asian Diaspora in Mexico City in future investigations. I also briefly cover another topic for future research: the presence of Asian immigrants in other parts of the Spanish empire in the Americas. I argue that better knowledge of those groups can lead to a better understanding of the Asian Diaspora as a whole.

2.1 The establishment of the Asian Diaspora in New Spain (1540-1620)

A very small number of Asians arrived in Mesoamerica before the establishment of the Manila Galleon via the Atlantic. Asians slaves were taken to the Iberian Peninsula before the establishment of the trade route, and sometimes their masters took them to the Americas. The first bishop of Mexico, Juan de Zumárraga, owned a slave from Calicut, called Juan Núñez, who worked for him as a cook and

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arrived in New Spain some time before 1540.¹ Antonio de Mendoza, first viceroy of New Spain, owned a slave from “la India de Portugal” in 1551.² Survivors of the Loyasa expedition took “Chino” slaves to Mexico that were later transported to Peru and later, Seville.³ According to Oropeza, Pedro Pacheco, a member of the Villalobos expedition, “llevó consigo un ‘señor indio’ del archipiélago [filipino] a España, pasando posteriormente ambos a la Nueva España.”⁴ Juan Gil argues that another member of that expedition, Íñigo Ortiz de Retes, “se hizo acompañar de un ‘indio natural de la China,’ con el que regresó [...] a Nueva España.”⁵

But it was only after the establishment of the Manila Galleon that immigration from Asia to the Americas began in earnest. There are many estimates as to how many Asians arrived on the Manila Galleon. As stated in the introduction, there are considerable discrepancies regarding the total number of immigrants. Floro Mercene argues for a higher number stating that only the Filipinos amounted to about 60.000; Jonathan Israel claims that 6.000 Asian slaves arrived every decade before 1650; which gives a total of 48.000.⁶ Slack gives an estimate between 40.000 and 100.000 Asian arrivals between 1565 and 1815 would be “within the bounds of probability.”⁷ Oropeza provides a much more conservative estimates of 7.200 chinos or indios chinos entering central New Spain between 1565 and 1700, out of which, she assesses, 4.500 and 5.000, 20% female, never returned to the Philippines.⁸ Seijas argues “that 300 slaves entered [Acapulco] each year off-registry” is likely exaggerated and instead thinks there were only approximately 60 slaves on each ship, concluding that between 1565 and 1700 at least 8.100 Asian slaves were transported to New Spain.⁹ Taking into account these estimates, and without having worked directly with sources from Acapulco, my own

¹ García Icazbalceta, *Fray Juan de Zumárraga*, 221.

² Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 13.

³ Iwasaki, *Extremo Oriente y el Perú*, 292.

⁴ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 13-14.

⁵ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 231.

⁶ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 7, n. 1. Slack argues that Guillermo Tovar estimates 40000 to 50000 Asian immigrants between 1600 and 1800, but provides no reference.

⁷ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 6-8.

⁸ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 78-79, 186.

⁹ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in New Spain*, 83-84.

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calculation is that at least between 10.000 and 20.000 Asians migrated to New Spain between 1565 and 1815.

Except for Slack's estimate, all these figures seem rather small when compared to the scale of African forced migration during the same period and to the number of Amerindians and people of European descent already living in the viceroyalty.¹⁰ However, this was certainly not the smallest migratory inflow to the western hemisphere. According to several estimates, the number of Asians that migrated to New Spain between 1565 and 1800 is similar to, or even larger than the number of Europeans that migrated to New England and New France during the seventeenth century. Felipe Fernández-Armesto argues that "only twenty-one thousand [immigrants] came [to New England] in the whole seventeenth century, [...] with only a third of that total arriving after 1640," and that "New France received fewer than 4.000 immigrants in the second-half of the seventeenth century."¹¹ Considering this comparative perspective, it cannot be argued that Asian migration to New Spain was a phenomenon so small as to be considered undeserving of study.

Many of those who arrived on this first wave of Asian migration to New Spain settled in the area surrounding Acapulco and along the Pacific coast of Mexico. Others settled in the hamlets and villages on the road inland to Mexico City, in the vice-regal capital itself and in the city of Puebla de los Ángeles. The Asians even reached areas and urban centers further inland, such as Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas, while others settled in areas along the Atlantic coast, particularly in the port city of Veracruz. There are even references to Asian immigrants in far-off Mérida, Yucatán.

Asians played a key role in the navigation of the Manila Galleon itself, contributing to building the ships, preparing the supplies it needed for its journey from Manila

¹⁰ See note 8 in the introduction.

¹¹ Fernández-Armesto, *The Americas*, 102.

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to Acapulco, and as sailors and cabin boys of the ships.¹² Andrew Peterson located a Manila Galleon crew manifest from 1755, which “listed 310 Philippine-born [mostly from Cavite] crewmen out of a total of 370 (84%).”¹³ Even if their numbers were smaller in earlier periods, their arrival contributed to make Acapulco into the first stable entryway to the Americas of information, people, ideas and material culture from Asia, transforming it into a location of paramount importance in the history of globalization. Asians were involved in the activities surrounding the galleon in Acapulco. As in Cavite and Manila, they became grocers, carpenters, blacksmiths, sawyers, woodcutters, and shipbuilders.¹⁴ Gil argues that the sacristan of the church in Acapulco, was a chino called Juan Bautista.¹⁵ Some chinos settled in the nearby town of Coyuca.¹⁶ Maps of Acapulco extant from the colonial period reflect the importance of the connection of this community with Asia, at least in the eyes of the cartographers who made them. The tree to which vessels were tied to after their transpacific voyage is featured prominently in a 1730 map of the port city.¹⁷ A hint to the presence of Asian sailors and immigrants is the naming of present-day “la Roqueta”—the islet at the entrance to Acapulco bay—as “isla de los chinos.”¹⁸

This cosmopolitanism was not always noticeable, for Acapulco was inhabited by only a very few people during most of the year. As stated in chapter one, Andrés de Urdaneta pressed to choose Acapulco above other ports on the Pacific, arguing it had greater capacity, and offered more safety. However, the harbor’s location offered little space between the coast and the mountains of the Sierra Madre del Sur, while its weather was suffocating, and tropical diseases never ceased to

¹² Peterson, “What Really Made the World Go Around?”. Oropeza compiled an extensive database of chino crewmembers in the Manila Galleon using materials from the *caja real de Acapulco*, in Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 197-202.

¹³ Peterson, “What Really Made the World Go Around?”, 63.

¹⁴ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 63. Her database of chinos in Acapulco is available in Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 203-250. See also Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 254-255.

¹⁵ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 254.

¹⁶ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 150; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 101.

¹⁷ AGI, MP-México, 125 (1730).

¹⁸ AGI, MP-México, 106.

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plague it. Thus the population of Acapulco never became very large and it was only during the *ferias* that the port became a busy locale.

The wealth exchanged at these *ferias* made Acapulco a target. After achieving and consolidating their independence, in 1598 and 1648 respectively, the Dutch became a growing threat to Spanish hegemony throughout the globe. A Dutch squadron threatened Acapulco in 1615, and in the aftermath viceroy Marqués de Guadalcázar ordered the construction of the fort San Diego, which was completed in 1617.¹⁹ Chinos were employed in the construction of this fortress and they were later conscripted as militiamen to protect it.²⁰ Edward Slack located a petition of a gunpowder-maker from Macao to enter New Spain in 1610, and argues that Asian militias “[were] essential to the military security of both the Philippines and New Spain.”²¹

In the Acapulco hinterland along the coastal region, as mentioned in chapter one, the presence of these Asians occurred in unison to the spread of plantations of another arrival from Asia: coconut palm trees. Many chinos—both slave and free—worked the plantations of these trees, which eventually supplanted the traditional cacao economy. At least one of the plantations belonged to a Filipino immigrant in 1619.²² Oropeza compiled a database of 120 chinos including 21 from Manila, Cebu, Pampanga, Cagayan, Zambales, and other places in the Philippines, 5 from India, 2 from Terrenate, and 2 from Papua.²³ Gil discusses details about Domingo de Villalobos, a chino trader and muleteer in the Colima region who sold Asian and Mexican textiles, as well as cacao, salt, maize, cinnamon, and wax, and travelled armed with an arquebus, and a sword and dagger.²⁴ Villalobos was a brother of the

¹⁹ David F. Marley, “Acapulco”, in *Historic cities of the Americas: an illustrated encyclopedia. Volume 1: The Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 211-212.

²⁰ Slack, “The Chinos in New Spain”, 40.

²¹ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 8-9.

²² Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 94-95.

²³ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 98.

²⁴ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 256-264.

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cofradía de las Ánimas in Mexico City, and upon his death, he left the brotherhood four pack animals in inheritance.²⁵

From Acapulco, chino immigrants travelled the difficult route inland to settle in the central highlands of New Spain. According to Schurz, this so-called “China Road” passed through a very difficult terrain and there were virtually no settlements or inns for long stretches of the route.²⁶ Schurz describes how “conditions of travel were always very primitive, [...] accommodations were few and discomforts were manifold.”²⁷ One of the many chinos that travelled the “China Road” to Mexico City was Alonso Cortés de Siles, the chino from Cebu whose story started this thesis. His 1688 marriage record mentions his sojourn in the towns of Chilpancingo and Taxco, and his journey to Mexico City to work as a barber.²⁸ Oropeza compiled a database of 343 Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Mexico City.²⁹ Tatiana Seijas located 598 chino slaves in all of New Spain, 182 of whom were chino slaves in the viceregal capital.³⁰ It seems clear that their number never rose over 1% of the total population of Mexico City, as was the case in Puebla. As further detailed below, chino barbers were an important segment of the Asian inhabitants of Mexico City and other towns, as were the chino merchants, servants, and slaves.

2.2 Legal status, occupation, and settlement patterns

Chinos navigated a legal system that was largely ambiguous to them. Overall chinos were viewed as roughly equivalent to indios. This allowed chinos to live among and mix with indios, on occasion filling positions of power, such as the position of *topile* or *gobernador de indios*, leading, at lead on one occasion to frictions and tensions between indios and chinos, as further discussed in section 2.4. Throughout the seventeenth century, however, chinos were increasingly associated with negros and mulatos, partly as a result of interethnic marriages, but

²⁵ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 260.

²⁶ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 310-311.

²⁷ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 311.

²⁸ AGN, Inquisición, Inquisición 61, vol. 673, exp. 37 (1688).

²⁹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 150.

³⁰ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 110, n. 3.

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primarily due to the association of chino slaves with Afro-descendants in bondage. Seijas showed how this ambiguity also permeated the relations of chinos with the Church. She argues that the Inquisition frequently refrained from processing chino offenders, because the tribunal considered them equivalent to indios, and indios were outside the jurisdiction of the Inquisition.³¹ Seijas argues that indios and chinos fell under the jurisdiction of the episcopal court known as *Provisorato de la inquisición ordinaria de indios y chinos*.³² Moreover, Seijas suggests that the church played an important role in legally associating chinos and indios, asserting that “during the course of the seventeenth century, the church went from treating chinos as slaves to identifying them as Indians.”³³ I discuss the specific issue of chino slavery in the following section. As for free chinos, the following cases illustrate the ambiguity that characterized the relationship between chinos, the authorities, and other ethnic groups in New Spain, as evidence by their settlement and occupational patterns.

Asian immigrants became merchants in New Spain since the early years of the transpacific connection. Juan González de Mendoza claimed that sometime in 1585 greed compelled Chinese merchants to go to México, bringing “cosas muy curiosas” to trade, and that they moved on until they reached Spain “y aun otros Reinos más remotos.”³⁴ This is one of the earliest mentions of Chinese migration to New Spain altogether. As mentioned in chapter 1, Déborah Oropeza located a group of ten Asian merchants registered entering Acapulco between 1592 and 1595.³⁵

³¹ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 189-203.

³² Seijas reproduces a 1769 edict from this tribunal that read: “If anyone knows an indian born in this archbishopric, or from the Philippine Islands, who are vulgarly called chinos, who has committed an offense against our Holy Faith, he must be denounced to the court or the parish priest.” AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1037, exp. 6, f. 248 (1769), translation in Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 203.

³³ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 175.

³⁴ González de Mendoza, *Historia del Gran Reino de la China*, 102. Mendoza wrote: “Ya la codicia los ha traído hasta México, donde llegaron el año pasado [15]85 mercaderes chinos con cosas muy curiosas y no pararon hasta llegar a España y aún a otros Reinos más remotos.”

³⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 75.

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One of these merchants, Tomás Pangasinan, paid duties for the “ropa de china” he brought on the galleon *San Pedro* in 1594.³⁶ Another early Asian immigrant was Juan Alonso, an indio chino muleteer living in the town of Sultepec in present-day state of Mexico, who in 1597 informed the authorities of his right to own twenty mules. He argued that even though the law barred indios from owning more than six mules, this regulation did not apply to him “porque no enbargarse que es yndio lo es chino y no tiene tierras que senbrar ni obligasion de hazer sementera.” Alonso asked permission to keep his mules “que quiere menester para sus granjerías.”³⁷ Alonso may be the same individual who, also in 1597, requested the authorities to ride on horseback and carry a sword. Indios were forbidden to carry swords. When Alonso was granted his request, the judge determined that “Juan Alonso indio chino haze su derecho particular por razón de no ser natural.”³⁸ Asian immigrants were taking advantage of a legal vacuum that allowed them to differentiate themselves from natives of Mesoamerica.

Juan Alonso’s case is evidence of the ambiguous place Asian immigrants had in New Spanish society.³⁹ In theory, as Slack argues, “Asians were [...] were equal to indios in the realm of jurisprudence.”⁴⁰ They were supposed to be treated the same as indigenous people in that they were not required to pay the *alcabala* sales tax, and they were subject to the *provisor* and *vicario general de indios y chinos*. However, in other instances, chinos were given different prerogatives, or as in the Juan Alonso’s case they seized them themselves. Oropeza argues that they did not attend mass at indio parishes, and that there was a proposition to create a separate chino barrio “por los inconvenientes que suelen resultar de vivir mezclados con los indios naturales.”⁴¹ To make matters blurrier, chinos were gradually also legislated upon along with mestizos, mulatos, and negros. Therefore they navigated a complicated legal environment that seems to have functioned almost on a case-by-case basis. Among the Spanish authorities, as Seijas argues, there was much:

³⁶ AGN, Real Hacienda, Archivo Histórico de Hacienda 8, vol. 1291, exp. 228, ff. 234vta (1594).

³⁷ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 4, vol. 6, exp. 1200 (1597).

³⁸ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 4, vol. 6, exp. 1202 (1597).

³⁹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 138.

⁴⁰ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 64.

⁴¹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 119.

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Confusion regarding the legal status of all chinos. Free natives from the Spanish Philippines thus found themselves in an ambiguous position in Mexico, for colonial administrators found it difficult to conceptualize indigenous vassalage as it pertained to people who were born in Asia. Confused officials often questioned these men's legal standing and challenged their claims to Indian privileges. Often taken for slaves, free natives of the Philippines struggled to prove their identity as Indians, constantly having to affirm their free status.⁴²

In regard to chino slaves, Seijas' chief argument is that they used this ambiguity to their advantage in order to integrate themselves into the indio group and attain their freedom.⁴³ She argues that they were able to implement this strategy successfully because, "in time, chinos came to be treated under the law as Indians [...] and became indigenous vassals of the Spanish crown after 1672."⁴⁴ Indeed many chino slaves managed, as Seijas shows, to free themselves and even prosper in New Spain. However, I partially disagree with the idea that Asians became "Indianized" in the end. As I will further elaborate in chapter 5, chinos were also increasingly associated in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century with people of African descent in a process that Slack calls "the 'Africanization' of the Asian."⁴⁵ Furthermore, chino slavery endured for some time even after it was abolished in 1672. The process of enforcement of the ruling against chino slavery took several decades. Clearly, the precise nature of the place of Asians in terms of their legal situation is a complex matter that warrants further exploration. It seems clear, however, that it changed over time and affected people from different social backgrounds in different ways, as evidenced in the following examples.

A few privileged chinos did enjoy important prerogatives most indios were barred from, most notably the right to carry sword and dagger. This phenomenon is particularly relevant. Starting in the Renaissance, wearing a sword became a social

⁴² Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 145.

⁴³ I further discuss chino slavery in the section 2.3.

⁴⁴ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 1.

⁴⁵ Slack, "The Chinos in New Spain", 64-65.

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statement. With a sword an individual called attention onto himself and could claim upward social mobility, as well as ancestry from a noble caste. To show off a sword was a symbol of both social status and identity.⁴⁶ One of the Japanese ambassadors of 1614, called Juan de la Barranca, who served as a soldier in Veracruz was rewarded with the right for him and his sons “para poder traer espada y daga” and to be exempt from tribute.⁴⁷ However, it seems that some chinos had a hard time getting this privilege granted. Chinos, mostly of Filipino origin, and some with a background in the wars against the sultanate of Mindanao in the Philippines, had to demand the reinstating of their right to bear arms. One of them argued that his people had assisted the Spaniards to quell the sangley uprising in Manila.⁴⁸ Many chinos had to made petitions making the argument that their swords were meant for utilitarian purposes, and not for a symbol of distinction. They said it was something they needed to have, as they were traders in some remote areas in northern New Spain, and therefore, they required their swords for protection against brigands.⁴⁹

One of them, Don Balthazar de San Francisco, “chino natural de la ciudad de Manila”, initiated a legal process against a person who tried to deprive him of his sword in 1612. The authorities agreed with San Francisco, reaffirming the license “para que libremente pueda tener y traer para el ornato y defensa de su persona.”⁵⁰ Francisco de Lima “chino libre de nación bengala, dueño de requa, vecino de Querétaro” received confirmation of his license “para portar daga, espada y arcabuz” in 1653. In his petition Lima argued that he needed his weapons to defend himself from highwaymen and “indios levantados que cada dia hacen roos y atroces delitos.” The document states that Lima traded with the chichimecas and supplied the mines of Escanela, in present-day Pinal de Amoles, in the state of

⁴⁶ Angus Patterson, *Fashion and Armour in Renaissance Europe: Proud Lookes and Brave Attire* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2009), 28.

⁴⁷ AGN, Indios, vol. 24, exp. 21, f. 15 (1666).

⁴⁸ AGN, Indios, vol. 17, exp. 19bis, ff. 31v-32v (1654).

⁴⁹ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 11, vol. 19, exp. 172, ff. 90v – 91 (1651); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Indios, caja 6422, exp. 86 (1612); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 6032, exp. 107 (1653); AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 10, vol. 17, exp. 19 BIS, ff: 31v-32v (1654).

⁵⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Indios, caja 6422, exp. 86 (1612).

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Querétaro.⁵¹ Juan Tello de Guzmán, “chino libre,” was granted a license to carry sword and dagger in 1651 to protect himself “cuando saliere fuera de la ciudad de México a vender sus mercaderías y las que llevare de personas particulares.”⁵²

While Balthazar de San Francisco, Francisco de Lima, and Juan Tello de Guzmán made pragmatic arguments others were able to claim sword bearing as a right. Because they successfully ascertained this right, Pampangos seem to have been a privileged few among the chinos of New Spain. A Pampang veteran petitioned the authorities to impede cattle from entering his property in 1654. Juan Gerónimo was identified as a “principal de las islas Philipinas.” He lived in Acayucan in the present-day state of Veracruz, and declared he had served and served still “al rey nuestro señor a mi costa y [...] con armas y caballo” and that he was “soldado de batallón.”⁵³ In 1654 Marcos de Villanueva “indio principal y natural de la isla de Papangos en las Philipinas”, “vecino y casado con española,” appealed to his lineage and service as a captain. Villanueva claimed he was the son of the “gobernador [...] del pueblo y partido de Tay Bay” and that he had served as “capitán y cabo de trescientos infantes que en la dicha provincia de Pampangos condujo por él con ellos acudir al servicio de su majestad.” According to his testimony, when he migrated to central New Spain the viceroy recognized his services and granted him a license “para poder traer espada y daga con tiros y pretina.”⁵⁴ An oidor of the Audiencia who had served in the Philippines supported Villanueva’s case stating that the “nación de los pampangos” were among the most faithful servants to the crown, that they earned half of what the Spaniard soldiers were paid, and that they were given the same military privileges. He argued that the Pampangos served in the wars against the Dutch, the Muslims of Mindanao and Joló, and helped quell the rebellions of the Chinese in Manila.⁵⁵ Thus the privileges obtained by the Pampangos through military service in Asia-Pacific gave the

⁵¹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 6032, exp. 107 (1653). The “Minas de Escalena” are located in present-day Pinal de Amoles in the state of Querétaro, Mexico.

⁵² AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 11, vol. 19, exp. 172, ff: 90v - 91 (1651).

⁵³ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Indios, caja 4852, exp. 35 (1654).

⁵⁴ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 10, vol. 17, exp. 19bis, ff: 31v-32v (1654).

⁵⁵ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 10, vol. 17, exp. 19bis, ff: 31v-32v (1654).

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opportunity to members of their diaspora to display their social status in central New Spain.

In a manner very different from the cases above, chino artisans achieved notoriety by their skill in their craft. As mentioned in chapter one, Thomas Gage reported in 1648 that “the Indians, and the people of China that have been made Christians and every year come thither, have perfected the Spaniards” as goldsmiths.⁵⁶ This reputation may have provided them with some amount of recognition. Even though some Asians were able to defend their right to trade and make a living in colonial Mexico, there is evidence that others were harassed. Manuel Sánchez “filipino” received permission to buy “en los límites de esta ciudad [de México], gallinas y otras mercancías.”⁵⁷ In 1608, Marcos García, “chino natural de las islas Filipinas casado en esta ciudad y muy pobre,” requested protection from the authorities because according to him, “las veces que hay nueva de navíos de China, llevo al puerto [de Acapulco] algunas cosas a vender y comprar y los que tartan en el puerto me maltratan.”⁵⁸ In 1630, Juan Ramos, indio chino, who made a living selling “aguardiente de maguey,” also sought protection against the abuses of the authorities.⁵⁹ Juan Salvador, “chino,” requested a license to sell scrap metal “en la plaza desta ciudad [de México]” in 1632. The authorities warned he would be held responsible for any stolen items he sold, perhaps a sign of chinos being perceived or portrayed as deceitful.⁶⁰ There was also conflict among chinos themselves. For example, Lucas de Miranda, a “chino libre,” who repaired stockings got into a dispute over “pesos de oro y treinta arrobas de vino de maguey” with Domingo de Salazar, “chino,” in 1631.⁶¹

Next to the evidence about conflict, there are also sources that illustrate cooperation. Chino solidarity seems to have been related to occupational and marriage patterns, which are worth outlining in order to frame chino network and

⁵⁶ Gage, *A New Survey of the West-Indies*, 123; Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 11.

⁵⁷ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. 5, exp. 38, f. 7v (1606).

⁵⁸ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, cajas 3000-3999, caja 3724, exp. 22, productores: Marcos García, Chino Natural de las Islas Filipinas (1608).

⁵⁹ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 6, vol. 10, exp. 249, f. 142 (1630).

⁶⁰ AGN, Gobierno Virreinal, General de Parte 51, vol. 7, exp. 221, f. 147 (1632).

⁶¹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 5087, exp. 036 (1631).

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kinship building discussed in the last section of this chapter. Asian merchants sold a variety of products. As noted in chapter one, many chinos sold articles imported from Asia and Europe.⁶² Others dealt in very different products, for example, Gonzalo de Azcuña, “natural de la India de Portugal y libre de cautiverio” sold tobacco. His case is interesting because he also served as a witness in the marriage between two chinos, Pedro and Ana María in 1613.⁶³

It is precisely in marriage records where a substantial part of the extant information about chinos can be found. These records contain a large portion of the data regarding chino women. Isabel de Torres, “china,” documented her legitimate children in her last will and testament shortly before dying in 1615. They were Antonio de Torres “que actualmente está en las islas de Filipinas,” Felipa, Ana María, “y otros dos o tres.”⁶⁴ Conversely, the following examples are located in marriage records. In 1644, Inés de Miranda “china libre” married Nicolás de Pozas, mestizo.⁶⁵ María de la Cruz “china natural de la India de Portugal” married a black man in 1646.⁶⁶ Pascuala Flores, china, married a castizo in 1662, after her previous marriage to a chino was nullified due to impotence.⁶⁷ In 1669, Juan de Mansilla “negro” married María de la Encarnación “china libre de cautiverio criolla de Manila y vecina desta [...] ciudad [México] desde criatura.”⁶⁸ In 1679, Santiago Rodríguez “mulato esclavo de don Juan de Velasco” married Sabina de Salazar “china esclava de don Diego de Salazar.”⁶⁹ The same year, Isabel de Ortega, a free “china criolla” acknowledged her awareness of the condition as a slave of her betrothed, Miguel de Sandoval, and her obligation to “donde quiera que su amo lo vendiere o enviare tengo de ir en su compañía a cohabitar con el susodicho.” This marriage record contains a mention of another chino slave called

⁶² AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D35, exp. 254 (1644), f. 233v; AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, 3681, exp. 45 (1644); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 3456, exp. 21 (1650); AGN Real Audiencia, Indios, 11, vol. 19, exp. 172, ff. 90v - 91 (1651); AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, 9, vol. 16, exp. 28, ff. 27v-28v, (1651); AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, 11, vol. 19, exp. 336, ff. 190 - 190v, (1661).

⁶³ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Matrimonios, caja 6477, exp. 29 (1613).

⁶⁴ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Bienes Nacionales 14, vol. 644, exp. 18 (1615).

⁶⁵ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios, vol. 19, exp. 62 (1644).

⁶⁶ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios, vol. 166, exp. 29 (1646).

⁶⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Matrimonios, caja 6276, exp. 52 (1662).

⁶⁸ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 173, exp. 161 (1669).

⁶⁹ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 19, exp. 16, ff.: 83-84 (1679).

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Alejandro de Aranda.⁷⁰ Another china, Antonia de la Cruz, made a commitment similar to Isabel's when she married a mulato slave in 1683, declaring that she was "sabedora como el dicho Francisco Lopez esta esclavo y por serlo estoy en obligación de ir donde el dicho su amo lo enviare o vendiere para cohabitar con él."⁷¹ Phelipa del Castillo "china libre" served as witness in a 1682 marriage.⁷² Lastly, Melchora de los Reyes "china libre de captiverio [...] que es muger de Juan Fernández harriero con mulas propias" also served as witness in a marriage between two mestizos in 1698.⁷³ These last two examples are evidence of the ritual kinships established by chinos with other groups. There are also examples of how they formed ritual kinship and other types of bonds within the chino group, evident, for example, in the baptismal records analyzed later in this chapter.

Another indication of ties among the Asian population of Mexico City is that many of them lived in a part of the city denominated as *barrio* or quarter of San Juan, located at what was then the southwestern edge of the city. Juan Alonso, a chino scrap metal vendor, bought and sold gold and silver "de pasamanos" according to a 1639 license petition. The document also states he was "matriculado en la parte de San Juan."⁷⁴ Francisco García, a vendor of textiles imported from the Philippines, was granted his request. According to the document, Francisco was "matriculado en la parte de San Juan."⁷⁵ A license was granted to a chino slave called Juan Antonio to sell cacao and sugar on the streets "pagando las reales alcabalas" in 1651.⁷⁶ This is perhaps the same person as the indio chino merchant living in San Juan, Juan Antonio, declared in 1656 that he sold honey, sugar and maguey "y otras legumbres comestibles" to sustain himself and his family "y pagar los tributos." He was registered "with the *naturales* of San Juan in this city [Mexico]."⁷⁷ Antonio de la Cruz, the aforementioned vendor of "géneros de Castilla, China y de la tierra,"

⁷⁰ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 183, exp. 131 (1679). En este documento aparece un esclavo chino llamado Alejandro de Aranda.

⁷¹ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 160, exp. 86 (1683).

⁷² AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 81, exp. 124, ff: 307-308 (1682).

⁷³ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol.179, exp. 126, f. 2v (1698).

⁷⁴ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Industria y Comercio, caja 4638, exp. 17 (1639).

⁷⁵ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 9, vol. 16, exp. 28, ff: 27v-28v. (1651).

⁷⁶ Aguirre Beltrán, *El negro esclavo en Nueva España*, 61

⁷⁷ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, cont. 11, vol. 20, exp. 63, ff: 38-38v (1656).

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resided in the same *barrio*.⁷⁸ Antonio de la Cruz Camargo—perhaps the same person as in the 1661 document—“chino libre tributario de su magestad matriculado en la parte de San Juan de esta ciudad [de México]” petitioned a vendor’s license in 1665.⁷⁹ Lastly, Gonzalo Márquez de la Cruz received protection from a 1658 cédula to “trajinar y vender los géneros de la tierra referidos [...] por ser tributario matriculado en la cuenta de los naturales de la parte de San Juan de esta ciudad [de México].”⁸⁰

Edward Slack noted this concentration of Asians in San Juan in the sources he analyzed and concluded that “one could therefore theorize that San Juan acted somewhat as the ‘Chinese ghetto’ of Mexico City in the seventeenth century.”⁸¹ It is unclear whether they voluntarily settled there, or if they were somehow coerced. There is evidence dated less than two decades after the latest of the examples of chino residents in San Juan listed above that the authorities did plan to confine Asians into a specific neighborhood. According to Serge Gruzinski, the group of indios chinos, which included Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, Bengali, and Moluccas archipelago islanders, was so numerous, that in 1675 there were plans to install them in a separate quarter of the city.⁸² It is likely that the model for this quarter was the Manila Parían, which had been designed to keep sangleyes separated from native Filipinos. Oropeza argued that this initiative, which she dates in 1676, came as a result of the abolition of chino slavery and was motivated by the idea that it was inconvenient to allow chinos and indios to live together.⁸³

Interestingly, today San Juan is still home to Mexico City’s Chinatown, which is located along Dolores Street. This raises the question of whether this fact is a sign of continuity between the first and the second wave of Asian migration to Mexico. More research is needed to understand what happened in this area of the city between the end of the Manila Galleon trade in 1815 and the arrival of the Chinese

⁷⁸ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, cont. 11, vol. 19, exp. 336, ff: 190 - 190v (1661).

⁷⁹ AGN, Indios, 14, vol. 24, exp. 85, ff. 48v-49 (1665).

⁸⁰ AGN, Real Audiencia, Tierras 110, cont. 1247, vol. 2956, exp. 52 (1658).

⁸¹ Slack, “The Chinos in New Spain”, 43.

⁸² Gruzinski, *La Ciudad de México*, 356-357.

⁸³ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 119.

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in the 1880s.⁸⁴ Taking into account that many Chinese of the latter wave came from Fujian, it could be hypothesized that there were distant familial ties that compelled the newcomers to settle in San Juan, however, much genealogical research is needed to test this idea. It is also possible they were coerced to live in this area because the inhabitants of Mexico City retained a vague memory that this had been the traditional “barrio chino.” With this information at hand, it could be suggested that Mexico City’s is not only the oldest, as Slack first suggested, but also the longest-lived Chinatown in the Americas. However, in its first iteration it was not only populated by Chinese, but by chinos from all over Asia. Their numbers were perhaps quite small compared to the rest of the inhabitants of the area. Then as now, Mexico City’s “Chinatown” was small; closer to a *Chinastreet*.

Apart from San Juan, there were other places on the western rim of the city associated with chinos, as shown in figure 2.1. For example, Oropeza located information about dozens of marriages involving chinos at the parish of Santa Veracruz, less than a kilometer away from San Juan. Interestingly, this was the only parish except for the Sagrario at the cathedral where she located baptismal, marriage, or burial records pertaining chinos.⁸⁵ Oropeza suggests that a substantial number of chinos may have settled near the convent of Santa Clara, where they founded a *cofradía*, the *Archicofradía del Santo Cristo y Lavatorio de los chinos*.⁸⁶ Santa Clara is only one kilometer away from San Juan. A chino called Juan de Baeza lived on the “calle de los Mesones,” located only 700 meters away from San Juan.⁸⁷ Only a few chinos associated with a specific place in the city lived more than a kilometer away from San Juan.

One of them was Manuel Pardo, a “chino” married to Angelina de la Cruz “natural de las minas de Pachuca,” who owned “unas casas” in the barrio of Lagunilla, two and a half kilometers away from San Juan, on the western edge of the city. When they died some time before 1679 they left these houses to their six children, who

⁸⁴ See Introduction, note 9 for literature on nineteenth and twentieth-century Chinese migration in Mexico.

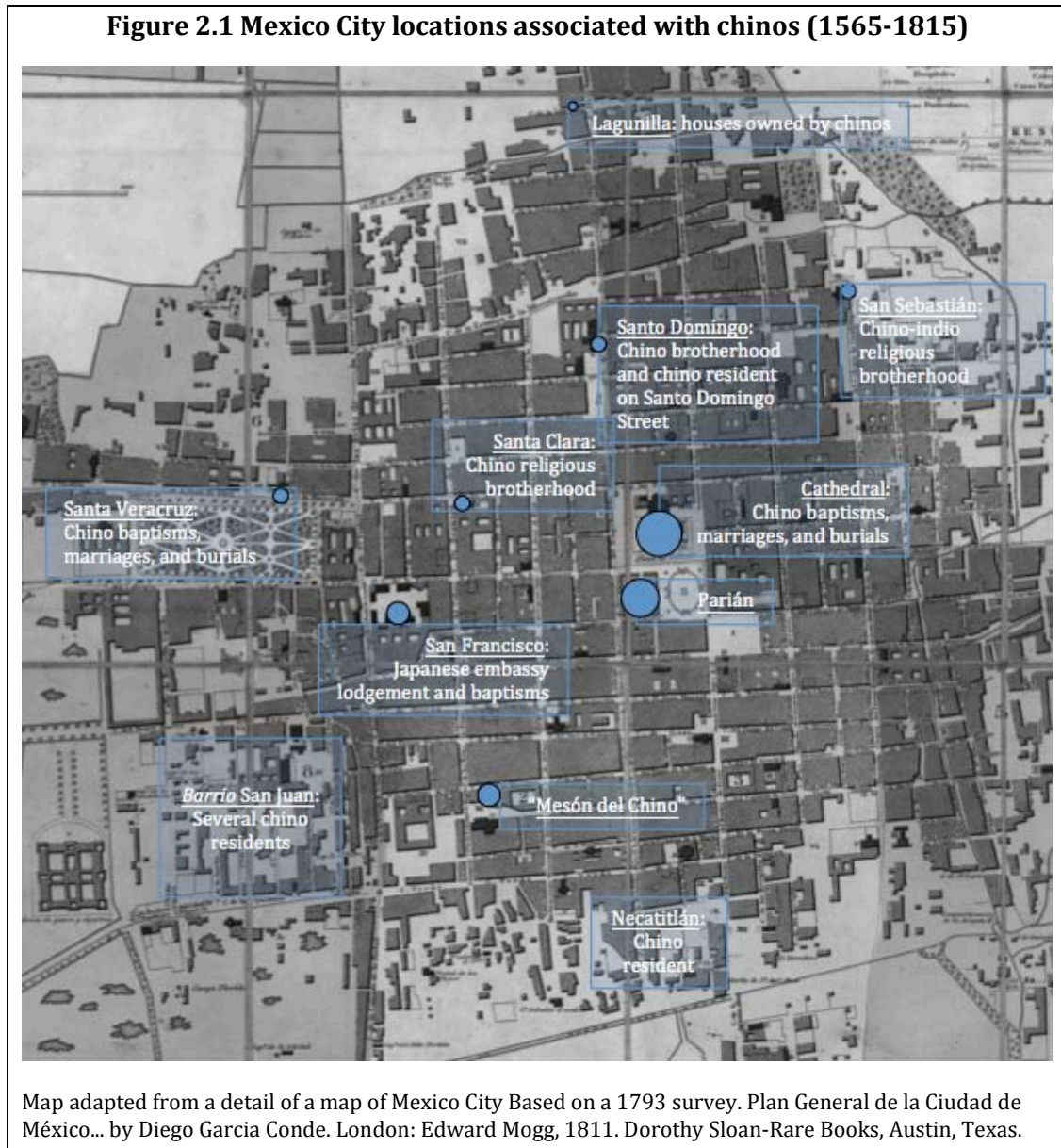
⁸⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 141.

⁸⁶ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 118, 172.

⁸⁷ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 118, 271.

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decided to sell them and divide the profits among them. They made this decision because the houses were “muy deterioradas y maltratadas por no habitarlas los susodichos ni tener con qué poderlas redificar.” They were sold for fifty pesos after being in public auction for thirty days.⁸⁸



Apart from a hypothetical chino barrio, there seems to have been a *barrio de los japones*; a place mentioned in the parochial records of Santa María la Redonda in

⁸⁸ AGN, Real Audiencia, Tierras 110, cont. 1093, vol. 2655, exp. 7 (1679). Pachuca is in present-day state of Hidalgo.

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1629.⁸⁹ It is hard to interpret what this separation meant. Some Japanese were often distinguished from *chinos*. According to Slack, “samurai converts were considered a more privileged subgroup of *chinos* in New Spain.”⁹⁰ It is not surprising that the members of the 1610 and 1614 Japanese embassies were shown honors as much could be gained from good relations with them. Their arrival was an anticipated affair. The commissary of the Inquisition in Acapulco informed his superiors in Mexico City when they landed, while the commissary in Veracruz informed of their return from Europe in 1616.⁹¹ As I will show when discussing the broader networks of godparenthood among Asians, they were assigned prestigious godparents from among the elite when baptized and confirmed in Mexico City. As with the previously mentioned case of 1614 ambassador Juan de la Barranca, Japanese who served as a soldier in Veracruz, was rewarded with the right to bear arms.⁹² Similarly, Francisco de Cárdenas, a Japanese soldier who lived in the port of Huatulco, in present-day state of Oaxaca, was granted such a license in 1644.⁹³ It is possible the Japanese were considered good fighters in New Spain, as they had this reputation in Asia-Pacific, where they were greatly valued as mercenaries by European and Asian sovereigns.⁹⁴

Thomas Calvo showed how, in Guadalajara, a group of Japanese immigrants achieved a remarkably high social status.⁹⁵ Being the seat of its own Audiencia, Guadalajara was the capital of the kingdom of Nueva Galicia, which administered territories on the West and Northwestern frontier of the viceroyalty. One of the earliest mentions of a Japanese in that area located by Calvo is a reference to a

⁸⁹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 119.

⁹⁰ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 50.

⁹¹ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 293, exp. 20, ff. 107-112, 115-128 (1614); AGN, Inquisición, vol. 302, exp. 7, fs. 1 (1614); AGN, Inquisición, vol. 312, exp. 39, ff. 187-188 (1616); Inquisición, vol. 312, exp. 49, fs. 251-254 (1616).

⁹² AGN, Indios, vol. 24, exp. 21, f. 15 (1666).

⁹³ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol 48, exp. 327, ff. 223-223v (1644).

⁹⁴ Stephen R. Turnbull, “The Japanese ‘Wild Geese’: The Recruitment, Roles and Reputation of Japanese Mercenaries in Southeast Asia, 1593-1688” (paper presented at the World History Association Symposium, Southeast Asia and World History, Pannastra University of Cambodia, Siem Reap Campus, January 2-4, 2012).

⁹⁵ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”. A more recent study of the same Japanese families is Melba Falck Reyes and Héctor Palacios, *El japonés que conquistó Guadalajara. La historia de Juan de Páez en la Guadalajara del siglo XVII* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, Biblioteca Pública del Estado de Jalisco Juan José Arreola, 2009).

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“japón” who settled in Ahuacatlán, in present-day state of Nayarit, sometime around 1620.⁹⁶ What is most remarkable about Calvo’s findings is the information about Japanese merchants in Guadalajara, in particular Luis de Encío and Juan de Páez. Calvo located a 1634 document signed by Encío in Japanese characters.⁹⁷ Encío’s prosperity as a merchant is the fact that his widow, Margarita, owned fourteen slaves, ten mulatas, and four negras.⁹⁸

Juan de Páez lived in Guadalajara since the 1620s, he sold spirits such as *vino de cocos* and *mezcal*, and became the owner of a store by 1650. Páez diversified the type of goods he bought and sold. According to Calvo, his many business transactions—he bought, for example “muchas cantidad de ropa” in 1638, and “220 novillos [steers]” in 1653—made him rich enough to become a moneylender and “albacea, heredero y tenedor de bienes” of twenty members of the elite of Guadalajara, get appointed as administrator of an estate between 1657 and 1661, after which he became “mayordomo y administrador de los propios y rentas de la catedral.”⁹⁹ When he died in 1675 he was buried in the cathedral, leaving in his last will evidence of a fortune counted in the tens of thousands pesos.¹⁰⁰ Despite all his success, Juan de Páez kept avoiding any reference to his Japanese origin, perhaps an indication of strong stereotypes and misconceptions about Asia in New Spain.¹⁰¹ This may also be the reason why Luis Encío ceased to sign his name in Japanese characters, even claiming, in 1643, “no saber firmar.”¹⁰² Because of this racial bias, Juan Páez’s daughters, wanting to become nuns, had to ask for a special papal dispensation.¹⁰³

It seems it was their record of services as soldiers, or their wealth, rather than their provenance, the decisive factor that granted the aforementioned Japanese

⁹⁶ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 534-535.

⁹⁷ See reproduction in Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 538.

⁹⁸ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 545.

⁹⁹ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 541-543.

¹⁰⁰ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 544.

¹⁰¹ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 542.

¹⁰² Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 539.

¹⁰³ They never used the dispensation, granted in 1677 because they married. However, the dispensation “abriría las puertas de los conventos mexicanos a una de sus sobrinas.” Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 545.

their social position and privileges, because other Japanese were treated no different from other Asians. Contrary to Oropeza's hypothesis that the Japanese were treated with special deference just for being Japanese,¹⁰⁴ I argue that in the eyes of other people in New Spain there was no substantial difference between them and other chinos; even a successful merchant like Luis Encío was on occasion referred to as "chino."¹⁰⁵ And there are more examples of Japanese individuals who received the same treatment as chinos. In 1641 Luis Martín, "de nación japon," had to request a license to sell "ropa de la tierra y otras mercaderías" and avoid harassment from the authorities; he was required to pay the *alcabala* tax.¹⁰⁶ Diego Baez and Diego de la Cruz, street vendors "naturales de Japón," also requested a license "[para que] puedan andar por los caminos y no sean molestados por las justicias."¹⁰⁷ Luis de la Cruz, "japón," requested a license to cut and sell firewood, and a license to "llevar y traer mercancías de su granjería."¹⁰⁸ There were also Japanese slaves in New Spain.¹⁰⁹ One of them, "el esclavo Min [sic] de Japón" requested a license to marry another Asian slave, Ursula, "de la India portuguesa."¹¹⁰ Another slave, Catalina de Bastidos, "japona," acquired his liberty when she married a Portuguese man, and managed to open a store where she sold woolens in Tlaxcala.¹¹¹ The Japanese were only a fraction of the Asian slaves in New Spain.

2.3 Chino slavery in New Spain

In terms of occupation, slaves were the largest group of Asian immigrants in the American territories of the viceroyalty. Even though the struggle to eliminate indigenous slavery had begun since the promulgation by Charles I in 1542 of the *Leyes y ordenanzas [...] gobernación de Indias y buen tratamiento y conservación de*

¹⁰⁴ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 148.

¹⁰⁵ Calvo, "Japoneses en Guadalajara", 539.

¹⁰⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, vol. 8, exp. 116, fs. 74 (1641).

¹⁰⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 4886, exp. 26 (no date).

¹⁰⁸ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Part, caja 2323, exp. 52 (no date); AGN Indiferente Virreinal, Industria y Comercio, caja 5185, exp. 65 (no date).

¹⁰⁹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Inquisición, caja 6596, exp. 138 (no date); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Matrimonios, caja 5090, exp. 69 (1604).

¹¹⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Matrimonios, caja 5090, exp. 69 (1604).

¹¹¹ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 122.

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los Indios, there were left some exceptions where indios—and consequently chinos—could be legally enslaved, such as revolt or being captured in “just war.”¹¹² Chino slaves were captured throughout South, South East, and East Asia, primarily by Portuguese slave trades, sold in Manila, and then could be taken to mainland New Spain on the Manila Galleon.¹¹³ Once there, they were mostly employed in coconut plantations near the coast, as servants in the houses of the rich, or workers in textile mills in urban centers like Mexico City and Puebla de los Ángeles. Seijas and Oropeza have studied Asian slavery in New Spain extensively.¹¹⁴ Seijas calculated that about 8,400 of the immigrants from Asia that entered the Americas were slaves.¹¹⁵ Oropeza, on her part, provides a seventeenth-century document, which stated that,

En la Nueva España y en especial en la ciudad de México y distrito de la Audiencia de ella hay grandísimo número de estos chinos tenidos y reputado comúnmente por esclavos y las mujeres chinas también y sus hijos sin diferencia alguna.¹¹⁶

In their respective publications, Oropeza and Seijas describe the large network of mostly Portuguese slave traders that fed Manila with slaves captured in a myriad places from Mozambique to Japan. These authors show that a complex Portuguese web of human trafficking, extending the breath of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea fed a lucrative slave market in Manila, where concessions were made to passengers and crewmembers of the Acapulco galleons to take a single slave with them across the Pacific and sold for a profit in New Spain.¹¹⁷ Seijas distilled data about the provenance of chino slaves in New Spain that I reproduce in graphic

¹¹² Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 212-246; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 28-32; González Claverán, “Un documento colonial”. The classic work on indio slavery in New Spain is Zavala, *Los esclavos indios en Nueva España*. The criteria for what constituted a “just war” varied. Indios who revolted against the crown or Muslims captured in combat could be legally taken as slaves.

¹¹³ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”; Seijas, “The Portuguese Slave Trade”.

¹¹⁴ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 5-57; Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”; Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*.

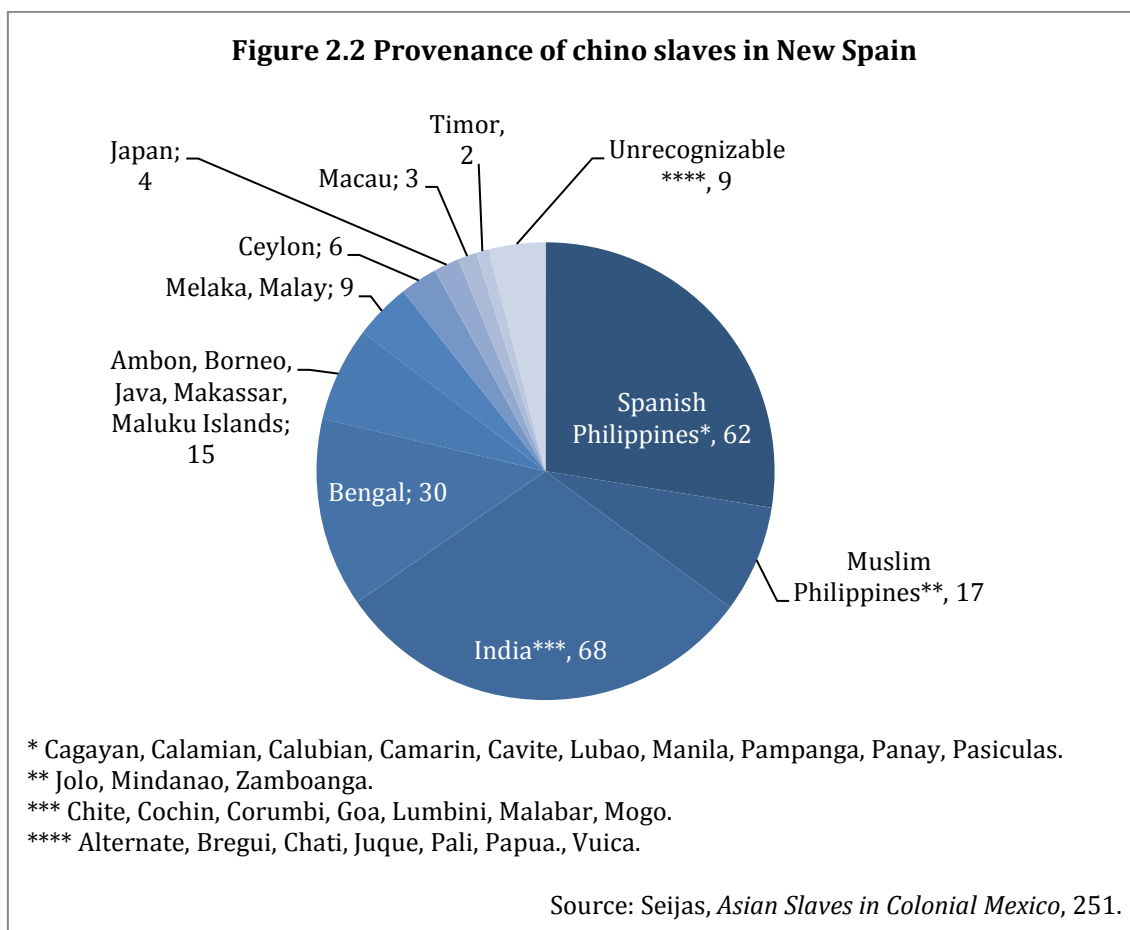
¹¹⁵ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 12.

¹¹⁶ AGI, Guadalajara, vol. 12, cited in González Claverán, “Un documento colonial”, 525.

¹¹⁷ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 17-29; Seijas, “The Portuguese Slave Trade”, 19-38. Seijas and Oropeza note that slave trade on the Manila Galleon was always an ancillary economic activity.

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form in figure 2.2.¹¹⁸ In Manila many were purchased and sent to Spanish America where their sale would yield substantial profit, even though, according to Seijas, they were less expensive than African slaves.¹¹⁹



The thriving slave market of Manila supplied labor to the American territories of New Spain and Peru, where demand for able hands was high as a consequence of the collapse of the Indigenous population. In the mid-to-late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries convergence of two processes created a large demand for

¹¹⁸ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 251; Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 17-29. Oropeza provides a database of 94 Asian slaves in New Spain between 1565 and 1673, including 50 slaves from various location in the *Estado da India* (India de Portugal, Bengala, Malabar, Cochin, Ceylon, Macau, Malacca, Macasar, Gujarat, and Terrenate), 31 from the Philippines (Manila, Cavite, Cebu, Jolo), and 4 from Japan, 3 from Java, 2 from China, 2 from Papua, and 2 from Brunei, in Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 27. I reproduce Seija’s figures because her database is more extensive and overlaps with Oropeza’s. A combination of the information compiled by both authors would have resulted in duplication of many individuals.

¹¹⁹ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 83-84.

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labor in New Spain: the collapse of the native Amerindian population in the wake of epidemics of diseases foreign to them—particularly the smallpox epidemic of 1576-1580—coupled with ongoing growth of the economy based on the silver-mining industry.¹²⁰ Spanish authorities struggled to maintain a balance between the two processes by attempting to stave off the effects of this demographic catastrophe eliminating—ultimately unsuccessfully—forced labor systems, such as the *repartimiento*. The desire to protect the indigenous population, on the one hand, and maintain the tendency of growing profitability of the silver mines, on the other, were contradictory. This is evident in viceroy Rodrigo Pacheco y Osorio's policy to eliminate the *repartimiento*, which did not include silver mines. He eliminated the *repartimiento*, “dejando sólo los [indios] de las minas que no me he atrevido a quitar, porque no cese el beneficio de la plata.”¹²¹ The labor demand triggered by the declining indigenous population and an expanding mining economy was filled with mostly African, but also Asian slaves. As Slack argues:

Epidemics that ravaged the native indio population in New Spain from roughly 1600 to 1650 fueled the demand for indentured labor. Despite the absence of an asiento for slaves brought through the back door of Acapulco, it was an open secret that was tolerated by the crown and enriched colonial merchants, priests, military and civil officials.¹²²

¹²⁰ Jonathan Israel, *Razas, clases sociales y vida política en el México colonial, 1610-1670* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980), 27. Colin A. Palmer argues that the highest imports of African slaves arrived during a period of sharp decline of the Amerindian population. Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 28-30, cited in Frank Proctor III, “Afro-Mexican Slave Labor”, 34. The debate surrounding the magnitude of the demographic decline of Amerindian population in the Americas has been long and protracted. A good summary and data from the various estimates by Rosenblat, Aguirre Beltrán, Zambardino, Mendizábal, Cook and Simpson, Cook and Borah, Sanders, Whitmore, Gibson, and Kubler is compiled in Robert McCaa, “Was the 16th century a demographic catastrophe for Mexico? An answer using non-quantitative historical demography” (paper presented at the V Reunión Nacional de Investigación Demográfica en México El Colegio de México, Mexico, June 5-9, 1995), accessed 12/07/2013, <http://www.hist.umn.edu/~rmccaa/nonquant/democat0.htm>.

¹²¹ Rodrigo Pacheco, *Relación* (1636), in José Iturriaga, *Anecdotario de viajeros extranjeros en México: Siglos XVI-XX* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), 79.

¹²² Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 10.

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However, large-scale slave traffic comparable to the Middle Passage in the Atlantic never developed in the Pacific because, as Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán asserts, “the slaves of Philippine origin were all brought [to New Spain] under individual contract.”¹²³ The Manila Galleon slave trade was never intended as a large-scale affair. Rather, first important passengers, and later a larger portion of the crew, were allowed to take a reduced number of slaves on board in Manila to take with them to Acapulco. However, many found loopholes, or outright ignored restrictions, and profited from the lucrative trade. A slave bought for 150 pesos in Manila could be sold for four times that amount in Acapulco. Despite specific regulations against it, 20% of those taken against their will to Acapulco were women including, most famously, Catarina de San Juan, who came to be known as the china poblana.¹²⁴

The presence of some Asian, indio chino, and chino slaves is recorded in marriage registries, among other sources. Most chino slaves joined other chino negro or mulato slaves. There is less evidence of chino slave marriages with indios, suggesting that their bondage made it more likely for them to marry people of African descent than Amerindians.¹²⁵ In 1613, Pedro “chino de la India de Portugal y esclavo de Domingo Hernández” married Ana María “china y esclava de Juan Gómez Pinto.”¹²⁶ Gómez Pinto, according to another marriage record dated the previous year, was a sixty-one-year-old español merchant.¹²⁷ Also in 1613 Marco Antonio Ferrer requested permission to travel to Spain to claim the inheritance his recently deceased sister left him. He took with him his wife, two black female slaves and a male chino slave.¹²⁸ When being taken away from Mexico City in 1617, Miguel, a “negro esclavo de la India de Portugal,” plead for permission to take with him his wife, a china slave called Gracia.¹²⁹ In 1625, Manuel, “esclavo negro de la

¹²³ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, “The Slave Trade in Mexico”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 24, 3 (1944): 420-421.

¹²⁴ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 11.

¹²⁵ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 169.

¹²⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Matrimonios, caja 6477, exp. 29 (1613).

¹²⁷ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 98, exp. 112. Juan Gómez Pinto is also mentioned in AGN, Real Audiencia, Tierras 110, cont. 1247, vol. 2956, exp. 106.

¹²⁸ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal 4182-10 (1613).

¹²⁹ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 332A, exp. 4 (1617).

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India de Portugal,” requested a license to marry an Angolan slave. Both had the same master.¹³⁰ Francisco Herrera, a “chino filipino” slave, married a negra slave in 1628.¹³¹ Also in 1628, Ventura Díaz, “mulato de la India de Portugal,” married Ana María, “negra esclava,” at the parish of Santa Veracruz.¹³² The following year, Brígida de los Ángeles and Antón, both identified as chino slaves, served as witnesses in a marriage between a mestizo and a mulata.¹³³ The same year “una mujer que dijo ser china y natural de Manila en las Islas Filipinas y es esclava de Pedro Gallo vecino desta ciudad, escribano mayor de minas y registros de esta Nueva España” witnessed another union.¹³⁴ Andrés de Silva, “chino natural de la India de Portugal esclavo,” married a “negra angola” slave who belonged to the same master as him, in Santa Veracruz in 1634.¹³⁵ Another source related to marriage and slavery was the 1634 claim made by Juan de la Cruz, a chino slave to force his wife “a hacer vida maridable con él.”¹³⁶

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, high-ranking officials of New Spain brought with them their Asian slaves, even before the establishment of the Manila Galleon. Some members of the Spanish elite that travelled to the Philippines continued to bring their Asian slaves with them when they entered New Spain. One example is Fernando de Valenzuela, marques de Villasierra, a Spanish nobleman who was exiled from the court in Madrid to the Philippines, and eventually arrived in Mexico in 1690. His competitors at court banished him using rumors of his entanglement with Queen Maria de Austria. Upon his death in San Agustín de las Cuevas, present-day Tlalpan, a borough in Mexico City, in 1692, he left his inheritance to his chino slaves, whom he presumably had acquired during his sojourn in the Philippines.¹³⁷

¹³⁰ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 288, exp. 13 (1625).

¹³¹ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 48, exp. 88, ff. 239-240 (1628).

¹³² AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 64, exp. 9, ff. 41-42 (1628).

¹³³ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 88, exp. 132, ff: 351-352 (1629).

¹³⁴ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 64, exp. 115, ff: 353-354v (1629).

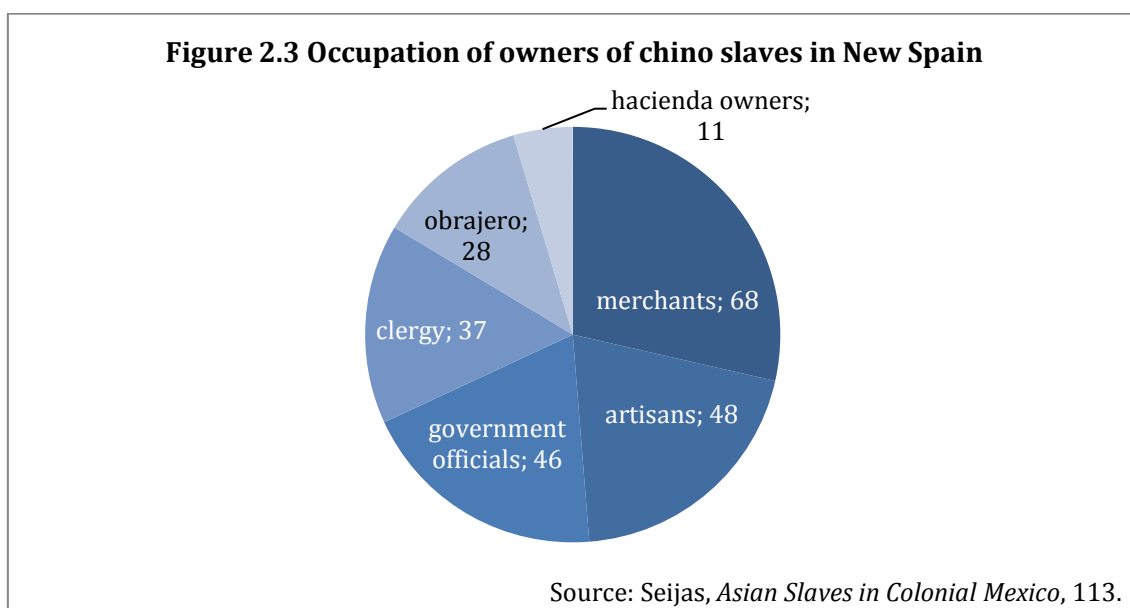
¹³⁵ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 267B, exp. 167 (1634).

¹³⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 2430 (1634).

¹³⁷ Francisco de la Maza, *La ciudad de México en el siglo XVII* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1968), 34-35.

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But the owners of chino slaves were not all high-ranking officers, as evidenced by Seijas data about chino slave owners reproduced in figure 2.3. Some of the poorer chino slave owners argued that they relied on their slaves to sustain themselves. In 1650, Alonso Encinas, a local priest, argued that “para poderse sustentar necesita de que un chino su esclavo llamado Juan [...] venda por las calles, conventos, mesones y plazas de esta ciudad cacao y azúcar.”¹³⁸ The same year, Francisca de Torres requested the Real Audiencia for a license to have his slave, “el chino Antonio de la Cruz,” sell “mercancía de Castilla, China y la Tierra, de cuyas ganancias pueda sustentarse.”¹³⁹ Similarly, in 1653, a widow called Francisca Torres de Villaseñor claimed that, in order to pay her taxes, “tiene un esclavo chino llamado Antonio de la Cruz al cual por las calles públicas de esta ciudad le ha ocupado en vender por menudo un poco de azúcar.”¹⁴⁰ Francisco de Torres Vella received a license “para vender mercancías por las calles de México, por medio de un chino.”¹⁴¹



There are many sources that document how chinos struggled to become free. Several chino slaves ran away, and sometimes their masters claimed they were

¹³⁸ AGN, Gobierno Virreinal, Reales Cédulas Originales y Duplicados 100, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D18, exp. 26, ff: 39 Vta (1650).

¹³⁹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal 4601-29 (1650).

¹⁴⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Real Audiencia, caja 6673, exp. 66 (1653).

¹⁴¹ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas D18-758-287v (1654).

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stolen.¹⁴² Álvaro de Castillo and Diego de León requested action against whoever stole their china slaves, respectively in 1617 and 1618.¹⁴³ In 1637 Domingo López Helguera accused María de la Cruz, a china slave woman from “la India de Portugal,” married to Nicolás “chino,” of buying her freedom by selling cacao, vanilla, and dyes she had stolen from her master.¹⁴⁴ The same year, Felipe Flores de Palacio requested help to locate “una esclava china que se le fugó.”¹⁴⁵ For example, in 1626 Martín de Bisola “provisor y vicario general” demanded excommunication “para quien de su servicio se halla llevado y hurtado un esclavo chino llamado Agustín, de edad de 13 años.”¹⁴⁶ In 1634, Manuel López Núñez requested legal action against whoever was concealing his “servidor chino de nombre Tule” after he had “hecho muchas diligencias en buscarlo” without finding him.¹⁴⁷ The same year María Moreno, “mestiza natural de Filipinas,” claimed recognition of her freedom as the daughter of a woman from Bengal and a captain.¹⁴⁸ Don Luis de Cifuentes, a priest of the Mexico City cathedral, complained in 1636 that “un chino mi esclavo llamado Tome, algo moreno, de edad de cuarenta años, poco más o menos, habrá un mes que se me fue y ausentó y aunque en su busca he hecho muchas diligencias, no lo e podido hallar ni descubrir.”¹⁴⁹ In 1643, an official demanded the return of his chino slave called Vicente “que se le ausentó.”¹⁵⁰ In 1658, Margarita de Saavedra denounced the disappearance of his chino slave “llamado Pedro, prieto de color.”¹⁵¹

Other chino slaves attempted to attain their freedom by legal means. Chino slaves working in close proximity with their masters gained their masters affection and on occasion this led to their manumission, sometimes as a pious act by their

¹⁴² Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 168.

¹⁴³ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero Regular y Secular, caja 4049, exp. 8 (1617); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero Regular y Secular, caja 6038, exp. 70 (1618)

¹⁴⁴ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 803, exp. 17 (1637).

¹⁴⁵ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero Secular y Regular, caja 1388, exp. 39 (1637).

¹⁴⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 3470, exp. 11 (1626).

¹⁴⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 1007, exp. 14 (1634).

¹⁴⁸ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja-exp.: 5036-023. Clero Regular y Secular. Año: 1634, fs. 10.

¹⁴⁹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, cajas 2000-2999, caja 2242, exp. 29 (1636).

¹⁵⁰ AGN, General de Parte 51-9-61-f. 38v.

¹⁵¹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 2289, exp. 1 (1658).

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masters upon their death.¹⁵² According to Seijas, a few chinos managed to recover their freedom through trials, often with the argument that “they had been captured by pirates, rather than in just wars,” sometimes adding that they came from nations that “could not be slaved.”¹⁵³ Finally, there were other chino slaves who were able to self-purchase, often relying on donations from a network of other chinos.¹⁵⁴ However chino slavery as a whole in New Spain would only eventually be abolished and disappear in a process that started in the late seventeenth century.

In 1673 the Audiencia de Guadalajara issued an edict prohibiting indio chino slavery throughout New Galicia and New Spain. This document demanded compliance with the *reales cédulas* published the previous year that forbade temporary or perpetual slavery of indios chichimecas and chinos.¹⁵⁵ According to Seijas, “chino slavery came to an end in the late seventeenth century because the Spanish crown included chinos in its campaign to eradicate indigenous slavery.”¹⁵⁶ The 1670s effort sought to eliminate these exceptions. Despite the initiative, there were chinos still enslaved in New Spain as late as the 1690s, as in the case of Fernando de Valenzuela’s chino slaves mentioned earlier in this section.

The process of how chino slaves navigated the legality of New Spain to achieve their freedom is only part of the history of their interaction with the other groups that inhabited the viceroyalty. In the next section I will analyze the strategies both slave and free chinos employed to secure for themselves a stable place in society, as well as the challenges they faced in doing so.

2.4 Network building and ritual kinship among chinos in New Spain

¹⁵² Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 117-126.

¹⁵³ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 223. It is unclear what criteria defined what made the members of a community not liable to slavery. Chino slaves often claimed that their particular community had never been subjected to slavery. There are contradictory sources to all the claims, further complicating a systematic approach to the issue.

¹⁵⁴ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 127-129.

¹⁵⁵ González Claverán, “Un documento colonial”, 523.

¹⁵⁶ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 212.

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Chinos were forced to coalesce and cooperate in the face of the challenges posed to them by New Spanish society, slavery being paramount among them. In this section, as examples of other challenges, I will synthesize how they faced the Inquisition and other colonial authorities, and how they occasionally came into conflict with indios. Then I will discuss their adoption of Spanish institutions such as confraternities, guilds, and godparenthood to argue that chinos formed a relatively cohesive and distinguishable group within New Spanish society.

The Inquisition tried several chinos. In 1621, a chino slave was charged with selling powder to women to attract men. The text reads that he sold it to many people and that he claimed that the powder “tienen virtud que trayéndolos consigo las mujeres y sahumándose con ellos y haciendo otras cosas que él dice cuando los vende que se mueren por ellas los hombres.” The man said that the “Gran Turco” sent him the powder, along with “unos papeles llenos de caracteres.”¹⁵⁷ In 1628 the Inquisition commissary in San Luis Potosí accused a china woman called Lucía of “azotar a un Cristo.”¹⁵⁸ The same year Francisco López, “natural del reino de Bengala, en la India de Portugal,” was tried for “un hechizo hecho con la cabeza de un gato negro para ponerla en un agujero y delante de ella llamar al Diablo.”¹⁵⁹ In 1690 the Inquisition started another process against a chino called Antón or Antonio, on charges of superstition.¹⁶⁰ Private citizens denounced other chinos. In 1643, for example, Sebastián de Avellaneda accused a “chino carretonero” of stealing ten pesos and of trying to kill him in San Lucas.¹⁶¹

However, chinos were also able to appeal to the authorities in the face of injustice. As previously stated, chino merchants requested licenses to avoid harassment from law enforcers, and the chino slaves initiated processes to have their freedom reinstated. Other times they simply sought justice against people who threatened or harmed them. One example of this was recorded when a chino called Felipe de

¹⁵⁷ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 486, exp. 39 (1621). Perhaps a reference to Arabic, Japanese, or Chinese characters.

¹⁵⁸ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 365, exp. 3 (1628).

¹⁵⁹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Inquisición, caja 5633, exp. 73 (1628).

¹⁶⁰ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 435, exp. 253 (1690).

¹⁶¹ AGN Real Audiencia 37-100-187-19-ff. 283-303.

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Jesús denounced a priest called Cristóbal de Garnica “porque sin razón acudió a su casa y lo golpeó, amenazándolo con un cuchillo.”¹⁶² Another is a document dated in 1637, which contains information about a procedure started on behalf of several mulatos and a chino slave called Gaspar, property of Don Diego de Guevara Altamirano, in response to censuras against them.¹⁶³ These documents show that chinos knew how to navigate New Spanish legal procedures. It was perhaps this knowledge that allowed some chinos to escalate the rungs of the social ladder of the New Spanish socio-political order.

Thanks to this expertise Asians were able to shape local governing institutions. In Colima, for example, the authorities had to establish the position of *alcalde de chinos*.¹⁶⁴ In Puebla another chino, Mateo Peña, “que era mulato,” was named gobernador of the indios of the city in 1682.¹⁶⁵ However, the performance of chinos in places of power caused conflict at least in one instance. Sometime before 1696, a chino called Pedro Vázquez was reelected “gobernador de los naturales” in the township of Huitzucó, a place en-route between Acapulco and Mexico City, in present-day state of Guerrero. The authorities instructed the alcalde of nearby Iguala to investigate the situation and gather electors to select a different gobernador, since Pedro Vázquez was “chino y no indio.” The order specified that the new gobernador was to be chosen among indios “sin proponer mestizos, mulatos, ni otra calidad de gente que están prohibidos por leyes reales y ordenanzas.”¹⁶⁶

Seijas located another case of conflict resulting in the expulsion of chinos from an indio community. She describes how,

¹⁶² AGN, Indiferente Virreinal 4395-1.

¹⁶³ AGN Indiferente Virreinal, Real Audiencia 6257-14 (1637).

¹⁶⁴ Machuca, “El alcalde de los chinos”.

¹⁶⁵ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 178-179; Cuenya and Contreras, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 41.

¹⁶⁶ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58-18-32-350-ff. 286v-387; AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58-18-32-337-ff.297v-298. The traditional legal división of the population of New Spain in a “República de Españoles” and a “República de Indios” was instituted to prevent españoles, mestizos, negros, mulatos, and other castas from the former to mix with the indios in the latter. Chinos had an ambiguous position in this system, causing problems such as this. See Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 146.

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In 1630 the indigenous leader of Atacomulco complained that some chinos had come to live among them with their families. The chinos, who were bakers, “aggrieved and harassed” the natives, forcing them to buy their bread. As a result the town’s people sought to have them expelled.¹⁶⁷

Perhaps it was rejection from other groups exemplified by these instances that compelled chinos to form several *cofradías* or *hermandades*. These were religious brotherhoods or confraternities; Catholic organizations of lay people engaged in a variety of religious and communal activities, as well as charity work, and linked to a specific church.¹⁶⁸ In Spanish America they were, on occasion, ethnically or otherwise exclusive. Nancy E. Van Deusen explains the important role confraternities played among people of African descent in Lima thus:

Many Afro-Peruvian *limeños* knew someone who served as a *mayorala*, *hermana*, or *cofrada* in any one of the dozens of confraternities designated for *moreno/as*, *pardo/as*, and *mulato/as* in a city overflowing with monasteries. Not only did this lay religious brotherhoods finance the ceremonious displays of religious devotion, they also helped the sick, paid burial fees, and oversaw the establishment of chaplaincies for souls in purgatory. They also fostered new networks of kinship relations based upon a common organizational thread.¹⁶⁹

There were at least five chino confraternities in New Spain that doubtless served the same functions to its members. The oldest record of a chino confraternity in New Spain is dated in 1659, when, according to Seijas, the members of the aforementioned “Hermandad del Santo Cristo y Lavatorio” at the convent of Santa Clara made a payment of 250 pesos to free a chino slave called Juan de la Cruz

¹⁶⁷ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 162.

¹⁶⁸ A recent comprehensive study of confraternities in Mexico City is Alicia Bazarte Martínez and Clara García Ayuardo, *Los costos de la salvación: las cofradías y la Ciudad de México, siglos XVI al XIX* (Mexico: Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Archivo General de la Nación, 2001).

¹⁶⁹ Nancy E. Van Deusen, “‘The Lord walks among the pots and pans.’ Religious Servants of Colonial Lima”, in *Africans to Spanish America. Expanding the Diaspora*, eds. Serhwin K. Bryant, Rachel Sarah O’Toole, and Ben Vinson III (Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 136-160, 149.

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“because he belong[ed] to their nation and [was] the eldest among them.”¹⁷⁰ Seijas located a 1694 source indicating that the “natives of San Sebastián from Mexico and the Philippine Islands” formed a confraternity that took care of an image of Our Lady of Sorrows at the convent of San Sebastián. This was meant to be a confraternity for indios who came from outside Mexico City.¹⁷¹ Confraternities commonly participated in processions in certain special religious holidays. In chapter seven of *Viaje a Nueva España*,¹⁷² The famous Italian globetrotter, Francesco Giovanni Gemelli Careri (1651-1725) reported that “los hermanos de San Francisco, que llaman la procesion *de los chinos* por ser indios de Filipinas” got involved in a brawl with the brothers of the Santísima Trinidad over precedence to enter the city’s main square during a procession on Maudy Thursday, 1697. Gemelli Careri described how the members of the two confraternities “se dieron con las mazas y con las cruces en las espaldas de tal manera que muchos quedaron heridos.”¹⁷³ In Puebla, according to chronicler Miguel Cerón Zapata, there was a group of “chinos en hermandad” in 1714 that took care of a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe in the church of Santa Veracruz.¹⁷⁴ One last chino confraternity is particularly interesting, because it was the confraternity of the barbers’ guild; an occupation dominated by chinos in Mexico City. Oropeza argues that the chinos founded the “Cofradía y Hermandad del Santo Christo, de los Tres Gremios de Cirujanos, Barberos y Boticarios” at the church of the Santísima Trinidad.”¹⁷⁵ This suggests that the barber’s guild may have been a chino organization, which lent support to its members in various ways.

¹⁷⁰ Notarial record cited in Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, Archivo General de Notarías de la Ciudad de México, Juan de Salas, 4380, f. 59v (1659). Oropeza also mentions this and other chino confraternities and suggests that Asian art pieces located in this and other churches where there are chino confraternities further demonstrate the link between these organization and Asia. Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 118, 143-144, 172.

¹⁷¹ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 208.

¹⁷² This is part of Careri’s, multi-volume *Giro del mondo* detailing his adventures on a journey around the world.

¹⁷³ Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri, *Viaje a la Nueva España*, Francisca Perujo (ed.), (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2002, originally published in 1700), 73. Slack mentions this fight in Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 53. It is possible the members of the Santa Trinidad were chinos as well, as the cofradía of barberos had many chino members.

¹⁷⁴ Cited in Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112.

¹⁷⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 144; Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 170-171.

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I argue, for example, that in the case of Alonso Cortés de Siles, the chino barbers served as an immigration support network that provided him with the resources and skills that allowed him settle down in Taxco to work as a barber.¹⁷⁶

The prevalence of sources concerning indio chino and chino barbers is an indication that this occupation provided a vector for cooperation and networking for Asian immigrants. Their belonging to a common occupation provided a framework for collaboration. It is telling that chino barbers, according to their español rivals, tended to pick fellow chinos as apprentices. Writing about apprentices within the guilds of New Spain, Francisco Calderón argues:

Con frecuencia [...] estaba limitado el número de aprendices por taller, tanto para evitar que hubiera un número mayor de maestros que al competir entre sí abatirían los precios de las mercancías, como por el propósito de evitar que los maestros más ricos [...] monopolizaran la producción. [...] Era habitual y a veces estaba establecido por las ordenanzas que fuesen escogidos entre los hijos de los agremiados; los maestros particularmente buscaban aceptar como aprendices a sus hijos, parientes y amigos y cerraban la puerta de su taller u obrador a los extraños.¹⁷⁷

Thus it is likely that the bonds that existed among chino barbers reflected familial ties as well. As suggested in chapter 1, it is also plausible that the barbers were of sangley descent, as sangleys dominated healthcare occupations in Manila.¹⁷⁸ It is clear that chino barbers formed an entity big enough to threaten Spanish barbers.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 673, exp. 37 (1688).

¹⁷⁷ Francisco Calderón, *Historia económica de la Nueva España en tiempos de los Austrias* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), 399.

¹⁷⁸ Slack suggests this idea in Slack "Sinifying New Spain", 11-12. Seijas disagrees and asserts chino barbers were "natives of the Philippines" in Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 158. Dubs and Smith called the barbers "Chinese," almost certainly not realizing the complexity of the term *chino*. However they also alluded to the presence of Chinese barbers in Manila, in Dubs and Smith, "Chinese in Mexico City", 388.

¹⁷⁹ In the sources the latter are referred to as "españoles," that is people of European descent born in New Spain. I use "Spanish" to avoid confusion, but it is very doubtful that the barbers in these documents were actually born in Spain.

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Hints of tensions with the Spanish barbers appear since the earliest extant barber license concerning a chino individual, dated in 1625. Francisco Antonio was being harassed by his competitors of European descent, and had to request a license stating that he offered his services for free to the poor. He argued that the “barberos españoles me quieren quitar, que no use el oficio de hacer barbas, injustamente, porque yo no sangro y lo demás es libre poderlo hacer.”¹⁸⁰ According to Edward Slack, “barbers or phlebotomists in New Spain were considered the fourth category of medical providers, ranked behind physicians, pharmacists, and surgeons.”¹⁸¹ Despite the fact that barbers would usually perform the most basic medical care, such as teeth removal and, occasionally, bloodletting, chino barbers in Mexico City were deemed improperly trained and were accused of spreading disease.¹⁸²

There is substantial information about the chino barbers. There is even information about the involvement of one of them in a marital dispute. In 1634, a chino called Juan Pérez declared that his wife had ran away after a fight between them. Pérez claimed she took refuge at the house of Agustín, a chino barber who lived in the barrio of San Agustín.¹⁸³ The following year, Agustín, along with the other chino barbers would face adversity after a complaint by the barbers of European descent, possibly catalyzed by a natural disaster.

In 1629 a great flood wrought havoc in Mexico City causing enormous material and human loss. The privileged population of European descent fled to the nearby townships of Tacuba, Tacubaya and Coyoacán. The waters did not recede until 1634.¹⁸⁴ It was perhaps the conditions in the aftermath of this flood that triggered the conflict between the chino and the Spanish barbers. It is possible that when the Spanish left fleeing from the flood, the chino barbers established themselves in the center of the city, filling the vacuum. A year after the waters receded, in 1635, the Spanish barbers, perhaps returning from their refuge, solicited the Mexico City

¹⁸⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Real Audiencia, caja 3303, exp. 8 (1625).

¹⁸¹ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 11.

¹⁸² Dubs and Smith, “Chinese in Mexico City”, 387.

¹⁸³ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 2430, exp. 29 (1634).

¹⁸⁴ Gruzinski, *La ciudad de México*, 349.

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municipal council to enforce the removal of the chino barbers. They submitted a petition to the viceroy, who in turn consulted the Mexico City *cabildo* on the matter. The Spanish barbers protested against the “excesses” of the chino barbers, including their alleged tendencies to overcharge and to take only other chinos as apprentices. They also noted supposed problems that resulted from the practices of the chino barbers. For example, as mentioned previously, the chinos were accused of transmitting diseases when bleeding patients.¹⁸⁵ Despite the obvious conflict of interests, the municipal council failed in favor of the Spanish barbers and determined that the chino barbers would be restricted to work in the outskirts of the city. They also ordered that no more than twelve chinos could legally provide their services as barbers, and they were forbidden from taking in chino apprentices.¹⁸⁶

As a consequence of these restrictions, the years that followed saw a proliferation of barber’s license petitions from chinos: Gonzalo Mota’s in 1639, Anton de la Cruz’s in 1641, Silvestre Vicente’s in 1642, Juan Agustín’s in 1648, among others.¹⁸⁷ Gonzalo Mota specified he had his shop “fuera de los muros” of the city and that he was “de los doce a quien esta concedida [...] la licencia.”¹⁸⁸ Anton de la Cruz declared that he had his barbershop “en la calle de Santo Domingo junto a la puerta de los caballos del dicho convento.”¹⁸⁹ He is perhaps the same person as Antonio de la Cruz, a chino who received legal protection in 1643 for his barbershop “siendo uno de los doce permitidos.”¹⁹⁰ In 1642, Silvestre Vicente requested confirmation and renewal of his barber’s license and, contrary to the restriction established in 1635, permission to have two chino apprentices working with him “en el barrio del hospital real desta ciudad [San Juan].”¹⁹¹ In 1643 his license was confirmed “para que pudiera tener tienda de barbero en esta

¹⁸⁵ Dubs and Smith, “Chinese in Mexico City”, 387; Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 45.

¹⁸⁶ Dubs and Smith, “Chinese in Mexico City”, 387; Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 45.

¹⁸⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 5795, exp. 55 (1639); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, vol. 8, exp. 66, f. 46v (1641); AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 6057, exp. 39 (1642); AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 9, vol. 15, f. 44v (1648).

¹⁸⁸ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 5795, exp. 55 (1639).

¹⁸⁹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, vol. 8, exp. 66, f. 46v (1641)

¹⁹⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, vol. 9, exp. 116, f. 78 (1643).

¹⁹¹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, General de Parte, caja 6057, exp. 39 (1642).

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ciudad.”¹⁹² This confirmation suggests a relaxation in the restrictions. Juan Agustín was also granted an apprentice, although his 1648 petition does not specify the ethnicity of the apprentice, stating only that it was “para que pueda tener su tienda de barbero de navaja y tijera en la plaza pública de esta [...] ciudad o en su casa con un oficial.”¹⁹³ Even a chino that arrived after the restrictions were imposed was granted a license. Pedro de Asqueta, an indio chino denizen of Mexico City since 1636, received his license, “para poder tener su tienda en la plaza de esta ciudad y su casa donde pueda usar dicho oficio de barbero con un oficial atento a ser libre y tributario,” in 1648.¹⁹⁴ These sources suggest that, to viceregal authorities, sometimes the chinos’ condition as crown tributaries prevailed over ethnicity when granting or denying them barber licenses. Dozens of chinos continued to work as unlicensed barbers in the 1670s and 1680s.¹⁹⁵ This situation prompted the creation of an office designed to curb this activity in 1635; an office that disappeared in 1667, was reestablished in 1670, but eventually failed.¹⁹⁶ Alonso Cortés de Siles’ account discussed in the introduction of this thesis confirms Slack’s interpretation of the failure of the anti-chino barber office, because he was able to acquire this trade in the late 1680s, and may have even received financial aid from other chino barbers.

Seijas shows that credit networks among chinos were a crucial aspect of their interconnectedness.¹⁹⁷ A few of those who benefited were barbers, but there were chinos with other occupations involved, from hog-dealers to silversmiths. Often these credit networks enabled chinos to establish their own shops. The existence of these credit networks reinforces the idea that there was a sense of a chino community that transcended the most immediate familial ties, since “creditors were willing to extend [credit] to chinos, who had no family networks to support

¹⁹² AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, D48, leg. 136, ff. 56v-57 (1643).

¹⁹³ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 9, vol. 15, f. 44v (1648).

¹⁹⁴ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, Vol. 15, exp. 29, ff. 20v-21 (1648).

¹⁹⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 63. Seijas argues there were “more than 100 chino barbers operating illegally within the city walls” in 1670, in Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 159.

¹⁹⁶ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 12-13.

¹⁹⁷ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 172-178.

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them.”¹⁹⁸ Despite compiling an impressive database of chino credit networks, Seijas refuses to admit this as evidence of the existence of an intra-chino community, stating that,

This evidence of Chino-to-Chino credit networks might seem to question my argument that Chinos did not develop a community of their own. . But I would say that this kind of lending had more to do with the occupational opportunities open to Chino freedmen than intra-ethnic solidarity.¹⁹⁹

Seijas further argues that, “the process of creolization or Hispanization did not destroy their Asian ‘identity’ because they never had one,” and that “common experiences such as the transpacific crossing did not suffice to generate a pan-Asian Chino cultural identity.”²⁰⁰ According to her, unlike what happened with African slaves, who were able to develop a commonality from their experiences in the transpacific voyage, the chinos were unable to develop a shared pan-Asian “identity.” She argues that “Chinos were not even a group—they came from all over Asia, each population with distinct beliefs and values.”²⁰¹ However, the same can be said about Africans, as they hailed from places as diverse as Angola, Biafra, Guinea, etc. This argument seems to rely on the idea that there was no common ground in terms of cultural values for chinos to build upon. Nonetheless, I believe there is substantial evidence that contradicts this notion, in the form of marriage, but especially baptismal records, which reveal a tendency among chinos to form spiritual kinship ties through godparenthood.

Frank Proctor argues that the marriage patterns of Africans in Mexico City, together with the betrothed’s choice for witnesses for the unions, were clear indication that “the relationship among slaves who wished to marry and their testigos began in Africa or during the Middle Passage.”²⁰² I agree with Seijas that the chino slaves’ experiences on the Manila Galleon could not compare to the

¹⁹⁸ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 176.

¹⁹⁹ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 15.

²⁰⁰ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 17-18.

²⁰¹ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 17.

²⁰² Frank Proctor III, “African Diasporic Ethnicity”, 68.

terrible hardships experienced by the African slaves during the Middle Passage. However, I see no reason why this fact would stop the chinos in New Spain from developing close ties leading to marriage and ritual kinship in New Spain. Because of their small numbers chinos were mostly exogamous, but evidence suggests they chose chino spouses frequently, as I will show when discussing marriage patterns in Puebla in chapter 3. But baptismal records in Mexico City show a preference among chino parents to select chino godparents for their children. This choice may have rested on shared ideas and values.

Godparenthood is a pivotal institution for social organization in Spanish America.²⁰³ Connie Horstman and Donald Kurtz argued that *compadrazgo* played a more important role in post-conquest Mexican society than *gremios* or *cofradías* because it more closely resembled pre-conquest institutions of ritual kinship.²⁰⁴ Paul Charney argued that “Indians readily adopted the Spanish custom as a way to stabilize family life in the face of epidemic-related deaths”, and was encouraged by Spaniards as way to extend and consolidate its control over Amerindians, as well as people of African descent.²⁰⁵ The parties involved engaged in a serious commitment, lasting the entirety of the child’s life. Often this relationship triggered or was triggered by familial, social or economic bonds. Godparenthood may also indicate a patron-client relationship.²⁰⁶ This makes studying the trends of godparentage among chinos an important element to consider in order to fully understand the way chinos related to other chinos. I argue that extant baptismal records reflect that chinos developed a network of ritual kinship primarily with other chinos through this institution. At this point it is hard to ascertain what motivated chino parents’ choice of godparents. While it is possible that some of

²⁰³ It is important to note that ritual kinship is not an exclusively Spanish American, or even Catholic, phenomenon. See M. Bloch and S. Guggenheim, “Compadrazgo, Baptism and the Symbolism of a Second Birth”, *Man* 16, 3 (1981): 376-386.

²⁰⁴ Connie Horstman and Donald V. Kurtz, “Compadrazgo and Adaptation in Sixteenth Century Central Mexico,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 35, 3 (1979): 361-372.

²⁰⁵ Paul Charney, “The Implications of Godparental Ties between Indians and Spaniards in Colonial Lima”, *The Americas* 47, 3 (1991): 295-313, 295.

²⁰⁶ Stephanie Blank, “Patrons, Clients, and Kin in Seventeenth-Century Caracas: A Methodological Essay in Colonial Spanish American Social History”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 54, 2 (1974): 260-283; John Ingham, “The Asymmetrical Implications of Godparenthood in Tlayacapan Morelos”, *Man* 5, 2 (1970): 281-289.

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these bonds were formed as a consequence of commercial interactions, others may have resulted from shared experience, for example, bondage in a textile mill, or even a sense of belonging to the same group.

Apart from chinos and people of African descent, there are other examples of relatively small migrant communities in Spanish America where minorities used marriage and godparentage ties as a way of preserving their bonds of kinship, reinforcing or establishing a distinctive “identity.” Laura Mathew counts godparentage among the strategies that *mexicanos*—the descendants of the Nahuatl, Mixtec, and Zapotec warriors, who aided the Spaniards in their conquest of Guatemala—used to cement their kinship relations and assert themselves as a privileged minority in Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala.²⁰⁷ Mathew argues that in these types of *compadrazgo* “the most salient relationship was (...) between godparents and the parents of the child”, and that “often, the bonds between these adults—formalized through the obligations of *compadrazgo* and involving long-term, mutual economic and moral support—endured until their deaths.”²⁰⁸ The chinos were a substantially more heterogeneous group than the *Mexicanos* of Guatemala, however the two populations are comparable in the way they formed social bonds through ritual kinship. I argue that chino parents selected their child’s godparent based on similar grounds, perhaps related to their provenance back in Asia, in the same way as *mexicanos* did in Guatemala.

A recent study on godparenthood in Catholic Europe shows that people tend to choose godparents from within their extended families.²⁰⁹ Chino parents in New Spain followed a similar pattern, it is most likely that they were inclined to choose individuals with a relatable set of values, and perhaps a similar cultural background, or even ethnicity—for instance sangley—to take care of the spiritual

²⁰⁷ Laura Mathew, *Memories of Conquest: Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

²⁰⁸ Mathew, *Memories of Conquest*, 227. See also Hugo G. Nutini and Betty Bell, *Ritual Kinship. The Structure and Historical Development of the Compadrazgo System in Rural Tlaxcala* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

²⁰⁹ Guido Alfani, Agnese Vitali and Vincent Gourdon, “Social Customs and Demographic Change: The Case of Godparenthood in Catholic Europe”, *Journal of Scientific Study of Religion* 51, 3 (2012): 482-504.

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upbringing of their children and engage in such an important life-long relationship with them. These records may reflect a “chino commonality” that gradually emerged in central New Spain among the Asian immigrants and their offspring. It also is plausible that chino slave owners played a role in determining the patterns of godparenthood, by selecting the godparents in their chino slave’s stead. However, even if this was the case, the ritual kinship bond between chinos formed all the same.

The patterns of ritual kinship among chinos may have been aided by the fact that a large portion of the chino immigrants in New Spain lived in urban centers. Jay Kinsbruner argues that, despite the fact that godparenthood was not an exclusively urban phenomenon, “it was in the urban areas (...) that extended families and kinship units were more easily establish, and could more readily provide immediate as well as long-term benefits to their members.”²¹⁰ Kinsbruner also argues that godparenthood networks influenced the habitation structure of the city itself, stating that “there are indications that some streets and even some barrios were occupied by a single kinship group and that kinship families concentrated in a particular part of town.”²¹¹ This could explain why so many of the chinos in Mexico City and Puebla resided in close proximity to each other.²¹²

Before analyzing the godparenthood ties among common chinos, it is worth exploring those that resulted from the baptisms and confirmation of the Japanese embassies. Befitting their status, the members of the Japanese embassies that were baptized in Mexico City in 1611 and 1614 were assigned godparents from among the elite, and in the latter occasion were baptized by the archbishop in a grand

²¹⁰ Jay Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City. Urban Life in the Age of Atlantic Capitalism* (University of Texas Press, 2005), 115.

²¹¹ Kinsbruner, *The Colonial Spanish-American City*, 116. Kinsbruner supports the assertion citing, Greenow, L. L., “Spatial dimensions of household and family structure in eighteenth-century Spanish America”, Greenow, L. L., *Discussion Paper Series* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University, 1977), 35; and Michael M. Swann, *Tierra Adentro: Settlement and Society in Colonial Durango* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 311, n. 38.

²¹² These areas were the barrio of San Juan and neighboring streets in Mexico City, and, as I will argue in chapter 3, areas along the San Francisco River, especially in the barrio of Analco, in Puebla.

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ceremony.²¹³ It is clear that the choice of a person with whom to establish ritual kinship through baptism was carefully made. Sixty-three of the Japanese of the 1614 embassy also received their confirmation. A high-ranking official, the “fiscal del rey de lo civil,” assisted the archbishop and served as their godparent.²¹⁴ To the New Spanish authorities it was an essential symbolic gesture to show the importance of the embassy by providing godparents with high social or religious standing. I now turn to individuals who did not merit such pomp.

170 individuals were designated as chinos in seventy-eight entries of the baptismal records of the Mexico City cathedral between 1637 and 1642, a period selected because it coincides with the years with highest inflow of Asian migration. It is impossible to ascertain the place of origin of the chinos, because the sources simply refer to them as chinos with no indication of provenance. However, since these dates coincide with a period of relative high number of entries of Asians, I suspect that many of the chino parents and godparents came from Asia and, by cross-referencing my findings, I was able to determine that at least three came from Japan. I summarize the archival findings in table 2.1, which shows only the baptisms of chino children with two chino parents.

Child	Parents	Godparents	Reference
Pascuala	Manuel Pancares y María chinos	Domingo de la Cruz y Cecilia de Jesús chinos	BC5, f. 1
Pedro chino	Nicolás de la Cruz y	Juan y Ana María	BC5, f. 8

²¹³ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 223-225, 369-371.

²¹⁴ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 371.

²¹⁵ Sources are from *Libro de Bautismos de castas del Sagrario de esta Santa Iglesia Catedral de México que comienza en 9 de junio de 1637 hasta 10 de febrero de 1639*. Archivo del Sagrario Metropolitano de la Ciudad de México, Bautismos de Castas 5 (BC5 in table); *Libro de Bautismos de Castas del Sagrario de esta Santa Iglesia Catedral de México que comienza en 13 de febrero de 1639, hasta 9 de mayo de 1640*. Bautismos de Castas 6 (BC6 in table); *Libro de Bautismos de Castas del Sagrario de esta Santa Iglesia Catedral de México que comienza en 1 de mayo de 1640 hasta 28 de abril de 1642*. Bautismos de Castas 7 (BC7 in table). Mexico, Distrito Federal, registros parroquiales y diocesanos, 1514-1970, index and images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.3.1/TH-1-9758-27832-76?cc=1615259&wc=MCSV-7NG:122580201,122898201>] accessed 31/04/2014), Asunción Sagrario Metropolitano (Centro) > Bautismos de castas 1637-1642 > images 7 to 553. Designation is rendered as it appears in the source.

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	Brígida de la Cruz chinos	chinos	
Pedro mestizo	Lorenzo y Francisca chinos	Diego y María mulatos	BC5, f. 8v
Magdalena china	Agustín [?] y María de San Nicolás chinos	Antonia Luisa	BC5, f. 14v
Lorenzo chino	Diego y María chinos	Domingo chino [e] Isabel de Aguilera	BC5, f. 27
Miguel chino	Santiago chino y Madalena González [japona] ²¹⁶	Francisco y Pascuala chinos	BC5, f. 35
Lucas mulato	possible chino parent [source is barely legible]	Marcos Ortiz; Josepha [?]	BC5, f. 40v
Jusepa	Domingo chino y Melchora india	Lucas Rodríguez y María de la Cruz	BC5, f. 44
Leonor	Manuel chino y Clara mestiza	Hipólito de Rivera y María de Villafuerte	BC5, f. 46v
Andrés chino	Domingo y Lucía chinos	Nicolás de la Cruz mestizo	BC5, f. 53
María china	Juan Agustín y Tomasa Guillén chinos	Gerónimo de la Cruz y Juana de Aguilar chinos	BC5, f. 58v
Sebastiana	Pedro de la Torre y María Sánchez chinos	Pedro de la Serra	BC5, f. 69v
Antonio chino	Antonio [?] y Mónica Gómez chinos	Domingo de Arcos y Clara de Alarcón chinos	BC5, f. 83
Juan chino	Domingo chino y Juana mestiza	Pedro Escoto y Juana Guzmán de Soria y Gutiérrez	BC5, f. 87
Domingo mestizo	Antonio chino y María mestiza	Francisco Moreno y María del Rosal	BC5, f. 91v
Juan chino	Juan Donoso y Dominga chinos	Juan de Alvarado y Ana de Silva chinos	BC5, f. 96v
Cristóbal chino	Esteban de Alcazar y María china	Pablo Jimenez y Juana Gómez	BC5, f. 126v
Salvador chino	Salvador [e] Isabel chinos	Simón de la Cruz y Barbola Pérez indios	BC5, f. 174
Juan chino	Pedro y Clara chinos	Juan y Juana chinos	BC6, f. 2v
Julián chino	Domingo de Ortega y María de la O chinos	Domingo de Ortega chino	BC6, f. 6v
Helena chinita	Antonio y María chinos	Nicolás y Mariana de la Cruz	BC6, f. 31
Isidro	Francisco chino y María negra	Ana Diosdado negra	BC6, f. 32v
Polonia	Manuel y María chinos	Gregoria de San Francisco y Luis?	BC6, f. 52v
Bartola china	Antonio Pérez y Catalina Doñates? chinos	Cristóbal Fernández	BC6, 64v
Juan Matheo	Francisco y María chinos	Antonia de Aguilar	BC6, f. 71v

²¹⁶ Magdalena González is designated *japona* in her death record. AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 559, Sagrario Metropolitano, Defunciones de castas. See Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 271.

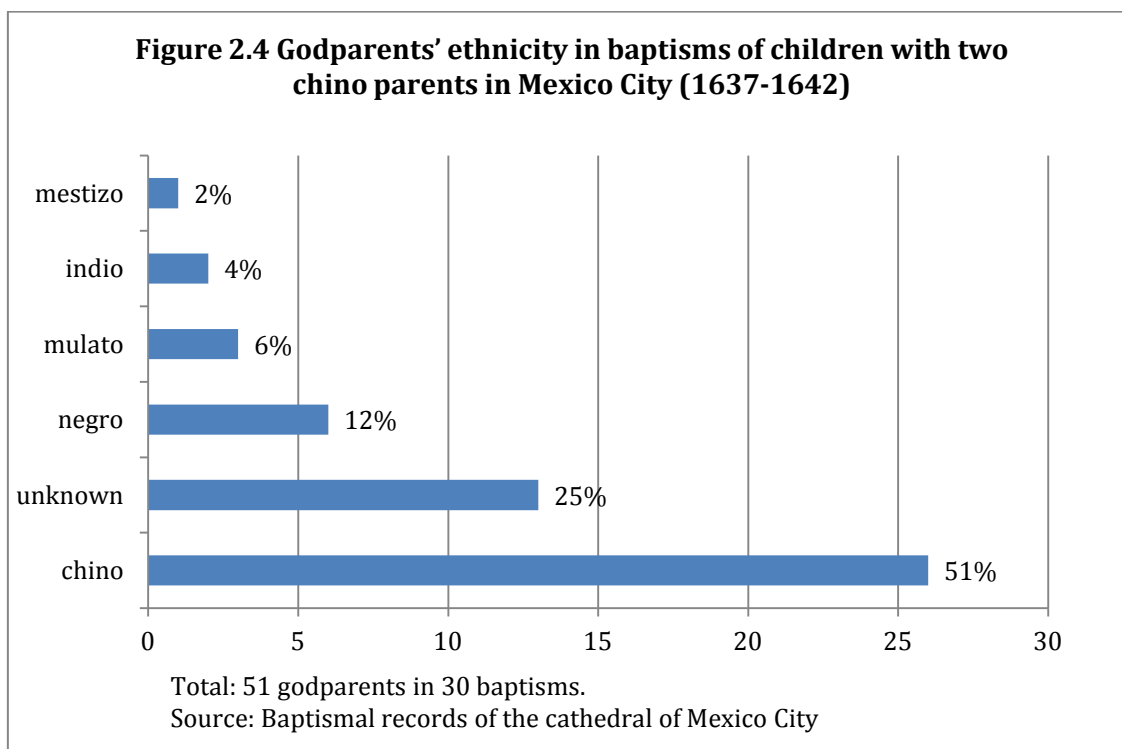
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Simón chino	Antonio y Mónica chinos	Francisco García y Gertrudis chinos	BC6, f. 79v
Francisco chino	Jacinto de la Cruz y María de los Ángeles chinos	Juan Juárez	BC6, f. 80v
Juan chino	Juan y Mónica chinos	Gerónima mulata	BC6, f. 81v
Gregorio	Francisco y María chinos	Luisa y Bartolomé negros	BC6, f. 87
Lucía negra	Antonio y Ana chinos	Antonio y Margarita negros	BC6, f. 92
Andrés chino	Constantino [e] Isabel chinos	Antón y Victoria negros	BC6, f. 100v
Angelina china	Domingo y Lucía chinos	Francisco chino [e] Isabel negra	BC6, f. 120
Domingo chino	Andrés y Bárbara chinos	Joseph de la Cruz chino	BC6, f. 139v
Diego chino	Ventura y Mariana chinos [japones] ²¹⁷	Juan de Alvarado y Juana de la Cruz chinos	BC6, f. 140v
Michaela china	Ventura y Mariana chinos [japones] ²¹⁸	Domingo y María de la Cruz	BC7, f. 3
Nicolás	Sebastián y Catalina chinos	Felipe y María chinos	BC7, f. 31v
Ana	Antonio de la Cruz y Juana de la Cruz chinos	Juan Baptista y Juana de la Cruz	BC7, f. 135

These registers suggest that chino parents preferred to trust the spiritual upbringing of their children to other chinos. Twenty-six out of a total of fifty-one godparents in thirty baptisms of children of two chino parents were chinos as summarized in figure 2.4. This represents 51% of all godparents of such children. The proportion is very likely even higher since the second largest group (thirteen individuals) is that of godparents whose ethnic designation was not registered in the baptismal records. At least some of them were probably chinos. Aside from them I located six negros, three mulatos, two indios, and a single mestizo participating as godparents in these baptisms.

²¹⁷ Ventura and Mariana are designated “japón” and “japona” in AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 643, Mexico, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos de castas. See Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos en la Nueva España”, 265.

²¹⁸ Ventura and Mariana are designated “japón” and “japona” in AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 643, México, Sagrario Metropolitano, Bautismos de castas. See Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos en la Nueva España”, 265.



More research of baptismal records is needed to see whether the results presented here were generalized. Unfortunately I found no information about ethnicity in Puebla parochial baptismal sources. However, I was able to compile a database of 175 Asian, indio chino, and chino individuals that reveal interesting occupational, marital, and spatial patterns in that city. Before turning to those sources, I will briefly summarize information about the chino communities in places in Spanish America outside New Spain.

2.5 Asians in the Spanish empire outside New Spain

Because of its large and diversified economy, and the direct connection it had with Asia in the first decades of transpacific exchange, it is almost certain that Peru boasted the largest Asian community in Spanish America outside New Spain. According to Fernando Iwasaki, very early in the history of Spanish exploration in the Pacific, “comenzaban a figurar en los censos los primeros chinos y japoneses del Perú.”²¹⁹ A *padrón*, or tributary census, compiled in Lima in 1613 includes information about “114 [Asians]: 38 eran chinos o filipinos, 20 japoneses, y los 56

²¹⁹ Iwasaki Cauti, *Extremo Oriente y el Perú*, 17.

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restantes de la 'India de Portugal,' categoría que comprende a varios malayos y un camboyano."²²⁰ I am confident these immigrants represent only a portion of the Asians that must have made their way to Peru. A deeper analysis using parochial and notarial data is needed to verify this migration and understand its scope and specific characteristics. An interesting line of inquiry would be to see whether they reached Potosí or other inland mining centers, or remained along the Pacific coast. A comprehensive survey of Peruvian sources would provide an opportunity to compare the experience of those Asians who reached Peru with those present in New Spain.

Being the center of Spain's interoceanic trade, Seville attracted Asian immigrants from the second half of the sixteenth century. Juan Gil analyzes several cases of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos that lived in that city.²²¹ The majority of the examples Gil cites are slaves. One of them, Diego, asserted his condition as indio, subjects of the crown, and thus unlawfully enslaved. His owner claimed he had purchased Diego in Goa, and presented several Portuguese witnesses that testified that all the "indios de Portugal" were slaves.²²² Other Asian denizens of Seville testified in the legal proceedings of this case falsely arguing that they came from a place in China colonized by Spaniards.²²³ Additionally, Gil located mentions of two Japanese men in Esteban de Cabrera's last will, a person who claimed to hail from Canton, all living in Seville around 1599. Cabrera claimed the two Japanese owed him money.²²⁴

It seems, rather surprisingly, that California, a region situated on the course of the Manila Galleon saw a relatively small inflow of Asian migration. The first Filipinos were the indios *luzones* that arrived with the expedition led by Pedro de Unamuno

²²⁰ Sánchez Albornoz, *La población de América Latina*, 95, cited in Iwasaki, *Extremo Oriente y el Perú*, 293. See also Patricia Palma, "'Indios del Xapón'. Primeras migraciones japonesas al virreinato del Perú, siglos XVI-XVII" (paper presented at I Jornada de estudios japoneses, Universidad Católica, Santiago de Chile, April 5, 2008).

²²¹ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 233-249.

²²² Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 240-241.

²²³ Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 244-248.

²²⁴ "Testamento del cantonés Esteban de Cabrera," Archivo Provincial de Sevilla I 1599, 1 [208], f. 906, transcribed in Gil, *La India y el Lejano Oriente*, 286-290.

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in 1587. It is interesting that the Spaniards did not call them chinos, and instead used the term indios luzones “to set them apart [...] from the Indians encountered in the exploration of lands along the California coast.”²²⁵ According to Hector Santos, the landing of the expedition in Morro Bay “marked the first presence of Filipinos (referred to in the ship’s logs as Luzones Indios) in the continental United States.”²²⁶ Santos argues that Unamuno and a party of twelve arquebuses was followed ashore by “another group of Luzon indios of undetermined number led by the priest from Macao, Fr. Martín Ignacio de Loyola.”²²⁷ Despite this early contact, it seems there were not very many Asians that followed these first pioneers. The forbidding nature of the California coast, and the course of the Manila Galleon route which emerged further south before turning to Acapulco, help explain why there was not a lot of galleon-derived activity in California, including Asian migration.²²⁸ It seems that it was not until the eighteenth century, when Franciscans started founding missions along the California coast, and Spanish exploration of the region began in earnest in response to Russian and British challenges to Spanish hegemony in the Pacific Northwest, that the next group of Asian immigrants arrived. One of them, according to Mercene, was Narciso, the Filipino personal servant of Junípero Serra (1713-1784), the Majorcan presiding father of the Alta California missions.²²⁹

Also in the eighteenth century, during the brief period of Spanish control over Louisiana, the first Filipinos settled in the lower Mississippi. As Marina Espina argues, “Filipinos came to Louisiana as a result of the Manila galleon trade conducted between the Philippines and Mexico.”²³⁰ Espina provides a timeline, stating “as early as 1765 Filipinos lived in small groups along the coast and delta

²²⁵ Eloisa Gómez Borah, “Filipinos in Unamuno’s California Expedition of 1587”, *Amerasia Journal* 21, 3 (1995-1996): 175-183.

²²⁶ Héctor Santos, “Did Philippine indios really land in Morro Bay?”, *Sulat sa Tansô*, 1995, accessed 20/09/2013, <http://www.bibingka.com/sst/esperanza/morrobay.htm>.

²²⁷ Santos, “Did Philippine indios”.

²²⁸ Schurz, “The Manila Galleon and California”, 107-126.

²²⁹ Mercene, *Manilamen in the New World*, 68.

²³⁰ Marina E. Espina, *Filipinos in Louisiana* (New Orleans: A.F. Laborde and Sons, 1988), 1. See also Mercene, *Manila Men in the New World*, 93-95.

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lands of Southeast Louisiana.”²³¹ Espina argues that the immigrants were Filipino seamen who jumped ship in Acapulco and “because they spoke Spanish” and were able to hide themselves among the Mexican population, “many of them gradually made their way by boat to the fertile fishing grounds of Louisiana.”²³² Espina’s is a valuable contribution, since, apart from her work, it seems no investigation has been conducted regarding Filipino migration to Louisiana prior to the Spanish American War in 1898, when “Filipino immigration to America was officially opened.”²³³ However it seems like a rather romanticized vision. Rather than refugees making their way across Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico to reach their freedom, the Filipinos of Louisiana were most likely chinos contracted in Veracruz to serve as sailors and militiamen in Louisiana. More archival research is needed to learn more about this migration.

Lastly, there is information about an indio chino on the other edge of the empire. An anonymous account of a voyage of the vessel *San Martín* from Buenos Aires to San Julián in Patagonia in 1752, mentions an indio chino sailor called José.²³⁴ It is unclear whether this suggests that there was another group of Asians settled in Buenos Aires.

²³¹ Espina, *Filipinos in Louisiana*, 38.

²³² Espina, *Filipinos in Louisiana*, 39.

²³³ Espina, *Filipinos in Louisiana*, 57.

²³⁴ Anonymous, *Viaje que hizo el “San Martín”, desde Buenos Aires al Puerto de San Julián, el año de 1752* (Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, Universidad de Alicante, 2002, originally written 1752-1755), 26.

CHAPTER 3

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PUEBLA AND ASIA: ECONOMIC INTERACTIONS AND THE CASE OF LA CHINA POBLANA

This chapter provides a framework for the more in-depth analysis of the Asian population of Puebla in chapter four. It shows how the city of Puebla de los Ángeles in central New Spain played a vital role in consolidating the Manila Galleon, and discusses the life of the most famous Asian immigrant in New Spain, Catarina de San Juan, who lived in Puebla in the seventeenth century. Being the second most important urban center in New Spain, Puebla is key to the discussion of Asian relations with the Americas, as the city's economy facilitated transpacific interactions. Puebla hosted a significant cohort of the *chinos* of New Spain and the efforts of its population to assert their centrality made this city a production center of representations of Asia. In the following sections I discuss how the well-known story of Catarina de San Juan is a chief example of how the history of Puebla, the history of Asian migration, and the history of the image of Asia in New Spanish literature intertwined and how they represent complimentary aspects of the early globalizing influences of the Manila Galleon.

The analysis starts with a brief introduction to the history of the foundation of Puebla de los Ángeles, and its rise to become the second largest city in the viceroyalty and a manufacturing center that produced goods such as flour, baked goods, ceramics, woolens, soap, and cochineal dyes, sold throughout New Spain

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and beyond. The chapter explains how this development made it an attractive destination for free immigrants from Asia, and a market for the slaves brought from Manila, and highlights the specific ways Puebla was connected to the Manila Galleon and Asia. The city provided foodstuffs required for the long journey to Manila, and its inhabitants consumed a portion of the luxury goods imported from Asia, contributing to the profitability of the trade route. Puebla was linked to trade in the Pacific, as its budding woolens industry supplied the Peruvian market until the 1630s. The city's history intertwined with that of Asia for almost 250 years, from the discovery of the Manila-Acapulco route in 1565, to the abolition of the Manila Galleon and the seizure of Acapulco by the Insurgente rebels in 1815. A direct consequence of this relationship was the establishment of the first wave of forced and free Asian migration to Puebla, analyzed in detail in chapter four.

The last section is about Catarina de San Juan, one of the most renowned religious figures of Puebla in the seventeenth century and the most famous Asian immigrant in New Spain. I summarize the state of the art regarding her life and some of the key elements in her biography, and provide an analysis of the passages in her life stories that reveal information about the Asian Diaspora's place in Pueblan society. I argue that the importance of this figure in relation to the wider phenomenon of Asian migration is that the stories about her life reveal perceptions about *chinos* in general, and are a relevant part of the configuration of the image of Asia in New Spanish literature.

3.1 Puebla de los Ángeles: foundation and development

The foremost researchers of the Asian Diaspora in New Spain agree that Puebla de los Ángeles was home to a relatively large portion of it. Oropeza theorized that although the largest group of *chinos* and *indios chinos* settled in Mexico City, another large community lived in Puebla, after finding fiscal records of many merchants from the city that traveled to Acapulco to supply the ships with *bizcocho*, the biscuit or hardtack sailors depended on for their long sea voyages.¹

¹ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' de la Nueva España", 107.

Slack also argued that Puebla was among the cities with the largest Asian populations, suggesting the possibility that they were involved in the famous Talavera ceramics industry, which to a certain extent, imitated Chinese styles.²

Edwin Altee Barber, Donna Pierce, Margaret Connors McQuade, and Suzanne Valenstein, and George Kuwayama have studied Chinese motifs in Talavera ceramics, often pointing to the 1653 guild regulation that fostered their imitation.³ According to Sanabrais this regulation stated that:

In making the fine wares the coloring should be in imitation of the Chinese ware, very blue, finished in same style and with relief work in blue, and on this style of pottery there should be painted black dots and grounds in colors.⁴

However, as Gustavo Curiel argues, “it is necessary to undo, once and for all, the general and erroneous idea that the blue-and-white ceramics of Puebla were simple copies of Chinese porcelain.”⁵ Chinese motifs were only one of various types of decorations found in these artifacts, and thus, Pueblan enameled ceramics did not merely “slavishly [imitate] the Ming dynasty *qingbai* (blue and white) style” porcelain, as Slack suggests.⁶ As discussed in chapter four, there is no evidence linking Asians to this particular craft, however, the sources suggest the city of Puebla de los Ángeles did have, the second largest Asian community in central New Spain, throughout most of the colonial period. Puebla attracted Asians, indios chinos, and chinos and, together with their descendants, they formed a small but

² Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 42-43.

³ Curiel, “Perceptions of the Other”, 33; Edwin Altee Barber, “The Maiolica of Mexico”, in *Art Handbook of the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, 1908), 59-72; Robin Farwell Gavin, Donna Pierce, Alfonso Plezquezuelo, and New Mexico Museum of International Folk Art, *Cerámica y Cultura. The Story of Spanish and Mexican Mayólica* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003). The most recent work on the subject is Meha Priyadarshini, “From the Chinese Guan to the Mexican Chocolatero: A Tactile History of the Transpacific Trade, 1571-1815 ” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2014). The dissertation is currently not available at the request of the author.

⁴ Sanabrais, “The Biombo or Folding Screen”, 80.

⁵ Curiel, “Perceptions of the Other”, 34, n. 8.

⁶ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 44.

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visible minority. This attraction was due to Puebla's extraordinary economic success and growth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Puebla was founded in 1531. According to Julia Linn Bell Hirschberg, the city was the result of coinciding views of religious and secular authorities in New Spain that "urban experimentation" was "the key to accomplishing the Crown's major goals of protecting the Indians and civilizing *conquistadores*."⁷ The foundation of Puebla de los Ángeles was an ultimately failed social experiment aimed at debunking the notion put forward by the *encomenderos* that Spaniards were incapable of surviving in the New World without forced Indigenous labor.⁸ It was intended to be a completely new city populated exclusively by Spanish farmers that would receive equal parcels of land and no assistance from the surrounding population⁹. In one contemporary source, an official argued in a letter to the Crown that it was also necessary to establish large Spanish settlements to provide a place to live for white "vagabonds"¹⁰ who ransacked the countryside to the point that there was, according to a 1531 source, "no village, outside Mexico [City] they do not destroy and rob."¹¹

Like in most Spanish American cities of the time, spacious streets formed a grid, or *traza*, of rectangular plots of land that would later contain the great houses and churches the city became famous for. It did not take long before several irregular *barrios* or wards formed a semicircle from the North East to the North West surrounding the *traza* of Puebla. The *barrios* were neighbourhoods or settlements primarily inhabited by Indigenous families—the first ones were called Santiago,

⁷ Julia Linn Bell Hirschberg, "A social history of Puebla de los Ángeles, 1531-60" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1976), 6.

⁸ Miguel Ángel Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles en tiempos de una peste colonial: una mirada en torno al Matlazahuatl de 1737* (Zamora and Puebla: El Colegio de Michoacán and Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 1999), 58.

⁹ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 58.

¹⁰ Hirschberg, "A social history of Puebla", 30; Miguel Marín Bosch, *Puebla Neocolonial, 1777-1831: Casta, Ocupación y Matrimonio en la Segunda Ciudad de Nueva España* (Zapopan, Jalisco: El Colegio de Jalisco, 1999), 18.

¹¹ "Carta del Lic. Altamirano a la Corona, 12 de marzo de 1531", cited in Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 58.

San Pablo, San Sebastián and San Francisco.¹² In 1568, 2.168 indios lived in the peripheral barrios and by 1572, 3.000 of the 4.000 total population of the city were indios.¹³ The non-white population eventually spilled into the *traza*, accompanied, first by African, and later by Asian slaves and workers. By 1681, indios and castas represented almost seventy-five percent of Puebla's population¹⁴. However, according to Miguel Ángel Cuenya, the planning of the city as a community populated exclusively by settlers of European descent did influence its demographic structure, in that *españoles*, i.e. people of European descent born in the Americas, as well as a very small number of Europeans, and *mestizos* were predominant in the city center.¹⁵

Despite its failure as a social experiment—the city did not become the Spanish utopia it was supposed to be—Puebla de los Ángeles grew and prospered throughout the sixteenth century. Its location was privileged, boasting access to resources and major trade routes, providing it with raw materials and markets for its crafts. As Jan Bazant summarizes,

The location, both from the point of view of roads and resources, was excellent. The region lacked precious metals, but the land was fertile. Puebla ground its wheat and converted its corn into pork and fine bacon, turning excess fat into soap. Silk worms were bred; cochineal was collected for dye. An abundance of streams served dye-works and water-powered mills for a variety of purposes. Nearby forests furnished fuel, local limestone provided building materials; fullers' earth was found for the woolen industry; clays for both fine and coarse pottery were at hand, and some other raw materials.¹⁶

¹² Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 82. Hirschberg, "A social history of Puebla", 416-417.

¹³ Marín, *Puebla Neocolonial*, 20.

¹⁴ Velasco and Sierra, "Mine Workers and Weavers", 105.

¹⁵ Miguel Ángel Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía, 1650-1850. Una aproximación al tema", in *Puebla, de la Colonia a la Revolución: estudios de historia regional* (Puebla: Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. Centro de Investigaciones Históricas y Sociales, Latin American Studies Association. International Congress, 1987), 9-72.

¹⁶ Jan Bazant, "Evolution of the Textile Industry of Puebla, 1544-1845", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 7, 1 (1964): 58.

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Dominican friar Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa described the city in the 1610s, also pointing out its strategic location,

Being halfway between the ports of Veracruz and Acapulco, there is much trade. The rich *encomenderos* and the *vecinos* of this city enjoy large quantities of goods that arrive at each port. [...] There are many rich and populated cities in this district where large amounts of very fine grana is collected, it [also] has obrajes among other local products. [...] This is why this city has grown and continues to grow, and its inhabitants are prosperous and rich.¹⁷

Until the end of the seventeenth century, immigrants flocked to Puebla, attracted by the city's growing economic, cultural, and religious importance.¹⁸ The newcomers' added momentum to the city's development until, according to Miguel Ángel Cuenya, "in population, in legal precedence, in commerce, in civic prestige, and even in the splendour of its cathedral, colonial Puebla [was able to maintain] more than the pretence of rivalry with the capital [Mexico City]."¹⁹

In similar fashion, traveller Alonso Ramírez's 1690 description of the city reads,

Those who live in la Puebla say that it is second only to Mexico City in the area it encompasses, in the cheerful openness of its streets, and in the magnificence of its temples, as well as in every other possible point of comparison. It appeared to me—for I had not seen anything comparable before—that in a city that large I would have no problem finding great conveniences.²⁰

¹⁷ Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Descripción*, 87-88, cited in Juan Carlos Garavaglia and Juan Carlos Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala y la economía novohispana (1680-1810)", *Puebla, de la Colonia a la Revolución*, 112.

¹⁸ Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía", 51-52.

¹⁹ Hirschberg, "A social history of Puebla", 1.

²⁰ Alonso Ramírez and Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, *The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez*, trans. Fabio López Lázaro (Austin TX: The University of Texas Press, 2011, originally published in 1690), 108.

Together with its growing importance, craftsmen began developing and perfecting products. This is the reason why Jan Bazant calls Puebla “the commercial and industrial capital of New Spain”,²¹ explaining how,

In Puebla the influence of the Church favored the development of a number of luxury industries: silk weaving, wrought iron work, wood carving of an extremely vigorous character, Talavera pottery, tiles, and furniture inlaid with mother-of-pearl, ivory, silver and tortoise shell.²²

The soap produced in Puebla gained almost as much notoriety as its famous *Talavera poblana* ceramics. In the sixteenth and most of the seventeenth century, nearby Tlaxcala, Cholula and Tepeaca were second only to the Mixteca region in Oaxaca in the quality of the cochineal red dyes they produced.²³ These dyes were used in Puebla’s silk industry²⁴ which imploded upon the arrival of the Manila Galleon Asian silk imports, and the prohibition to trade with Peru in 1634²⁵. While these industries were important, flour and woollens were the true staples of the Pueblan economy.

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Early in the city’s history, European wheat and agricultural technology were introduced to Puebla and its hinterland. The first flourmills and ploughs in New Spain transformed the Puebla region into the first site of commercial agriculture in the viceroyalty²⁶ and the area shortly became its most important cereal producer. The region’s wheat production enabled the work of millers, bakers, hardtack or

²¹ Bazant, “Evolution of the Textile Industry”, 56.

²² Bazant, “Evolution of the Textile Industry”, 56-57.

²³ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 112.

²⁴ Bazant, “Evolution of the Textile Industry”, 61; Woodrow Borah, *Silk Raising in Colonial Mexico* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1943), 35.

²⁵ Borah, *Silk Raising*, 35, 43, cited in Bazant, “Evolution of the Textile Industry”, 61.

²⁶ Alejandra Moreno Toscano, “Economía regional y urbanización: tres ejemplos de relaciones entre ciudades y regiones en Nueva España a finales del siglo XVIII”, *Actas del XXXII Congreso Internacional de Americanistas* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1972), 98, cited in Manuel Miño Grijalva, *El mundo novohispano, Población, ciudades y economía, siglos XVII y XVIII* (Mexico: El Colegio de México, Fideicomiso Historia de las Américas, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001), 89.

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biscuit makers, and the required workforce used for transportation of these goods. These products, together with soap and leather, were made for far-off markets, and their trade connected Puebla with Oaxaca to the south, and the Caribbean to the east.²⁷ *Poblanos* textile merchants sold their products across the country, while the flour that came out its mills supplied markets beyond central New Spain, crossing the Gulf of Mexico to reach Havana, Maracaibo²⁸ and Florida. Juan Carlos Garavaglia and Juan Carlos Grosso note that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Puebla was not only the most important wheat producing region in terms of volume, but it also had the highest concentration of wheat mills in New Spain. The authors also point out that commerce of this flour, together with consumption of baked goods in the city itself provided work for millers, sifters, muleteers, bakers, silo keepers, and bizcocho.²⁹ Part of this bizcocho fed the crews both of the Spanish fleet in the Atlantic, the *Armada de Barlovento*, and the galleons on their way back to Manila.³⁰ I adapt information about Pueblan hardtack supply to the navies compiled by Juan Carlos Grosso and Juan Carlos Garavaglia in figure 3.1.

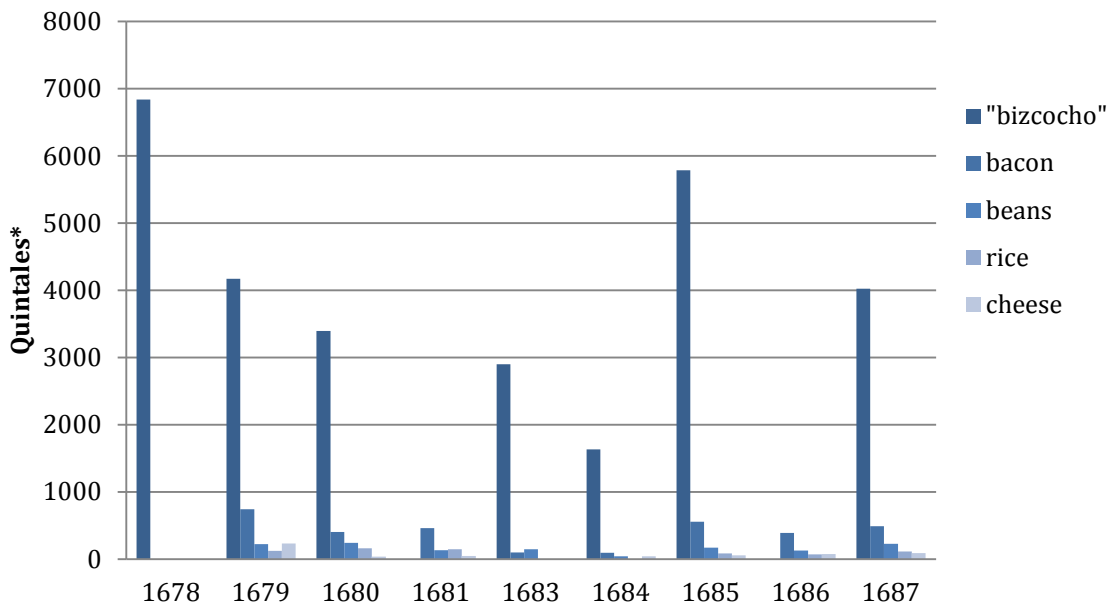
²⁷ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 95.

²⁸ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 89.

²⁹ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 101.

³⁰ Carmen Yuste, “Los tratos mercantiles transpacíficos”, in *El Galeón de Manila, un mar de historias. Primeras Jornadas Culturales Mexicano-Filipinas, México, 12-13 de junio de 1996, octubre-diciembre de 1996*, in Gemma Cruz et al. (Mexico: JGH editores, 1997), 59.

Figure 3.1 Foodstuff supply to the Armada de Barlovento, Acapulco, and Galleons from Puebla (1678-1687)



Source: Adapted from Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 103. The authors also compiled references to shipments of 229, 146, 88 and 67 arrobas of butter in 1679, 1680, 1681, and 1687, respectively. The majority of these shipments were destined to the fleets in the Atlantic, while Acapulco and the galleons were, according to Garavaglia and Grosso only a very secondary destination.

I must now turn to the textile manufacturing sector of the Pueblan economy because it would come to employ a large portion of the Asian free and slave laborers in Puebla. Starting around 1550, the Pueblan textile industry flourished, structured around large mills called *obrajes*. Wool for the *obrajes* came from flocks that grazed in the mountains bordering the Atlantic.³¹ By 1579 there were 40 *obrajes* operating in the city. In 1622 only 22 remained, but it was only after 1630 that Puebla (along with Tlaxcala, Mexico City, and Texcoco) began its decline as a woollens-manufacturing centre. The industry shifted to cotton but by 1790, there were only two *obrajes* left in Puebla.³² The *obrajes* were famous for their harsh working environment, featuring forms of forced labor, including bondage by debts and slavery, and sometimes imprisonment of their workers. Authorities tried to

³¹ Richard J. Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico, An Economic History of the Obrajes, 1539-1840* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 46

³² Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 90.

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protect the local indigenous population from abuse from obrajeros. However, effective protection was not enforced, as city officials discussed the need to employ indios in the obrajes arguing the cloth they produced was a vital commodity that was sent to Peru and “China,” i.e. the Philippines.³³

The growth of all these industries generated great demand for labor at a time where the local workforce was dwindling. The population of New Spain was determined by fluctuations in the indigenous population. This population fell rapidly in the wake of the Spanish conquest, the drop slowing down between 1540 and 1570 only to resume between the end of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, at which point it reached its lowest figures.³⁴ In the second half of the seventeenth century the indigenous population began to grow slowly.³⁵ In spite of this demographic disaster, concurrently, the population in cities grew consistently.³⁶ The indigenous population collapse was the driving force behind the introduction of slaves from Africa and Asia. The rising prosperity of cities in central New Spain also drew free Asians to them, and Puebla was no exception.

The constant arrival of Filipinos, and South and South East Asians was a direct consequence of Puebla’s involvement in the Manila Galleon trade. Sailing back to the archipelago was due in part to the aforementioned shipments of bizcocho and other foodstuffs from Puebla.³⁷ Wine, canvas hats, and thread, and other products associated with Puebla, especially soap and cochineal,³⁸ complimented silver, the most important commodity embarked on the Galleons in Acapulco.³⁹ The Manila Galleon was an important source of income for the Puebla customs. In as late a date as 1699, when trade had long been in decline, the Galleon generated 14.038

³³ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 15, doc. 166, asunto 6, 111v-112v.

³⁴ Woodrow Borah, *El siglo de la depresión en Nueva España* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1975), 36, cited in Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 23.

³⁵ Linda A. Newson, “Indian population Patterns in Colonial Spanish America”, *Latin American Research Review* 20, 1 (1985): 44, cited in Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 23.

³⁶ Jorge Enrique Hardoy, “Escalas y funciones urbanas en la América hispánica hacia el año 1600. Primeras conclusiones”, in *Actas del XXXVII Congreso Internacional de Americanistas*, Vol. I (Buenos Aires, 1968), 187, cited in Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 55.

³⁷ Carmen Yuste, “Los tratos mercantiles transpacíficos”, 59.

³⁸ Marín Bosch, *Puebla neocolonial*, 55.

³⁹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 55; Carmen Yuste, “El galeón en la economía colonial”, in *El Galeón del Pacífico*, ed. Benítez, 104.

pesos in taxes for the city, and between 1705 and 1723 this figure was between 6.706 and 9.235 pesos.⁴⁰

Asian luxuries introduced through Acapulco found in Puebla a market almost as large and rich as Mexico City. Taxes on Manila Galleon imports represented a major source of income for the local treasury. Pieces of furniture manufactured in Asia found their way to this market. Japanese biombos were among the most prized items transported to Acapulco. Two of them were listed in an inventory of the cathedral of Puebla in 1656.⁴¹ It is not possible to tell whether these items were direct Asian imports, since New Spain artisans adapted this art form and developed their own biombos throughout the seventeenth century and beyond. However, a particularly interesting piece of furniture does seem to have been imported from Asia. Preserved in the Museo José Luis Bello y González in Puebla, it is a seventeenth century wooden chest inlaid with an oil painting of the cityscape of Manila including the Parián, the quarter inhabited by Chinese immigrants⁴² shown in picture 3.1.

⁴⁰ Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 117-118.

⁴¹ Pierce and Otsuka, eds., *Asia and Spanish America*, 81.

⁴² Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 168.

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Picture 3.1 *Arcón filipino* depicting Manila on its lid



Chest on display at Museo José Luis Bello y González, Puebla. Photo by Rubén Carrillo Fabila.

The influence of Asia in the arts and crafts of central New Spain was not limited to pieces of furniture such as the biombos. Most famously, the Manila Galleon influenced the ceramics industry. Ceramics artisans in Puebla imitated the shape and decoration of Chinese porcelain.⁴³ The achievements of the makers of these wares were a source of pride for the people of Puebla, even claiming they were equal, if not superior, to those from China.⁴⁴

The intricate relationship between Puebla de los Ángeles and Asia is reflected in the records kept by the cabildo, or municipal council. The *actas de cabildo* contain frequent mentions to Asia and transpacific trade. In 1631 part of a session was

⁴³ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 177.

⁴⁴ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 57.

devoted to discuss the price of various products of Castile and China⁴⁵. The work of missionaries in Asia was discussed in the cabildo sessions. The assembly ordered lights, bonfires and fireworks to be lit in front of the *casas de cabildo* to celebrate the martyrs of Japan in 1628.⁴⁶ The celebrations were held again the following year.⁴⁷ According to one *acta*, in 1684 the city officials organized a petition to collect alms for the beatification of fray Bartolomé Gutiérrez, “quien padeció martirio en el Japón en el año de 1632.”⁴⁸ Gutierrez was born in Mexico in 1580 and burnt at the stake in Omura, Japan in 1632.⁴⁹

However, for the members of the cabildo, the most important affair concerning Asia was the supply of foodstuffs and manpower to maintain commerce with and military control of the Philippines. In 1599 the cabildo gave a license to Pedro Gutiérrez Asperilla to supply 500 quintales⁵⁰ of “bizcocho bazo” and 50 “del blanco” to supply the port of Veracruz and the ships of Philippines.⁵¹ Also in 1599, the cabildo authorized an inspection of the bizcocheros that were to supply the port of Acapulco, “dejándoles la cantidad específica del remate y lo demás lo encierren debajo de la vela, para que no se pueda disponer del bizcocho, sin licencia de la ciudad.”⁵² In 1625 the city paid 1.131 gold pesos to a muleteer to transport 800 quintales of bizcocho bazo and 100 of blanco to Acapulco “conforme a mandamiento del virrey Rodrigo Pacheco.”⁵³ Another *acta*, written the following year, talks about 1.500 quintales of bizcocho bazo and 200 of bizcocho blanco to be sent to the Philippines “y Real Campo de Manila para ayuda de soldados y marineros.”⁵⁴ Sending these resources seemingly strained the local economy. This could be the reason why, in 1627, the cabildo agreed not to send the supplies of bizcocho bazo and bizcocho blanco. The same document states that the cabildo

⁴⁵ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 17, doc. 283, asunto 5, 24/10/1631, 293-293v.

⁴⁶ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 17, doc. 119, asunto 2, 5/9/1628, 122-122v.

⁴⁷ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 17, doc. 138, asunto 4, 26/1/1629, f. 146-146v.

⁴⁸ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 31, doc. 8, asunto 3, 18/3/1684.

⁴⁹ “Beato Bartolomé Gutiérrez”, Santoral Católico, EWTN, accessed 01/16/2014, http://www.ewtn.com/spanish/saints/Bartolom%C3%A9_Guti%C3%A9rrez.htm.

⁵⁰ A quintal of 100 pounds equaled 46kg in Castile (DRAE).

⁵¹ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 13, doc. 157, asunto 2, 25/10/1599, f. 86v.

⁵² AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 13, doc. 160, asunto 2, 3/11/1599, f. 87v-88.

⁵³ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 16, doc. 254, asunto 2, 26/2/1625, f. 246.

⁵⁴ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 16, doc. 333, asunto 3, 19/5/1626, f. 322-322v.

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also agreed not to send sailors, cabin boys and supplies to the “naos que salen de Acapulco rumbo a Filipinas.”⁵⁵ Discussions over supplies to Acapulco were recorded in cabildo sessions twice more in 1627⁵⁶ and in 1635,⁵⁷ 1638,⁵⁸ 1640,⁵⁹ 1643,⁶⁰ 1644,⁶¹ 1647,⁶² 1647,⁶³ 1648,⁶⁴ 1650,⁶⁵ and 1651.⁶⁶

Raising levies of soldiers for service in the Philippines was likewise debated in the cabildo sessions. Levies of conscripts and volunteers were recruited in many of the major cities in New Spain.⁶⁷ The viceroy first instructed the cabildo to finance the levies to the Philippines in 1597.⁶⁸ A minute dated in 1625 discusses the amount of money used to pay for soldiers and supplies to dispatch to Acapulco “para provision de los naos y gente de mar y Guerra que partieron a Filipinas.”⁶⁹

People involved in the making of bizcocho for the vessels and recruiting soldiers for the Philippines were connected to the migratory flow from Asia to Puebla. Clemente Patiño, a baker who made bizcocho for the Galleon⁷⁰ owned at least four slaves from the Philippines.⁷¹ Jacinto de Rivas, an infantry captain who served in

⁵⁵ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol 17, doc. 35, asunto 27, 2/1/1627, f. 36v.

⁵⁶ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 17, doc. 45, asunto 2, 5/3/1627, f. 45. AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 17, doc. 47, asunto 3, 16/3/1627, f. 47v.

⁵⁷ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 18, doc. 132, asunto 3, 26/11/1635, 147v-148.

⁵⁸ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 18, doc. 254, asunto 5, 1/2/1638, f. 296-296v.

⁵⁹ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 19, doc. 84, asunto 2, 25/2/1640, 112v-113.

⁶⁰ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 20, doc. 54, asunto 3, 20/10/1643, f. 101-106.

⁶¹ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 21, doc. 26, asunto 2, 16/12/1644, f. 50v-51.

⁶² AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 22, doc. 2, asunto 33, 2/1/1647, 8-8v.

⁶³ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 22, doc. 44, asunto 3, 30/10/1647, 96v-97.

⁶⁴ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 22, doc. 64, asunto 3, 21/2/1648, 142v-143.

⁶⁵ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 23, doc. 9, asunto 3, 2/3/1650, 29-29v.

⁶⁶ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 23, doc. 49, asunto 2, 10/2/1651, 109-110.

⁶⁷ One such levy, for example, was raised in the city of Oaxaca (Antequera) in 1631. The *real provisión* naming its captain stated that the company “se levantará con gente que será enviada, como cada año, para el socorro de los Filipinos”, in AGN, Tierras, vol. 2941, exp. 11, ff. 19-19v (1631). See also García de los Arcos, *Forzados y reclutas*.

⁶⁸ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 13, doc. 41, asunto 1, 31/12/1597, 24f.

⁶⁹ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 16, doc. 256, asunto 7, 10/5/1625, f. 257.

⁷⁰ *Denuncia hecha por Clemente Patiño, vecino de la Ciudad de los Ángeles, en contra del Alcalde Mayor de Puebla, por no hacerle el pago correspondiente de un flete que le solicitó*. AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Alcaldes Mayores, caja 1261, exp. 20, 1654.

⁷¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, San José, *Libro de matrimonios de morenos* (1629-1657) ff. 29v, 30v, 31bisv, 35.

the Philippines and as captain in one of the voyages back to Acapulco, owned a slave that was described as a “chino de tierra bengala.”⁷²

The *actas de cabildo* also contain direct references to Asian migration to the city. In 1642 the cabildo assigned judges to participate in the proceedings of the *alcalde ordinario*, Antonio López de Otamendi against Mateo de Córdoba, a chino from Ceylon, who was forced to pay 142 pesos.⁷³ Another mention to a possible Asian immigrant occurred when the cabildo organized a committee to inspect a plot of land in Analco in 1659. To specify which plot of land was to be surveyed, the cabildo detailed that it neighbored “la huerta de las granadinas, [the] casas de Juan Rodríguez guantero y [...] casas de Lorenzo Francisco, chino.”⁷⁴

Thus, the city of Puebla de los Ángeles was connected to Asia in its economy, material culture and governance. One last example of this enduring and profound relationship illustrates the cultural link between the city and Asia. The longest biography ever printed in New Spain was written in Puebla about an immigrant Mughal princess called Catarina de San Juan.

3.3 The most famous Asian in Puebla: Catarina de San Juan

Any history of the Asian group in colonial Puebla must analyze the life and biographies of Mirra, also known as Catarina de San Juan. She is the most famous Asian to have lived in Puebla, and New Spain as a whole. Taken captive in India and sold into slavery in Manila, she was bought by a rich merchant from Puebla and lived most of her life in that city, from 1621 to 1688. She became famous for her pious lifestyle and the visions of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and many saints and angels she allegedly had throughout her life. Upon her death, she was the subject of three biographies, one of which was the longest ever written in New Spain. In the nineteenth century she was romantically related to today’s quintessential

⁷² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, San José, *Libro de matrimonios de morenos* (1629-1657), f. 33.

⁷³ AGMP, *Actas de Cabildo*, Vol. 19, doc. 228, asunto 4, 07/29/1642, f. 335.

⁷⁴ AGMP, *Actas de Cabildo*, vol. 24, doc. 201, asunto 7, 1/4/1659, f. 468-468v.

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traditional Mexican woman's dress known as *china poblana*. For Oropeza, there is no doubt Catarina de San Juan was the most outstanding Asian religious figure in New Spain.⁷⁵ Seijas admits that this visionary was the inspiration for her thesis about Asian migration in New Spain.⁷⁶ Slack cites the old tradition that Catarina de San Juan is credited with inventing the china poblana garment.⁷⁷ I include her in this study because there are passages in her biography that illustrate perceptions and roles of the Pueblan chino group as a whole. In order to provide some context, I first summarize her life, discussing the multilayered nature of biographies, and highlighting the legends surrounding her about matters such as the language she spoke and the way she dressed. I focus on her relation to the china poblana costume because my chief argument regarding Catarina de San Juan is that her biographies illustrate the life conditions of an overlooked minority living in seventeenth-century Puebla, and that this is a legacy that far outweighs her alleged sartorial contributions. Furthermore, I will discuss the representations of Asia present in these books in chapter six, asserting that her biography is part of the history of Asia in New Spanish literature.

According to Gauvin Bailey, the archetypical woman wearing a china poblana outfit “went on to epitomize the Republican spirit following the French invasion (1862-1863), and eventually embodied the very essence of Mexico itself.”⁷⁸ The china was strongly asserted as a symbol of Mexican femininity in the mid-nineteenth century, with one author writing, “antes que a cualquiera otra persona feminil, le presentaré mi *China* al lector, [...] mi tipo nacional predilecto.”⁷⁹ Margarita de

⁷⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 149.

⁷⁶ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 243.

⁷⁷ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 43.

⁷⁸ Gauvin A. Bailey, “A Mughal Princess in Baroque New Spain, Catarina de San Juan (1606-1688), the china poblana”, *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas* 71 (1997): 37. See also León, *Catarina de San Juan y la china poblana*; José Alejandro Sánchez Vigil, “Grajeda: *Compendio de la vida y virtudes de la venerable Catarina de San Juan. Una vida, un catecismo*”, *Texto Crítico. Revista del Instituto de Investigaciones Lingüístico-Literarias de la Universidad Veracruzana* 8 (16) (2005): 171-185.

⁷⁹ José María Rivera, *Los mexicanos pintados por sí mismos, Tipos y costumbres nacionales*, (Mexico: Imprenta de M. Murguía y Comp., Portal del Águila de Oro, 1854), 90. A detailed history of the evolution of the image of the china in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and a synthesis of the debates surrounding the connections between Catarina de San Juan

Orellana asserts that the archetype became “the very essence of Mexicanness” and “the national female gender.”⁸⁰ Edward Slack argues that Catarina de San Juan’s “Mughal Indian style of dress attracted many imitators far and wide by the end of her lifetime,”⁸¹ and subsequently became the china poblana costume, “synonymous with the attire worn by the majority of indio and mixed-race women, and today is an iconic symbol of Mexican national (mestizaje) identity.”⁸² While some scholars agree with Slack about the link between the seventeenth-century Asian visionary and the homonymous nineteenth-century Mexican female gown,⁸³ others reject this notion first put forward by Antonio Carrión in 1896.⁸⁴ Gutierre Tibón states this idea is merely a legend invented by Carrión and perpetuated by later authors.⁸⁵

Contemporary descriptions of her clothes hardly match the china poblana outfit. She wore cotton undergarments, linen shirts, rough cloth skirts and coarse woolen cloaks, black or dark brown shirt with long sleeves, matching long skirt, and she covered her face with a cheap rough white hood or veil.⁸⁶ Thus, Gutierre Tibón argues the china poblana costume cannot be identified with Catarina de San Juan’s garment.⁸⁷ Bailey concurs, stating that:

and the china poblana is in Blake Seana Locklin, “Orientalism and the Nation: Asian Women in Spanish American Literature” (PhD diss., Cornell University, 1998), 42-82.

⁸⁰ Margarita de Orellana, “Para vestirse de mexicana”. *Artes de México. La china poblana* 66 (2003): 7.

⁸¹ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 43.

⁸² Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 43.

⁸³ Elisa Varsaslugo, prologue to *Catarina de San Juan*, by Francisco de la Maza, 16-17. See also Armella, “La influencia asiática”, 59; Ramos Pérez, “Nueva España, hacia la plenitud”, 15.

⁸⁴ Antonio Carrión, *Historia de la ciudad de Puebla de los Ángeles* (Puebla: Viuda de Dávalos e Hijos, Editores, 1896), 183-184. Carrión argues that a wool piece of clothing or *zangalalejo* that the Catarina was interred with, “se generalizó entonces en Puebla [...] Tal vez en el traje de Catarina de San Juan tenga origen el zangalalejo o castor de la *China de Puebla*, como le decían”, 184.

⁸⁵ Tibón, “Las dos chinas”, 9. See also Agustín Grajales Porras, “La china poblana: princesa india, esclava, casada y virgen, beata y condenada”, in *México-India. Similitudes y encuentros a través de la historia*, ed. Eva Alexandra Uchmany (Mexico: ISPAT Mexicana, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998), 104-135.

⁸⁶ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 61-62.

⁸⁷ Tibón, “Las dos chinas”, 10.

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[The china poblana] was in fact two people. The china poblana of the popular imagination—of the brightly embroidered blouse and *rebozo* shawl—is an invention of the nineteenth century. A symbol of Mexican womanhood, she is related to Spanish prototypes such as the *maja* immortalized in paintings by Murillo and Goya. [...] The original china poblana [...] Catarina de San Juan (1606-1688) was renowned in her day as an anchorite and visionary, and was consulted by nobles, promoted by great churchmen, and venerated by the people.⁸⁸

It is clear the attire the china is wearing in her only extant portrait does not match what the women are wearing in nineteenth-century depictions of chinas poblanas, as the comparison in picture 3.2 clearly shows. However, it is worth noting that Abby Fisher argued that weavers of *rebozos*, today quintessential Mexican garments for women, might have drawn inspiration from Asian textiles.⁸⁹ Déborah Oropeza wonders if indios chinos working in New Spanish obrajes “introdujeron o reforzaron” an Asian dyeing technique, known as *ikat* that was used to make some of them.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 37-38.

⁸⁹ Abby Sue Fisher, “Trade Textiles”, 185. See also Virginia Armella de Aspe and Teresa Castelló Yturbide, *Rebozos y sarapes de México* (Mexico: Grupo Gusto, 1989).

⁹⁰ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 162.

Picture 3.2 Comparison between the portrait of Catarina de San Juan in Ramos' biography (1689-92) (left) and a china depicted in *Los mexicanos pintados por sí mismos* (1854) (right)*



* Photographic reproductions in Wikimedia Commons, 'Catarina de San Juan', [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Catarina_de_San_Juan.jpg], 'La china', [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:La_china.jpg], accessed, 12/12/2012. Originals in Alonso Ramos, *Primera, segunda y tercera parte de los prodigios de la omnipotencia y milagros de la gracia en la vida de la venerable sierva de Dios Catharina de San Joan*. Puebla: Diego Fernández de León, 1689, 1690, 1692, and José María Rivera, *Los mexicanos pintados por sí mismos, Tipos y costumbres nacionales*, México: Imprenta de M. Murguía y Comp., Portal del Águila de Oro,

There are three main sources about the life of Catarina de San Juan. The first is a sermon written by Jesuit Francisco de Aguilera for her funeral in 1688, and published again in 1692, which covers her life and some of her visions. This was the only text Aguilera dedicated to a contemporary of his.⁹¹ The second is an extensive biography written by Jesuit Alonso Ramos published in three large volumes in 1689, 1690 and 1692,⁹² respectively, making it the longest biography

⁹¹ Olimpia García Aguilar, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo. Relaciones, amistad y edificación en la autobiografía de José del Castillo Grajeda", *Estudios de Historia Novohispana* 37 (2007): 88.

⁹² Alonso Ramos, *Primera, segunda y tercera parte de los prodigios de la omnipotencia y milagros de la gracia en la vida de la venerable sierva de Dios, Catarina de San Juan* (Puebla:

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ever published in New Spain⁹³ and, according to Miguel Ángel Cuenya and Carlos Contreras, and it was Ramos' most important work.⁹⁴ The third is another biography by José Castillo Grajeda published in 1692, and again in 1767.⁹⁵ The latter two authors were Catarina's confessors. Complementing these sources, Olimpia García Aguilar located a document⁹⁶ containing the autobiography of Castillo Grajeda, in which he provides a few more details about her life and character.⁹⁷ According to García, all of her biographers were especially fascinated with Catarina de San Juan.⁹⁸ Castillo Grajeda's admiration of her was such that he respected her views on his own conduct, and even sought her for advice.⁹⁹

No woman in the history of New Spain received as much attention from biographers as did Catarina de San Juan.¹⁰⁰ Especially blessed religious or lay individuals were not uncommon in New Spain. Since the middle of the sixteenth century, numerous men and women from the lower social strata had, according to the foremost specialist in this type of religiousness in New Spain, Antonio Rubial García: "una activa participación en la dirección espiritual y en el fomento de variadas prácticas religiosas de clérigos y laicos."¹⁰¹ This researcher identified forty-four women, many of them tried by the Inquisition, who were "beatas autónomas," blessed women who were not part of the religious establishment, living in New Spain in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.¹⁰²

Imprenta Plantiniana de Diego Fernández de León, 1689, 1690 and 1692); Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 26; Tibón, "Las dos chinas", 11.

⁹³ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 9; García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 60; Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 39.

⁹⁴ Miguel Ángel Cuenya and Carlos Contreras Cruz, *Puebla de los Ángeles: historia de una ciudad novohispana: aspectos sociales, económicos y demográficos* (Puebla: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2007), 240.

⁹⁵ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 26; García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 57.

⁹⁶ AGN, Inquisición, v. 1515, exp. 3, f. 1-186v. (1792).

⁹⁷ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 52.

⁹⁸ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 89.

⁹⁹ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 70-71.

¹⁰⁰ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 52.

¹⁰¹ Antonio Rubial García, *Profetisas y solitarios, Espacios y mensajes de una religión dirigida por ermitaños y beatas laicos en las ciudades de Nueva España* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2006), 18. See also the study specifically addressing women by Asunción Lavrín and Rosalva Loreto López, *Monjas y beatas* (Mexico: Universidad de las Américas-Puebla, Archivo General de la Nación, 2002).

¹⁰² Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 31.

Rubial García suggests there must have been many more such women, who went unrecorded.¹⁰³ As for the men, it is worth highlighting the case of one hermit because, like Catarina de San Juan, he represents a connection between Puebla and Asia. Diego de Santos Ligerero was a hermit active in the Puebla region in the middle of the seventeenth century. Santos Ligerero set sail to the Philippines to accomplish his dream of finding martyrdom in Japan. When he failed in that endeavor, he returned to Puebla with an image of the Virgin that made him famous.¹⁰⁴ A contemporary panegyric prayer was based on him.¹⁰⁵

According to García, the life of Catarina de San Juan was not only an example to all women in New Spain, but it also made her a good candidate to be made a saint, thus achieving “one of the most ambitious dreams” of the society of the viceroyalty.¹⁰⁶ But despite the richness of information her biographies provide, there are considerable doubts about the truthfulness of these documents. For instance, Bailey claims that, as a Jesuit, Ramos “makes extravagant claims about her status and adventures [in Asia] to help promote Jesuit mission enterprises in Asia.”¹⁰⁷ The biographies are filled with exaggeration because they were written for the purpose of advancing the cause for Catarina’s canonization.¹⁰⁸ It was a dream of the elite of Puebla in particular, and the people of European descent in all New Spain in general, for their society to produce a local saint.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, as Bailey asserts, “Catarina became a heroine for a *criollo* class, desperate for a local saint—even though she was a foreigner herself.”¹¹⁰ Ironically, Ramos’ zeal, which translated into excess in his comparisons and descriptions of Catarina, may have caused her sainthood.¹¹¹ Furthermore, the biographies were based on her retelling

¹⁰³ Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 38.

¹⁰⁴ Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 27.

¹⁰⁵ Antonio González Lasso, *Oración panegyrica que en la traslación de las cenizas del venerable varón Diego de los Santos Ligerero, heremita en los desiertos de la ciudad de Tlaxcala...oró el licenciado...*, cited in Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 27.

¹⁰⁶ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 56.

¹⁰⁷ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 41-42.

¹⁰⁸ Roshni Rustomji-Kerns, “Las raíces olvidadas de Mirrah-Catarina”, *Artes de México* 66 (2003): 20-31.

¹⁰⁹ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 38-39; Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 98.

¹¹⁰ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 38.

¹¹¹ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 61.

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of her own memories, which Tibón deems to have been merely “the fantasies of a china slave.”¹¹²

For literary critic Rustomji-Kerns, the way Catarina’s memories are retold in her biographies follows the models of a Sanskrit *kavya*; a literary style used by court poets in India, and thus renders, in her opinion, believability to her story of her being a Mughal princess¹¹³. According to this author, the way in which Catarina projected her spiritual passion in her everyday life, and her devotion to the poor and the sick “resembles what the *Bhagavad Gita* defines as *karma yoga*”, the reflection of spiritual pursuits in actions of service to others.¹¹⁴ As attractive as this notion may be, it seems very unlikely that a ten-year-old Mirra was so influenced by the poetry of the courtly atmosphere she may or may not have been brought up in, and that this type of poetry shaped her memories almost seven decades later, when she retold her experiences to her biographers.

Kathleen Myers suggests a far more plausible source of inspiration for the biographies of Catarina de San Juan. She suggests that, while it is possible that she was in fact a noblewoman taken captive in her childhood by pirates and sold into slavery, the story of her kidnapping is presented in a fashion resembling the motifs of a byzantine novel.¹¹⁵ Olimpia García Aguilar agrees with this observation, comparing it to the novel *Las etiópicas*, by Heliodorus of Emesa,¹¹⁶ further suggesting that her life story follows the conventions of the hagiography to convey its moralizing themes, as well as those of an adventure novel.¹¹⁷ The beautiful and highborn heroine faces obstacles that give the narration suspense, and enables her

¹¹² Tibón, “Las dos chinas”, 11.

¹¹³ Rustomji-Kerns, “Las raíces olvidadas”, 20.

¹¹⁴ Rustomji-Kerns, “Las raíces olvidadas”, 23.

¹¹⁵ Kathleen Myers, “¿Testimonio para la canonización o prueba de blasfemia? La nueva Inquisición española y la biografía hagiográfica de Catarina de San Juan”, in *De palabras, imágenes y símbolos*, coord. Enrique Ballón Aguirre (Mexico, UNAM, 2002), 367-399; García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 53.

¹¹⁶ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 54.

¹¹⁷ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 53.

to ceaselessly and heroically fight evil, in order to constitute a model of good and pious behavior¹¹⁸.

It is worth bearing in mind these facts about the legend that surrounds this person and the peculiarities of her biographies when reconstructing the life of Catarina de San Juan. Alonso Ramos calls her a foreigner, “china, mogora o india”, and according to the author of a classic introduction to the life of Catarina, Francisco de la Maza, her marriage record from the Puebla Cathedral reads “china india, natural de la India.”¹¹⁹ According to her biographers, Catarina claimed to have been born “en el imperio del Gran Mogor”, the Mughal Empire, to aristocratic parents, a woman called Borta, and a man named Maximino in 1606.¹²⁰ This is also the provenance engraved on her tombstone at the temple of the Jesuits in Puebla¹²¹. Her exact birthplace could have been Agra¹²² or Lahore.¹²³ Gauvin Bailey considers that the Arabic origin of her original name, Mirra, suggests she came from a Muslim family.¹²⁴ Rustomji-Kerns posits that the familiarity of Mirra’s family with Christ and the Virgin Mary is further evidence of their being Muslim.¹²⁵ The author also argues her parents hated and persecuted idolaters, and distrusted Brahmins, believing them to be ill advisers and dangerous magicians.¹²⁶ Ramos claims her parents were sympathetic towards Christians.¹²⁷ Apart from the religious qualms of her biographers, the information about her parents’ religious attitudes reflects the fact that,

At the time of Catarina’s youth, Mughal India was arguably the most cosmopolitan nation on earth. World religions were freely tolerated, and refugees,

¹¹⁸ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 54.

¹¹⁹ Both documents cited in Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 21-22.

¹²⁰ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 38.

¹²¹ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 42.

¹²² Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 42; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 149.

¹²³ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 42.

¹²⁴ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 43.

¹²⁵ Rustomji-Kerns, “Las raíces olvidadas”, 26.

¹²⁶ Rustomji-Kerns, “Las raíces olvidadas”, 26; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 149.

¹²⁷ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 46; Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 149.

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merchants, soldiers, and missionaries from around the globe gathered within India's friendly borders.¹²⁸

According to Ramos, her captors and "some of her countrymen that came to this kingdom [New Spain]" purportedly confirmed her noble birth.¹²⁹ According to the Jesuit, she was no less "nieta, o conjunta muy cercana del Invicto Emperador del Mogor, Mahameth Zeladfin Ecchabar, ó Achbar [Akbar], que murió el año de mil seiscientos y cinco"¹³⁰ on her father's side.¹³¹ To further construct a noble lineage for her, Ramos also construed the fanciful story that Catarina was a descendant of the Roman emperor Maximinus (308-313).¹³² Ramos mistakenly states that Maximinus was responsible for the death of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, who was Catarina's namesake. De la Maza argues this device allows Ramos to reaffirm Catarina's "Oriental" origins, adding that Saint Catherine had called Catarina her "paisana" in one of her visions.¹³³

Bailey argues it was her family's Christian sympathies, which might have led them to flee their homeland, in the context of Mughal persecution of Christians due to increasing tensions with the Portuguese in 1613-1615.¹³⁴ Whatever the reason, sometime around 1615, when she was ten, Mirra's family fled from the wars in their homeland and went to live near the coast "close to the Portuguese", possibly in Surat, which was "a hive of piracy."¹³⁵ It seems the frequency of abductions of children was such that even empress Mumtaz Majal complained about them to his husband Sha Jahan¹³⁶. Catarina and her brother were kidnapped by pirates and taken to Cochin¹³⁷, where the Jesuits baptized her Catarina de San Juan,¹³⁸ and a

¹²⁸ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 42.

¹²⁹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 38; Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 44.

¹³⁰ Ramos, *Primera parte*, 4v-5; Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 44.

¹³¹ Rustomji-Kerns, "Las raíces olvidadas", 23.

¹³² Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 38.

¹³³ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 38.

¹³⁴ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 47.

¹³⁵ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 47.

¹³⁶ Rustomji-Kerns, "Las raíces olvidadas", 24.

¹³⁷ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 47.

¹³⁸ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 40; Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 149.

woman, jealous of her good looks, nearly drowned her.¹³⁹ Her appealing physique would continue to be a problem when she was taken to Manila where she had her first vision of Christ who she claimed, consoled her of her hardships.¹⁴⁰ While still in Manila, she was persistently pursued by a Christian Japanese prince and by a merchant from India who, not only harassed her, but also flogged her out of frustration from her denying him his pleasure.¹⁴¹ She embarked on the galleon to Acapulco disguised as a boy. Oropeza argues that her wearing a disguise was due to the restrictions set on female slave trafficking on the Manila Galleon.¹⁴² According to Francisco de la Maza, sailing on the vessel across the Pacific with Catarina de San Juan there were several Filipinos, Chinese from Canton, Java islanders, natives from Coromandel, and Malabar, referred to by the Spaniards as *chinos*, because everyone “that came from Luzon and Mindanao was a *chino*.”¹⁴³ Even a Spanish woman born in the Philippines, Maria Ignacia Herrera Cruzat, was dubbed “la china Herrera” upon her arrival in Mexico in 1701.¹⁴⁴ While on board, Catarina miraculously resisted more assaults, successfully preserving her virginity all the way to Mesoamerica.¹⁴⁵ According to de la Maza, it was not uncommon for men of de elite, merchants, officials, and, on one occasion, the viceroy of New Spain,¹⁴⁶ through intermediaries, to seek out and acquire china slaves “who were almost always Filipino, and sometimes Malay or from India.”¹⁴⁷

She was purchased by Captain Miguel de Sosa of Puebla, and arrived in that city in 1621 where she received her confirmation in the parish of San José.¹⁴⁸ Miguel de Sosa and his wife Margarita allegedly acquired Catarina not for want of a slave but to fulfill their desire for a daughter.¹⁴⁹ Castillo Grajeda tells the pious tale that the Sosas “habían encargado [...] su correspondiente chinita para tenerla como a hija,

¹³⁹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 40.

¹⁴⁰ Rustomji-Kerns, “Las raíces olvidadas”, 24.

¹⁴¹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 42.

¹⁴² Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 15.

¹⁴³ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 21.

¹⁴⁴ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 21.

¹⁴⁵ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 42.

¹⁴⁶ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 11.

¹⁴⁷ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 21-22.

¹⁴⁸ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 42. Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 149.

¹⁴⁹ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 55.

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por no haber tenido el fruto del matrimonio.”¹⁵⁰ She lived in the Sosa household as a slave seamstress, cook and chocolate maker “and she made wafers for the Jesuits.”¹⁵¹

Upon the death of her master, Miguel de Sosa, in 1624, Catarina was given her freedom, and shortly thereafter became a servant of a priest, Pedro de Suárez, who had a chino slave of his own called Domingo Suárez. Catarina and Domingo married in 1626.¹⁵² Gutierre Tibón also identifies Domingo as an immigrant from Asia.¹⁵³ Her biographers insisted that she never broke her chastity vow and remained a virgin despite her marriage until her death. In response to Catarina’s adamant attitude, Domingo took a mistress that gave him children whom Catarina piously raised even after the death of her husband.¹⁵⁴ After receiving a license from the viceroy to sell his goods throughout New Spain, Domingo died in Veracruz in 1644.¹⁵⁵ Following her husband’s demise, Catarina moved to a small and humble chamber close to the stables of a captain who lived across the street from the Jesuit headquarters in the city, where she remained until the time of her own demise in 1688.¹⁵⁶

Catarina de San Juan was among the least privileged members of Pueblan society. She was a woman of a small minority who became a widow, had few friends, suffered pain in her old age, and never spoke the Spanish language properly.¹⁵⁷ According to Tibón, Grajeda stated that she spoke the same as all the others that were “de nación china”, and that she called herself a “china bozal.”¹⁵⁸ Tibón asserts that she never managed to speak Spanish even moderately well, despite living in

¹⁵⁰ José del Castillo Grajeda, *Compendio de la vida y virtudes de la venerable Catarina de San Juan* (Mexico: Ediciones Xochitl, 1946, originally published in 1692), 45; Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 61. Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 48.

¹⁵¹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 43.

¹⁵² Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 57-58. Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 149.

¹⁵³ Tibón, “Las dos chinas”, 9. Oropeza, 185.

¹⁵⁴ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 59.

¹⁵⁵ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 61.

¹⁵⁶ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 61.

¹⁵⁷ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 56.

¹⁵⁸ Tibón, “Las dos chinas”, 10.

Puebla for sixty years,¹⁵⁹ while researcher Pedro Ángel Palou suggests she spoke a Prakrit language.¹⁶⁰

Apart from the linguistic barrier, her appearance was also a source of problems. Castillo Grajeda writes she grew in virtue and beauty,¹⁶¹ and the theme about her looks continues in Ramos' account of how, to help her maintain her virtue, her appearance was miraculously transformed:

En breve tiempo se fueron poco a poco secando y consumiendo sus carnes, se mudaron las facciones de su rostro, enturbiósele el cabello y se achinó el color del rostro, de suerte que más parecía vieja que niña, más retostada china que blanca y rubia mogora, más india avellanada, de las muy tostadas del Occidente, que blanca y hermosa oriental de los confines de la feliz Arabia.¹⁶²

This passage gives clues about the dark-skinned phenotype the biographers of Catarina de San Juan attributed to the people they called *chinos*.

More hints about the social perception of *chinos* in Pueblan society appear in words attributed to Catarina in her biographies. While protesting to a priest who tried to tempt her to rob him of a peso she purportedly objected returned the peso, claimed she was not trying to cheat anyone, and filled with rage she said: "Tome su peso que yo no trato de engañar a nadie y sepa que tengo muy buena sangre en estas venas aunque parezco y me tienen por china."¹⁶³ This phrase suggests *chinos* were perceived as dishonest and lowborn. Another passage again illustrates opinions about perceived *chino* moral flaws; many Pueblans called her "perra china embustera."¹⁶⁴ These lines suggest *chinos* were stereotyped as greedy and cheating, befitting their lowly social status in the view of their detractors. Jonathan Israel argues that *chinos*, the same as blacks and mulatos, were often linked to vice and delinquency in Mexico City and Puebla, appearing in records of robberies and

¹⁵⁹ Tibón, "Las dos chinas", 11.

¹⁶⁰ Pedro Ángel Palou, "La Puebla de Mirrah-Catarina", *Artes de México* 66 (2003): 19.

¹⁶¹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 46.

¹⁶² Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 58.

¹⁶³ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 47.

¹⁶⁴ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 47.

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other crimes.¹⁶⁵ Chinos were grouped with Afromestizos when, unsurprisingly, sanctions to transgressions to the cabildo's directives were set differently depending on ethnicity. When the price of a pound of sugar was set at one and a half *reales*, a fine of ten pesos was established as penalty for overpricing, but the additional punishment of 100 lashes in case of a repeat offence only applied if the perpetrator was "chino, negro, mestizo o mulato."¹⁶⁶

Catarina became increasingly surrounded by people impressed by her piety and her ever more notorious visions. Bailey states that she was eventually "renowned in her day as an anchorite and visionay, [...] consulted by nobles, promoted by great churchmen, and venerated by the people."¹⁶⁷ She became a disciple of another famous visionary from Puebla María de Jesús Tomelín (1579-1637).¹⁶⁸ Tomelín inspired a number of biographies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁶⁹ Catarina visited her frequently at the convent of the Limpia Concepción where she resided, to the point that María de Jesús became a mother figure and appeared in her visions.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ Israel, *Razas, clases sociales y vida política*, 84.

¹⁶⁶ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 23, doc. 133, asunto 6, 28/2/1653, f. 273.

¹⁶⁷ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 38.

¹⁶⁸ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 44; Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 149.

¹⁶⁹ Agustina de Santa Teresa, *Tratado de la vida y virtudes de la Madre María de Jesús Tomelín (1633-1637)*; Miguel Godínez, *Apuntes de la vida de la Madre María de Jesús (unknown date before 1637)*; Francisco Acosta, *Vida de María de Jesús de la Puebla de los Angeles (1648)*; Francisco Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroycas de la Madre María de Jesús, Religiosa profesora en el convento de la Limpia Concepción de la Virgen María en la Ciudad de Los Angeles (1676)*; Diego Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, fobores y milagros de la Venerada Madre sor María de Jesús, angelopolitana religiosa del convento de la Limpia Concepción de la Ciudad de los Angeles en la Nueva España y natural de ella (1683)*; José de la Madre de Dios, *Storia della vita, virtu, doni e grazie della venerabile serva di Dio Suor María d i Gesù, monaca professa del venerabile monastero della Concezione Angelopoli, nelle Indie occidentali (1739)*; Félix de Jesús María, *Vida virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la Venerable Sierva de Dios, Sor María de Jesús, religiosa profesora en el Venerado Monasterio de la Inmaculada Concepción de la Puebla de Los Angeles de las Indias Occidentales, sacada de los Procesos formados para la Causa de su Beatificación y Canonización (1756)*. List compiled in Margarita Drago, "Sor María de Jesús Tomelín (1579-1637), concepcionista poblana, La construcción fallida de una santa" (PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2002), 4-5; Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 49.

¹⁷⁰ Drago, "Sor María de Jesús Tomelín", 213-214.

According to her biographers, Catarina also had a good relationship with Bishop Juan de Palafox (1600-1659). The most famous bishop of Puebla in colonial times, serving in that post from 1640 to 1648, Palafox is famous for the measures he undertook to protect the indigenous population and to complete the construction of the Puebla cathedral. He also concerned himself with advancing culture and learning in the city, donating his impressive library to a new college he helped consolidate. In 1642 he was briefly appointed interim bishop of Mexico, viceroy, and *visitador*, or royal inspector. Like Catarina, through his writings, Palafox also represents a connection between Puebla and Asia. Palafox argued that the “short” distance between his seat in Puebla and China gave him authority to interject in religious disputes that developed in that Asian country, and even gave him grounds to a claim to the title of bishop of China.¹⁷¹ Thus, one incident in the protracted and bitter confrontation between the bishop and the Society of Jesus came in the form of the Dominican bishop’s position against the Jesuit views in the Rites Controversy, when the latter defended the theological validity of allowing Chinese Christian converts to venerate their ancestors.¹⁷² Palafox also penned a history of the Manchu invasion of China, which toppled the Ming and established the Qing dynasty in 1644.¹⁷³ Palafox based his account on information collected in Mexico, and possibly, it has been argued by Anna Busquets, on accounts of Chinese people residing in Puebla.¹⁷⁴

Catarina’s biographers knew that including Palafox in her story would confer it authority, since by the second half of the seventeenth century, the bishop was invoked to increase the verisimilitude of biographies and processes of recognition of sainthood of nuns, blessed women and hermits.¹⁷⁵ Thus, the mentions of Palafox

¹⁷¹ Clossey, “Merchants, migrants, missionaries”, 43.

¹⁷² James S. Cummins, “Palafox, China and the Chinese Rites controversy”, *Revista de Historia de América* 52 (1961): 395-427.

¹⁷³ Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, *Historia de la conquista de la China por el tártaro* (Paris: acosta de Antonio Bertier 1670).

¹⁷⁴ Anna Busquets, “La entrada de los manchús en China y su eco en España”, in *Cruce de miradas*, ed. San Ginés, 456.

¹⁷⁵ Antonio Rubial García, “El rostro de las mil facetas. La iconografía palafoxiana en la Nueva España”, in *Juan de Palafox y Mendoza. Imagen y discurso en la cultura novohispana*, ed. José Pascual Buxó (Mexico: UNAM, 2002), 301; García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 77.

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appear in Catarina's biographies as a rhetorical device to enhance the document's believability.¹⁷⁶ Olimpia García makes a convincing case that Ramos and Castillo Grajeda were making the point of including him in order to ease the bitter and protracted tensions between the Jesuits and Palafox, during his tenure as bishop of Puebla and beyond. In Ramos' account, the prelate appears in Catarina's visions, while Castillo Grajeda claims Catarina remembered him as an excellent bishop who had been particularly kind to her.¹⁷⁷ Castillo Grajeda attributes Catarina's conciliatory remarks about the Jesuits and the bishop, claiming she told him,

Yo soy muy amante a la Compañía de Jesús y de todos sus hijos porque les he debido mucha enseñanza y porque son todos siervos de Dios, y porque Dios y la Virgen Santa María los quiere mucho; y también soy muy amante del señor obispo Palafox porque le debí mucho y porque ha cuidado siempre de su mesa de enviarme algún alimento.¹⁷⁸

On one occasion bishop Palafox gave her and her husband a special dispensation to go on a pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Cosamaloapan.¹⁷⁹ En-route she had a vision of legions of angels battling devils.¹⁸⁰

This battle is only one among the many visions described in her biographies. For the purposes of this analysis, the most interesting are the ones linking her back to Asia. According to Rustomji-Kerns, her Indian background and early life experiences in that country influenced her visions.¹⁸¹ Towards the end of her life she experienced bilocations, visions of out-of-body journeys, that took her, according to Bailey, on "long-distance voyages to the nations of the Americas and Asia,"¹⁸² in which she "viewed the nations of the world as if she were walking on the pages of a Renaissance atlas, reflecting the increasing global awareness and

¹⁷⁶ Rubial García, "El rostro de las mil facetas", 301; García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 77.

¹⁷⁷ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 77.

¹⁷⁸ AGN, Inquisición, v. 1515, exp. 3, f. 105 (1792), cited in García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 78.

¹⁷⁹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 60.

¹⁸⁰ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 62.

¹⁸¹ Rustomji-Kerns, "Las raíces olvidadas", 25.

¹⁸² Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 68.

aspirations of her society.”¹⁸³ In the 1680s she traveled to Japan, India, Central Asia, Arabia, and China in her visions,

Corrió finalmente con su entender, y conocimiento infuso, en estos días, muchas Ciudades, Provincias, y Reinos del Oriente, distinguiendo las tierras pertenecientes a la China, Tartaria, y de los Reinos del Japón; los del Mogor [the Mughals], de la Arabia, y India; señalando, y midiendo la longitud, y distancia de unas, y otras Monarquías.¹⁸⁴

She travelled to the presence of the emperor of China whom she “sprinkled [in] his face with the blood of Christ and made the sign of the Cross on his forehead.”¹⁸⁵ She witnessed theological debates between Jesuits and pagan lords in Japan.¹⁸⁶ Ramos took the opportunity of his retelling of her visions of Asia to emphasize the missionary exploits of the Jesuits in Asia.¹⁸⁷ International trade of New Spain also occupied her thoughts as she envisioned the safe arrival or, conversely, the perils endured by ships and cargoes arriving in Acapulco and Veracruz.¹⁸⁸ She had visions of indigenous uprisings in New Mexico, arrival and departure of important officials in New Spain, and battles won and lost by the Spanish Monarchy.¹⁸⁹

It has been argued her visions influenced the art history of Puebla. Bailey discusses the possibility that Catarina de San Juan’s visions and the artwork of contemporary artists, such as Cristóbal de Villalpando, were sources of mutual inspiration,¹⁹⁰

In keeping with—and sometimes surpassing—developments in viceregal painting, which was characterized by a spirit of triumphalism in the second half of the seventeenth century, most of Catarina’s grandest compositions occurred in the years preceding her death in 1688. Catarina would have been familiar with several

¹⁸³ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 40.

¹⁸⁴ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 68.

¹⁸⁵ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91.

¹⁸⁶ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91.

¹⁸⁷ Alonso Ramos, *Segunda parte de los prodigios*, 159, 173ff; Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 68.

¹⁸⁸ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91.

¹⁸⁹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91-92.

¹⁹⁰ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 40, 50; García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 86.

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important works of viceregal painting of the period, including a number of works by Villalpando, but her visions are far from merely derivative of contemporary painting. There is much that is original, even portentous in her descriptions; the question is who was first? The influence between visions and art was reciprocal in this period. Was Catarina derivative of the new church interiors of her city, were viceregal artists themselves moved by Catarina's much-publicized visions, or were both products of the same *Zeitgeist*. We may never know.¹⁹¹

In what Rubial Garcia considers a pre-meditated act to impress her confessors with her humility, Catarina dictated her will in 1686, leaving all her belongings, which were little more than a dozen religious objects and books, to the poor and to pay for masses for her soul.¹⁹² She died in 1688. According to de la Maza, her wake was attended by a large crowd; people piled up to get a glimpse of her body, or tried to kiss her or take a piece of her shroud. Members of the cathedral chapter, of the clergy, city officials, and members of the military orders all attended the procession that carried her coffin, and put her to rest in the church of the Jesuits.¹⁹³ A catafalque was raised and it was adorned with paintings and poems. One painting and its accompanying poem depicted the Manila Galleon that had taken Catarina to Acapulco, captained by Saint Ignatius of Loyola.¹⁹⁴

The way people started to revere Catarina and her image after her death alarmed the Inquisition. In 1691, its officials issued an order to collect and destroy portraits of her, and those in which she appeared with bishop Palafox,¹⁹⁵ and declared that to possess such portraits was punishable with excommunication.¹⁹⁶ This edict drove Ramos to lose hope in her canonization and eventually this disappointment led him to alcoholism,¹⁹⁷ his account of Catarina's life condemned by the Inquisition.¹⁹⁸ Finally, the tribunal also ordered the small chambers where

¹⁹¹ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 50.

¹⁹² Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 60.

¹⁹³ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 111.

¹⁹⁴ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 112.

¹⁹⁵ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 114; García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 78; Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 149.

¹⁹⁶ Tibón, "Las dos chinas", 9.

¹⁹⁷ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 61.

¹⁹⁸ Tibón, "Las dos chinas", 10-11; Cuenya and Contreras, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 240.

Catarina had spent the last part of her life and which had been converted into a shrine after her death, to be shut down in 1696.¹⁹⁹

I have summarized the key details in Catarina's biography that explain her impact in Pueblan and New Spanish society. The many details of her life that her biographers noted helped them and their audiences make sense of the experiences of this remarkable woman. Most importantly, the texts contain details about the perceptions and social standing of chinos in Pueblan society. Catarina as portrayed in her biographies was able to transcend the limitations imposed by her origin. Her alleged noble lineage separated her from the common chinos that lived in New Spain. The biographies suggest that she struggled to separate herself from other chinos by developing a strong moral fiber linked to her devout religiosity. Thus these documents are also a testament to the exclusion suffered by the Asian migrant population as a whole.

¹⁹⁹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 61.

CHAPTER 4

THE LESSER-KNOWN CHINOS POBLANOS: A SURVEY OF ASIAN POPULATION IN PUEBLA DE LOS ÁNGELES (1591-1803)

This chapter is the first comprehensive outline of the Asian population in Puebla de los Ángeles during the colonial period. This is a necessary case study because Puebla concentrated the largest chino group in New Spain after Mexico City. The life of the first Asian immigrants to the city of Puebla remains largely unknown. Scholars have focused their attention primarily on Catarina de San Juan and the influence she may or may not have had in the emergence of the traditional Mexican *china poblana* costume. Researchers of the Pueblan textile mills (*obrajes*) have found evidence of chino workers but, in most cases, they have interpreted these people as being of mixed Amerindian and African descent. Slack and Oropeza suggested that the Asian community in Puebla was among the largest in the viceroyalty, second only to that of Mexico City, an assessment this case study corroborates.¹ Dana Velasco and Pablo Sierra assert Asians added to Puebla's ethnic and cultural diversity.² Despite the perceived importance of the city in the history of the Asian Diaspora in the Americas, this is the first in-depth study of the

¹ Slack, "The *Chinos* in New Spain", 42-43; Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 107.

² Dana Velasco Murillo and Pablo Miguel Sierra Silva, "Mine workers and weavers. Afro-Indigenous Labor Arrangements and Interactions in Puebla and Zacatecas, 1600-1700", in *City Indians in Spain's American Empire. Urban Indigenous Society in Colonial Mesoamerica and Andean South America, 1530-1810*, eds. Dana Velasco Murillo, Mark Lentz and Margarita R. Ochoa (Portland: Susex Academic Press, 2012), 104-105.

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Pueblan Asian minority. Understanding this population enables future comparative analysis with other relevant urban centers.

This is the longest and most descriptive chapter in this thesis because, being the first attempt to quantify and analyze the Asian diaspora in Puebla, this study warrants a basic outline of the sources. Chinos settled throughout the city and acquired various occupations from house slaves, to workers in the large textile workshops, to soothsayers, to rich merchants. What follows is an exploration of the parochial records from Puebla preserved in the Genealogía section of the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City, as well as several additional primary and secondary sources that recorded the presence of the Asian Diaspora of Puebla. The chapter covers sources for 175 Asian, indio chino, and chino individuals that lived in Puebla from 1591 to 1803. I synthesize archival findings in a series of detailed tables and charts.

In the first section I discuss the type and location of the sources employed in this chapter. I outline the division of the city in parishes and then describe the records available for each one of the parishes. Lastly, I quantify the overall findings and discuss their distribution by gender.

In the second section I discuss the provenance and the settlement distribution of the Asian population of Puebla. I explain the wide range of places from Asia associated with individuals in the parochial archives (Manila and other places in the Philippines, India de Portugal, Malacca, Ceylon, Bengal, Cambodia, Japan, and India). I represent this heterogeneity of the chinos poblanos in graphic form where I also show the chinos with no specific provenance and the chinos born in New Spain. I also analyze the chronological distribution of the various geographic/ethnic designations. Lastly, I discuss their geographic distribution within the city of Puebla.

Section three is about occupational patterns. I analyze their distribution by occupation and argue that the majority of chinos whose occupation is known were employed in some form of servitude ranging from slavery to free chinos forced to

work in the textile mills, or obrajes of the city. I discuss the evolution of the wool textile industry developed around these obrajes, and how chinos participated in this vital sector of the economy of Puebla. Other chinos were able to secure less demanding occupations and more prominent social positions, as in the case of Antonio de la Cruz's family, whose case I highlight in this section.

I discuss the crucial topic of marriage patterns in section four. This comprehensive macro-level analysis of marriage patterns follows the summary of specific marriages, with an interpretation on what this information reveals about chino relationship with other ethnic groups in the city. I analyze the evolution of preference of spouse's ethnicity among chinos through time. I argue that the selection of their partner's ethnicity is related to slavery. Chino slaves were more likely to marry people of African descent than free chinos. Marriages between chinos and indios took place primarily before the abolition of chino slavery in 1672-1673. I argue that these patterns evidence the dynamic nature of the relationship between chinos and people of other ethnic designations.

The last section focuses on the downfall of Puebla in the eighteenth century in order to explain why the city became less attractive to new immigrants. This factor, coupled with interruptions in transpacific trade, and the ongoing process of mestizaje, that affected overall Asian migration in New Spain, as explained in chapter five, contributed to dilute Asian presence in Puebla during the eighteenth century. I argue that new immigrants could have preferred to settle in emerging competing cities such as Querétaro, Guadalajara or Zacatecas, rather than Puebla. I suggest that future regional studies of these urban centers would help clarify the changes in the geographical distribution of the Asian diaspora. This latter sections relates directly to chapters five and six where I detail the reasons for the overall process of dilution of the Asian diaspora during the eighteenth century and its literary legacies leading up to the early nineteenth century.

4.1 Sources

4. *The lesser-known chinos poblanos*

By comparison to what is reported about Catarina de San Juan, information about other individual Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Puebla is scarce. Nevertheless, many Asians, indios chinos and chinos were recorded in registries of the various parishes of Puebla. The parishes were an administrative superstructure that articulated the center of the city and the *barrios* or wards.³ The borders of the different parishes varied overtime and sometimes their jurisdictions overlapped.⁴ The first parish of Puebla dates from the foundation of the city in 1531. As the oldest diocese in New Spain, the Diocese of Tlaxcala was moved to Puebla, this church was elevated to the status of cathedral and consequently, its parish became the Sagrario Metropolitano, or cathedral chapter of Puebla de los Ángeles. The second parish, San José, was established in 1578.⁵ It administered a portion of the traza and the barrios of San Antonio, Santa Ana, San Antonio el Chico, San Pablo, San Felipe and the village of San Jerónimo.⁶ It was followed in 1627 by Santo Ángel Custodio, located in the barrio of Analco on the east bank of the San Francisco River⁷. Santo Ángel Custodio, which I refer to simply as Analco, also administered the barrio of Remedios and the village of San Baltasar.⁸ The third parish, San Sebastián, was founded in 1640, congregating the indios of the wards of Santiago, San Matías, and San Miguel⁹. In 1681¹⁰ or 1683,¹¹ a portion of the San José parish separated itself to create the parish of Santa Cruz, which included the barrios of Xonaca, Xonacantepec, el Alto, San Juan del Río, and the ranch of Amalucan.¹² Finally, after being an auxiliary church of the cathedral for some time, San Marcos was made into a separate parish in 1767¹³ or 1769.¹⁴ In 1809, Santa Cruz fused

³ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 67.

⁴ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 99.

⁵ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 77.

⁶ Juan de Villa Sánchez, *Puebla sagrada y profana, Informe dado a su ilustre ayuntamiento* (Puebla: Casa de José María del Campo, 1835, originally published in 1746), 23; Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 66-67.

⁷ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 77.

⁸ Villa, *Puebla sagrada y profana*, 23. Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles en tiempos de una peste colonial*, 67.

⁹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 78; Villa, *Puebla sagrada y profana*, 23; Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 67.

¹⁰ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 67.

¹¹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 78.

¹² Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 67.

¹³ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 67.

¹⁴ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 78.

with Santo Ángel Custodio, and San Sebastián was incorporated to San Marcos. These mergers were dissolved once again in 1922.¹⁵

I found records of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in the archives of only three of the six parishes. There is a larger proportion of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in the books for marriages of blacks and castas than in the books for indios, suggesting that the priests of Puebla tried to group them with people of African descent, particularly in the second half of the seventeenth century. This reflects a phenomenon noted by Jonathan Israel that, although Asians, indios chinos and chinos were legally equal to the indios, or local indigenous population, in practice they were equated to blacks, mulatos and mestizos.¹⁶ According to Slack, regardless of their ethnicity, chinos were increasingly associated with “Afromestizos” throughout the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century; they were “grouped together with mulatos, pardos, morenos, negros, mestizos, and zambaigos” in militias and in the organization of the Puebla clothmakers guild.¹⁷

I have synthesized my findings in table 4.1, which shows the number of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos located by decade in each of the parochial archives. A separate column includes individuals located in other types of sources.¹⁸

¹⁵ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 78.

¹⁶ Israel, *Razas, clases sociales y vida política*, 84.

¹⁷ AGN, Ordenanzas, vol. 6. exp. 39; Slack, “The Chinos of New Spain”, 64-65.

¹⁸ AGN, Inquisición, vols. 486, 356, 626, 1418; Hacienda, vol. 285; Tierras, 1251, vol. 2963; Real Audiencia, Indios, 6, vol. 9; Mariano Fernández de Echevarría y Veytia, *Historia de la Fundación de la Ciudad de la Puebla de los Ángeles en la Nueva España, su descripción y presente estado*, ed. Efraín Castro Morales, Vol. 2 (Puebla: Ediciones Altiplano, 1962, originally written in 1780), 129; Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112-113, 178-179, 418; Hans Pohl, Jutta Haenisch, Wolfgang Loske, “Aspectos sociales del desarrollo de los obrajes textiles en Puebla colonial”, *Comunicaciones del Proyecto Puebla-Tlaxcala* 15 (1978): 43; Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 39, 113.

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Table 4.1 Number of mentions of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in sources from Sagrario, San José, and Analco parishes and other types of sources (1591-1803)

	Sagrario ^a	San José ^b	Analco ^c	other sources ^d
1590-1599	10	No record	No record	No record
1600-1609	13	No record	No record	No record
1610-1619	20	No record	No record	2
1620-1629	10	No record	No record	2
1630-1639	No record	10	No record	No record
1640-1649	No record	11	7	No record
1650-1659	No record	11	14	14
1660-1669	No record	No record	1	1
1670-1679	7	No record	3	2
1680-1689	20	No record	3	1
1690-1699	2	No record	4	No record
1700-1757	3	No record	No record	2
1777-1803	No record	No record	No record	2
TOTAL	85	32	32	26

Sources:

- a. AGN, Genealogía, Rollos 1526, 1527, 1528.
- b. AGN, Genealogía, Rollos, 1706, 1707, 1794.
- c. AGN, Genealogía, Rollos, 1844, 1924, 5931.
- d. AGN, Inquisición, vols. 486, 356, 626, 1418; Hacienda, vol. 285; Tierras, 1251, vol. 2963; Real Audiencia, Indios, 6, Vol. 9; Mariano Veytia, *Historia de la Fundación*, 129. Hugo Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112-113, 178-179, 418; Hans Pohl, Jutta Haenisch, Wolfgang Loske, "Aspectos sociales del desarrollo", 43; Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 39, 113.

Before examining in detail the information about Asians, it is necessary to discuss the nature of these sources. The priests in these parishes kept detailed records of birth, marriage, and burial of the denizens of their respective jurisdictions. Among them, the richest sources are the *libros de matrimonios*, since, unlike what seems to have happened with the other sacraments in Puebla, the people betrothed were required to state their ethnicity, and priests duly recorded this information. The priests accepted what information was given to them, even when in doubt of its truthfulness.¹⁹ Generally, it was not required for them to record ethnicity in the case of baptisms and burials. Thus, no *chinos* were located in the *libros de bautismos* of any parish, nor in the *libros de entierros* of the Sagrario Metropolitano.

¹⁹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 79.

In some of the books, the priests of the parishes of San José and Analco did include information about ethnicity when recording burials, including data pertaining to Asians, indios chinos and chinos. Fewer records for the San Marcos and San Sebastián parishes are extant, and there are no surviving records of chinos in them. The absence of chinos in these parishes could be a consequence of the fact that, according to Dana Velasco and Pablo Sierra, they “catered to heavily indigenous constituencies, while complex, multiethnic communities attended the many churches of San [José] and Santo Ángel Custodio.”²⁰ However, taking into account Miguel Marín’s suggestion that a portion of the marriages recorded in the Sagrario pertained to people from San Marcos and San Sebastián,²¹ it is possible to hypothesize that a number of the Asians, indios chinos and chinos located in the Sagrario records actually resided in San Marcos or San Sebastián.

Despite their relative richness in detail, the information contained in the marriage registries is not uniform. While most followed the *Manual de lo ordinario* written by Bishop Palafox, the format and style varied from parish to parish, and from priest to priest.²² Notwithstanding there being separate books for españoles, indios, and castas, the groups were utterly mixed, and the contents of the books do not match their idealized titles that declared separate ethnicities.²³ An extreme example of this is a book of españoles of the Santa Cruz parish, where sixty percent of the people recorded were castas.²⁴

According to Marín, it was not required for the parishes to register the marriages and baptisms of the indigenous population in their congregations until the *Primer Concilio Provincial Mexicano* mandated it so in 1555.²⁵ In 1585 the *Tercer Concilio* ordered the recording of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and burials of the entire population.²⁶ These regulations were in compliance with the stipulations of the Council of Trento. This may be the reason why, while the earliest parochial

²⁰ Velasco and Sierra, “Mine Workers and Weavers”, 127.

²¹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 100.

²² Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 86, 109.

²³ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 89.

²⁴ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 90.

²⁵ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 81.

²⁶ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 81.

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data from Puebla are contained in the baptism records of the Sagrario Metropolitano, starting in 1545,²⁷ the earliest marriage records are dated in 1585, coinciding with the council.

Due to severe restrictions of access to the individual parochial archives, my analysis relies on the microfilmed versions of the registries preserved in the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City. The books of marriages of indios and castas of the Sagrario Metropolitano are located in microfilm rolls 1526, 1527 and 1528. As summarized in table 4.2, I located information about Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in four registries of marriages of indios and negros that took place between 1585 and 1624, and in four registers dated between 1657-1758.

²⁷ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 85.

Table 4.2 Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Sagrario (1585-1758)

Matrimonios de indios (1585-1607) ^a	5 indios chinos
Matrimonio de negros (1586-1607) ^b	5 indios chinos from the Philippines 1 chino from Manila 1 indio chino de Malaca 1 negro de Malaca en la China 6 indios chinos
Matrimonios de indios (1605-1620) ^c	1 indio japon 1 indio chino 3 chinos
Matrimonios de negros (1607-1624) ^d	5 indios chinos 18 chinos 3 indios chinos from Manila 1 negro chino from Cambodia 1 chino from Malaca
Matrimonios de indios (1657-1681) ^e	3 chinos 1 chino from the Philippines
Matrimonios de mulatos (1675-1686) ^f	2 chino from the Philippines 1 chino from Manila 1 Cebuano 16 chinos
Matrimonios de negros y mulatos (1687-1699) ^g	2 chinos from Manila 1 negro de la India de Portugal 1 chino
Matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos (1738-1758) ^h	1 mulato from Manila 1 chino from Cavite 1 chino from Manila

Sources:

- a. *Matrimonios de indios, Comenzoze el libro siendo obispo el señor Don Diego Romano*. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527.
- b. *Matrimonios de negros*, ff. 109-170 in *Matrimonios de indios, Comenzoze el libro siendo obispo el señor Don Diego Romano*. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527.
- c. *Libro de matrimonios de indios en que prosigue el año de 1605, Siendo obispo el señor don diego Romano*. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527-1528.
- d. *Libro de desposación de negros desde el año de seiscientos siete*. Starts in f. 1, after *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 174v, AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528.
- e. *Libro octavo de Matrimonios de los indios desta sta cathedral desde cuatro de julio de 1657, Obispo meritisimo de este obispado el ilmo y renmo señor don diego osorio de escobar y llamas, Cura d nicolas gomez briseño y el difunto francisco lorente*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528.
- f. *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos, en que prosigue el año 1675 como constara por sus planas numeradas en adelante*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526.
- g. *Libro en que se asientan los nombres de los negros y mulatos que se desposaron en esta sancta iglesia cathedral desde el primero de henero de 1687*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526.
- h. *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos de el sagrario de esta santa iglesia cathedral de la Puebla de la Angeles y comiensa el dia dos de marzo de mil setesientos treinta y ocho años*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526-1527.

The priests at the cathedral ceased to use the term “indio chino” in the books dated after 1657, simply using “chino” instead after this date. There is an additional book in the Sagrario archive that despite its title, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, chinos*

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y pardos, (1758-1790) does not contain any reference to Asians, indios chinos, or chinos.²⁸ This could be explained by the fact that there were fewer arrivals from Asia in the second half of the eighteenth century. Additionally, it seems the term chino lost ground to the less specific and more encompassing “mestizo” label. It is interesting to note that the person who wrote the title was probably anticipating marriages of chinos, possibly because they had been relatively commonplace in previous registries.

As can be seen in tables 4.1 and 4.2, the microfilm rolls at AGN in Mexico City do not contain the marriage records of marriages of indios and castas that took place at the Puebla cathedral for a substantial period between 1624 and 1657. If there are more extant records of marriages in the cathedral that were not microfilmed, it is highly likely that they contain more cases of marriages of Asians, indios chinos and chinos. It is also possible that Asians, indios chinos, and chinos, along with blacks and other castas, were banned from marrying in the cathedral, a restriction that would have been lifted after 1657. The basis for this hypothesis is the fact that the records kept in the parish of San José include a book that almost matches the gap seen in the cathedral sources. When church official Lucas de Oviedo inspected the book of marriages for 1629-1657, he wrote it was the “libro donde se asientan los chinos, negros y mulatos libres y esclavos que se casan” in San José.²⁹

The San José parish marriage and burial registries, located in rolls 1706, 1707, and 1794, fill part of the lacunae in the cathedral records. As table 4.3 shows, no Asians, indios chinos, or chinos were located in the San José registers of indio marriages,³⁰

²⁸ *Libro de matrimonios de negros, chinos y pardos açi libres como esclavos pertenecientes a la feligrecia del curato del sagrario de esta iglesia catedral desta ciudad de los Angeles que prosigue el año de 1758 desde el dia primero de octubre (1758-1790)*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527.

²⁹ *Auto de Besita*, in *Libro en que se asientan los casamientos y velaciones de morenos de esta parroquia de señor santo jose que su principio fue el año de 1629 su fin el año de 1657*, AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, f. 49.

³⁰ *Libro de casamientos e bautismo de naturales y mestisos desta parroquia de san joseph (1621-1627)*, AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1697, *Libro de los casamientos y belaciones de indios desta santa iglesia del señor san joseph desta ciudad en primero de junio del año de 1653 (1653-1657)*, *Libro en el que se asientan los matrimonios de los naturales feligreses de esta yglesia parroquial del glorioso patriarca san joseph (1657-1661)*, *Libro en que se asientan los casamientos de los feligreses indios que en esta parochia se casan (1662-*

further suggesting they were increasingly associated with the population of African descent. Because the dates of a blacks and castas marriage book matches the 1627-1657 gap in the cathedral almost exactly (1629-1657), it is tempting to suggest that blacks and castas—including the Asians, indios chinos, and chinos—were compelled, or possibly even required, to get their sacraments in San José, instead of the cathedral. This would also explain why the bishop of Puebla gave Catarina de San Juan her confirmation in San José and not in his own parish, the Sagrario.³¹

Table 4.3 Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in San José (1629-1659)

Matrimonios de morenos (1629-1657) ^a	1 mulato from Manila 5 chinos from Manila 2 chinos from Ceylon 2 chinos from Portuguese India 1 chino from Bengal 15 chinos
Entierros (1630-1659) ^b	1 china from Portuguese India 2 chinos

Sources:

- a. *Libro en que se asientan los casamientos y velaciones de morenos de esta parroquia de señor santo jose que su principio fue el año de 1629 su fin el año de 1657.* AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollos 1706-1707.
- b. *Libro en que se asientan los feligreses que se mueren en esta parroquia del señor san joseph que su principio fue el año de 1630 su fin el año de 1659.* AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794.

I found no information about Asians, indios chinos, or chinos in any of the subsequent books. However, as in case of the book from Sagrario mentioned above, four books in San José mention chinos in their title, despite containing no chino marriages.³² Once again, the reason behind this could be that the priests were expecting to record chino marriages, even as this group's numbers were decreasing throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a consequence of mestizaje and a drop in new arrivals from Asia. This indicates chino marriages were relatively common in the preceding decades. The San José

1676), *Libro en que se asientan los casamientos de los feligreses indios que en esta parroquia se casan* (1688-1705), AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706.

³¹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 42; Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 149.

³² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1704-1705.

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books that include chino in their titles are:

- *Casamientos de mestisos, negros, mulatos y chinos, Libro octavo de los casamientos y velaciones de los mestizos, castizos, mulatos y negros feligreses y vecinos de esta parrochia del señor san joseph de la ciudad de la puebla de los angeles y corre desde el presente año de 1739 (1739-1751)*
- *Libro en el que se asientan las partidas fe casamientos de mestizos, negros, mulatos y chinos de esta feligresia del señor san josef de la ciudad de los angeles y comiensa el 5 de septiembre de 1773 años (1773-1785)*
- *Libro en donde se asientan las partidas de casamientos de castisos, mestisos, negros, mulatos y chinos de esta feligresia de ss jose de la ciudad de los angeles. Ciendo cura el sr dr dn jose atanacio dias y tirado comienza el 13 del mes de julio del año de 1785 (1785-1796)*
- *Libro en que se asientan las partidas de casamientos de mestizos, castizos, mulatos, negros, chinos y que comienza el dia 7 de agosto de 1796 años. siendo cura propio de esta parroquia de señor san jose de la ciudad de los angeles el señor doctor don jose athanacio diaz y tirado (1796-1809)*

In 1632 the priests in Analco started registering all marriages in a single tome. These include information about Asians, indios chinos, and chinos. Additionally, the priests of Santo Ángel Custodio buried several chinos or their spouses. Table 4.4 summarizes my findings.

Table 4.4 Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Analco (1632-1697)

Matrimonios (1632-1670) ^a	1 chino from Manila 1 chino from Ceylan 2 indios chinos 7 chinos from Puebla 8 chinos
Entierros (1633-1657) ^b	6 chinos
Entierros (1661-1697) ^c	12 chinos

Sources:

- a. *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844.
- b. *Entierros de los años de 1633 a 1657*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924.
- c. *Entierros pertenecientes a los años de 1661 a 1697*. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924.

There is information about Asians, indios chinos, and chinos outside the parochial records. Apart from Catarina de San Juan, four other chinos that lived in Puebla in the seventeenth century caught the attention of the Inquisition. An indio chino called Andrés was accused in 1621 of “selling powder to attract women.” It was argued that he got the powder from “el Gran Turco,” and that he had with him papers “filled with strange characters.”³³ In 1626 a chino named Luis was ordered to testify ‘por reniegos.’³⁴ Diego Palomino, “chino”, and his daughter were tried for being “superstitious” in 1675.³⁵ In 1803 a woman accused her son in law, an anonymous Filipino, of claiming a noble lineage.³⁶ Outside the Inquisition records, information about two Filipinos, an immigrant from Bengal, and eighteen chinos residing in Puebla is scattered throughout various primary and secondary sources. These will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.³⁷

Some individuals listed in the sources described above appear more than once. When calculating the total I was careful not to count the same individual twice. Overall, I located a total of 175 Asians, indio chinos, and chinos, 125 men, 36

³³ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 486, exp. 39, f. 201.

³⁴ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 356, exp. 20, f. 27.

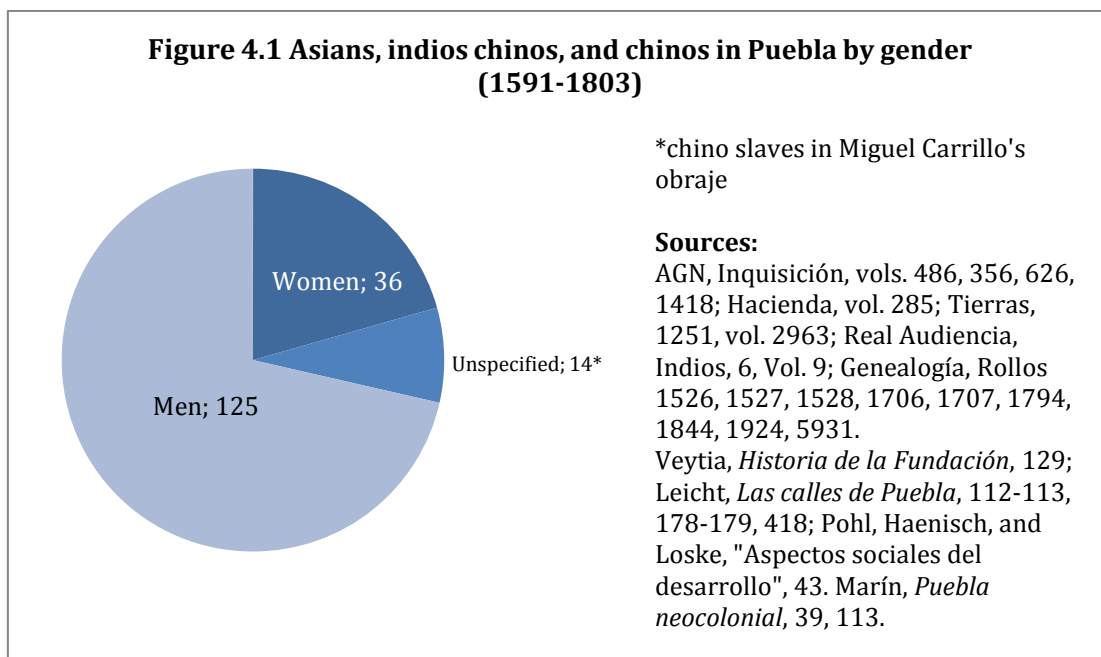
³⁵ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 626, exp. 4, fs. 9.

³⁶ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1418, exp. 15, ff. 180-181.

³⁷ AGN, Archivo Histórico de Hacienda, vol. 285, exp. 10, fs. 1. AGN, Tierras contenedor 1251, vol. 2963, exp. 69. AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, cont. 6, vol. 9; Veytia, *Historia de la Fundación*, 129; Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112-113, 178-179, 418; Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 39, 113; Pohl, Haenisch, and Loske, “Aspectos sociales del desarrollo”, 43.

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women, and 14 individuals of unspecified gender, living in Puebla between 1591 and 1803, as shown in figure 4.1. This is roughly the same man-to-woman ratio Oropeza found for the Asian slave population in Mexico City.³⁸ This number is only an approximation to the actual number, since the marriage records leave out the children and the unmarried Asians, indios chinos and chinos of Puebla. With one or two of its members marrying or being buried every year on average throughout the seventeenth century, a presence in the important textile industry, and a role in the religious life of the city, it is safe to argue this was a small but visible group.



4.2 Provenance and settlement distribution in Puebla

The exact provenance of most of them is not clearly stated in most sources. The biggest obstacle is the use of vague terms such as "indio chino" and "chino" in the sources. People whose Asian origin is clearly stated appear in the records throughout the analyzed period (1591-1803). The earliest use of the term chino without further information about provenance is 1608. It continued to be used until the end of the colonial period. The less prevalent indio chino designation was only used until the first half of the seventeenth century in the analyzed Puebla parochial records. Since the term is mostly used in the early decades of contact

³⁸ Oropeza, "La esclavitud asiática", 15; Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 186.

between New Spain and the Philippines, it is most likely that the nineteen indios chinos with no additional information on provenance located in the Puebla records came from Asia. In Mesoamerica the term *China* was a generic term used to refer to the East Indies, i.e. South, South East and East Asia, as a whole. Thus, indio chino was used as a term of geographic distinction between inhabitants of that large area and the local indios from the West Indies.³⁹ Jonathan Israel makes no distinction between Asians, indios chinos, and chinos, assuming they all came from across the Pacific.⁴⁰

Forty-seven individuals living in Puebla certainly came from various locations in Asia. Most said to have come from the Philippines, including nineteen from Manila, one from Camarín, one from Cavite, one from Cebu, one from Lubao, one from “Madrassa en el obispado de Manila,” one from Pasig, and one from Parañaque, in addition to six immigrants from an unspecified location in the archipelago. It is possible that the people from Manila came in reality from somewhere else. Manila may have been used simply to indicate the port of departure, rather than the homeland of the person. Therefore, it is highly likely that many of these “Filipinos”, especially the slaves, originated from other places in Asia. According to Oropeza, Filipinos were a relatively small part of the transpacific slave migration because in 1574 King Philip II prohibited enslavement of indios of the Philippines.⁴¹ The Puebla sources do mention immigrants from places outside the archipelago: three individuals from Malacca, two from Ceylon, two from Bengal, one from Cambodia and one from Japan, in addition to five individuals from Portuguese India.⁴² I present this information in graphic form in figure 4.2.

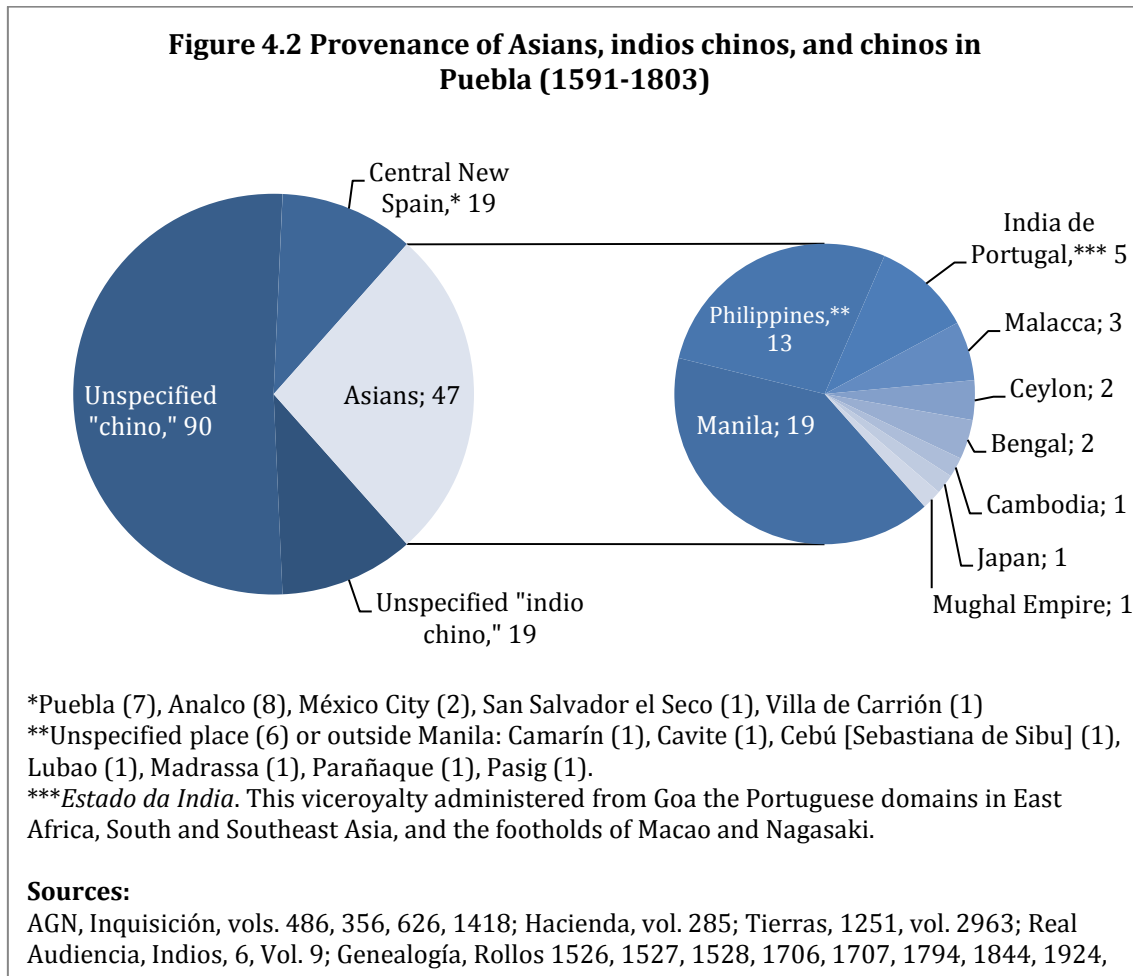
³⁹ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 17.

⁴⁰ Israel, *Razas, clases sociales y vida política*, 82-84.

⁴¹ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 17-18.

⁴² The *Estado da India*, administered from Goa, included the Portuguese domains in East Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and their footholds in Macao and Nagasaki.

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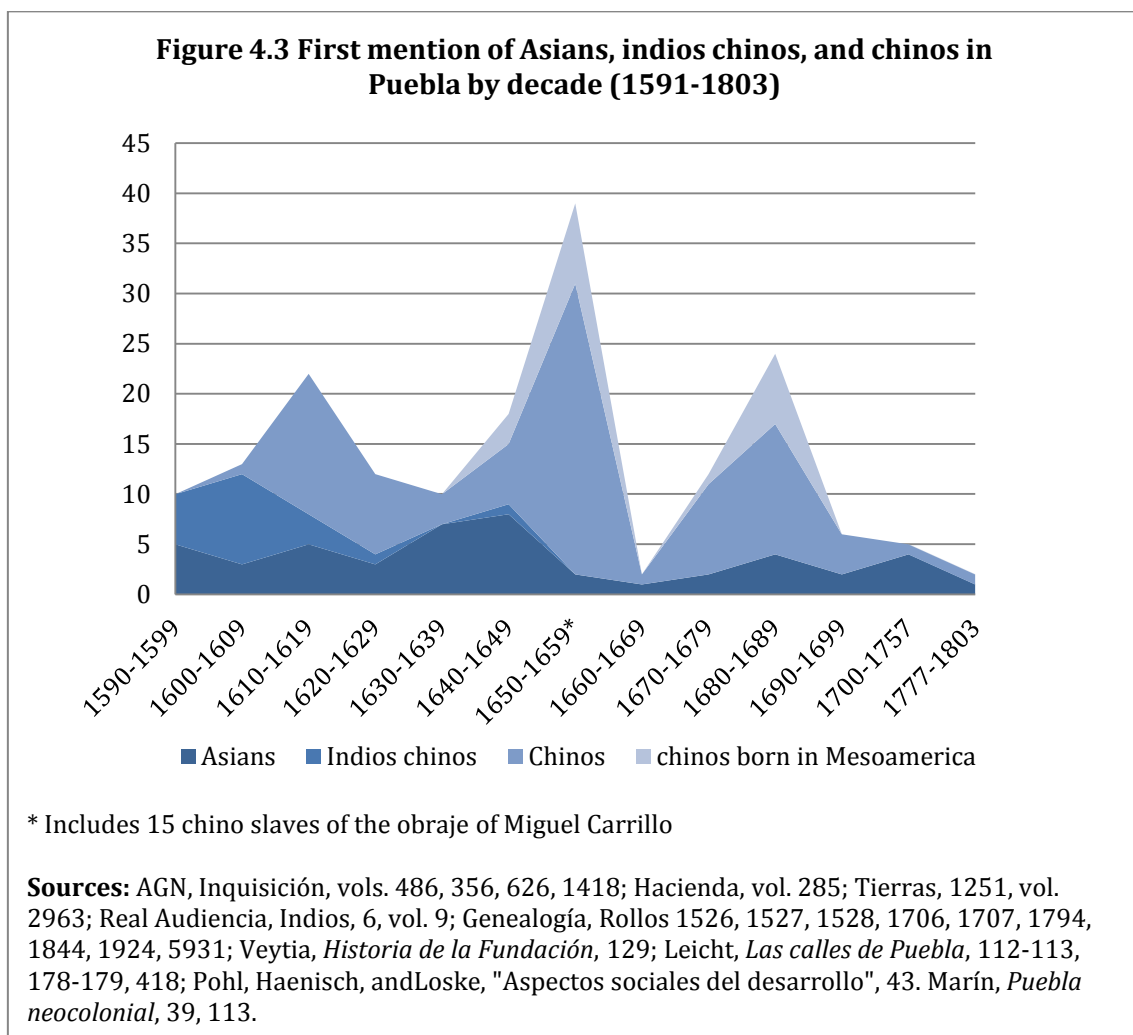
Not all Asians were called *chinos* in the sources. Antón was described as a “negro de tierra malaca en la China” when he married in 1597,⁴³ while Andrés Antonio López’s 1739 marriage record reads “mulato natural de la ciudad de Manila en las islas Filipinas.”⁴⁴ In the analyzed material the term *chino* was employed more as a geographic than as an ethnic category. Alonso de la Cruz, “mulato chino,” most likely came from Asia, since he was the widower of a woman called Sebastiana de Sibú—possibly of Cebuano origin.⁴⁵ Here it seems *chino* refers to his Asian provenance, while *mulato* describes his ethnic designation.

⁴³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Matrimonios de negros*, f. 128v.

⁴⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 33.

⁴⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 130v.

In the remaining ninety cases the people referenced in the sources were simply dubbed chinos, with no reference to their place of origin. It is most difficult to determine the provenance of chinos after 1646, date of the first notice in Puebla of a chino born in Mexico. Between 1650 and 1690, statistically, it is more likely their place of birth was Mesoamerica rather than Asia. The reason for this proposition is the fact that there are more cases of confirmed Mexican chinos than Asians during this period. However, the opposite is true for the preceding decades, since there is no evidence of chinos from Mesoamerica between 1591 and 1646. After 1690, the term chino becomes less frequent, and no more cases appear where the place of birth can be placed in Mexico. Only five Asians and two chinos of undetermined origin were located living in Puebla between 1700 and 1803. Figure 4.3 shows the first mention of the 175 individuals detected in chronological order.



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It is certain that the situation could arise where a person whose Asian origin was stated in one document, was simply called chino in another. This happened to Francisco de Habreo, who was dubbed 'chino' in his first marriage in 1642,⁴⁶ and "chino chingala," i.e. Sinhalese from Ceylon,⁴⁷ when he remarried in 1644.⁴⁸ Mateo de Córdoba, Habreo's countryman, was clearly identified with Ceylon in his marriage record in 1639,⁴⁹ but was simply called chino in 1642 when the cabildo assigned judges to participate in legal proceedings against him.⁵⁰

The likelihood of situations like this occurring was rather high, especially in the early decades; a period when the information recorded in the parochial registries is scarce and more heterogeneous. While some entries provide details about provenance, occupation, place of residence, and family, others merely state first names of the spouses and date of the wedding. Additionally, sources about women tend to be less detailed than those referring to men.

Chinos born in Mesoamerica are relevant to the history of Asian migration to Puebla because there is substantial evidence that indicates they were of Asian descent, at least on one parent's side. It is possible that even third-generation chinos were aware of their Asian heritage. The analysis of the parochial records gives nuance to the assertion that the term chino was simply used to talk about the mixed offspring of mulatos and indios. Oropeza points out the use of the term in eighteenth century casta paintings for the offspring of marriages between indio and black in addition to zambo, zambaigo, mulato pardo, and mulato prieto and, in

⁴⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 1707 *Libro en que se asientan los casamientos y velaciones de morenos*, f. 23.

⁴⁷ Identification of the term chingala with the Sinhalese is found in Pedro de Faria y Sousa, *Asia Portuguesa*, Vol. III, Parte III, Cap. VIII (Lisbon: Antonio Cracsbeeck de Mello, 1675), 278, and Joseph Laporte, *El viajero universal o Noticia del mundo antiguo y nuevo*, trans. Pedro Estela Tomo III, Carta XXXVIII, "Segunda parte de Ceylan" (Madrid: Fermín Villalpando, 1795), 260. See also etching of a "chingala de Ceylan" warrior by Joseph Vázquez based on a drawing by A. Rodríguez, No. 65, in *Colección general de los trages que usan actualmente todas las naciones del mundo descubierto* (Madrid, 1799).

⁴⁸ Rollo 1844 Matrimonios (1632-1670) f. 68v.

⁴⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 12.

⁵⁰ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 19, doc. 228, asunto 4, 07/29/1642, f. 335.

only one occasion, to the child of an español and a morisca⁵¹. Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán contends that in seventeenth-century Puebla children of Afro-Amerindian parenthood were described as “mulato or chino,” while Oropeza suggests this usage could also happen in Mexico City based on an inquisition record of 1665 that describes a slave as “mulato o chino.”⁵²

However, in the Puebla parochial registries there are no records of chino children of mulato and indio parents both born in central New Spain. Only the children of other chinos, mulatos *chinos*, or indios *chinos*, i.e. hailing from Asia, were referred to as chinos. Both of Isabel de San Alberto’s parents, a china who married in 1656, were chinos: María del Valle “china” and Ignacio “chino,” both of whom slaves owned by *alferez* Pedro Marín del Valle who married in 1619.⁵³ Miguel Ruiz was dubbed chino when he married in 1676,⁵⁴ because he was the son of an india china and a mulato.⁵⁵ Similarly, Francisco de la Cruz was classified as a chino at his wedding in 1683,⁵⁶ for being the son of a chino slave from Manila and a Puebla-born china.⁵⁷

What the term chino meant to people in Puebla or elsewhere in New Spain in the seventeenth century cannot be inferred from the casta paintings made in the 1700s. Far from being a faithful depiction of the ethnic composition of the population of New Spain, the ‘complex and confusing’ nomenclature employed in

⁵¹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 20; María Concepción García Sáiz, *Las castas mexicanas, un género pictórico-americano* (Mexico: Olivetti, 1989), 25-29.

⁵² Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1972), 179. AGN, Inquisición v.600, exp.23, ff.521-529, cited in Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 20.

⁵³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 59.

⁵⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos, en que prosigue el año 1675 como constara por sus planas numeradas en adelante*, f. 15.

⁵⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 102v.

⁵⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 129.

⁵⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 80v.

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casta paintings were an intellectual expression, more closely related to Rococo exotism, than a serious effort to represent social reality.⁵⁸

Therefore, it seems that, for the most part, *chino* was used first as a term to indicate distinction based on geography, which did not become a moniker with ethnic connotations until later and, even then, only among the descendants of people who had originally arrived to New Spain from Asia. I argue that the confusion in the argument that *chinos* were a *casta* of Native American and African descent stems from the fact that many of the immigrants from Asia *were* “mulato” and “negro.” People like *casta* painters, who were trying to categorize the complicated ethnic landscape of New Spain in the eighteenth century, would easily have been mistaken. This would explain the absence of any allusion to Asian origin in the depiction of *chinos* in *casta* paintings.⁵⁹ Another possibility is that this omission was intentional, as the Spanish American elite made a conscious effort to erase any trace of Asian provenance of their *chino* slaves, after the 1673 ban on *indio chino* slavery.⁶⁰ If their *chinos* were presented as a mixed *casta* born from American-born *indio* and *mulato* unions, the owners would be in no obligation to free them and would be able to keep them and their children in bondage.

Marriages between new coming Asians and *chinos* born in Puebla support the idea that, some sense of awareness of their Asian heritage prevailed, among central New Spain-born *chinos*. Sihalese Francisco Habreo married María Teresa, a *china* born in Puebla, daughter of Francisco Diego, *chino*, in 1644.⁶¹ Francisco Diego is also the name of the father of Ignacio Francisco, “*chino libre criollo de Puebla*,” who married Gertrudis de los Ángeles a *mestiza* from the town of Chiapa in 1655.⁶² Thus, María Teresa and Ignacio Francisco may have been siblings. Another *chino* family reconnected with Asia through marriage in 1646, when Lorenzo de la Cruz, “*chino de Manila*,” property of Cristóbal Barbero Barrientos married a free *china*

⁵⁸ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 88.

⁵⁹ Nicolás León, *Las castas del México colonial o Nueva España* (Mexico: Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, 1924), 22-23.

⁶⁰ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 46.

⁶¹ Rollo 1844 Matrimonios (1632-1670) f. 68v.

⁶² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, San José, *Libro en que se asientan los casamientos y velaciones de morenos*, f. 46.

born in Puebla called Andrea de los Reyes.⁶³ Her father, a “chino” by the name of Pedro Álvarez, also served as a witness at the wedding of chinos Antonio de San Juan and Isabel Díaz.⁶⁴ When Lorenzo died in 1679, a priest of the Santo Ángel Custodio buried him in the convent of la Concepción.⁶⁵ Lorenzo and Andrea’s son, Francisco de la Cruz, “chino” became a blacksmith and married a mulata in the cathedral in 1683. He too resided in Analco.⁶⁶ Other examples are chino Antonio de la Cruz’s children, who married in Analco throughout the 1650s.⁶⁷ When his eldest son Nicolás died in 1683, his ethnicity was omitted both in his burial record⁶⁸ and his will.⁶⁹ These entries suggest at least part of the community was a cohesive group that on occasion sought marriage with newcomers from Asia.

Further proof of the cohesion of the chinos of Puebla is chronicler Cerón Zapata’s assertion in 1714, which a group of “chinos en hermandad” took care of a chapel dedicated to the Our Lady of Guadalupe in the church of Santa Veracruz.⁷⁰ Apart from familial links, it is not clear if there were more elements that amalgamated these units. There could have existed cultural or linguistic affinity among the members of the chino community in Puebla. Perhaps rejection from the other, more clearly defined groups was their incentive for attachment. The site of the Santa Veracruz church, now known as La Concordia, is very close to a street that came to be known as “calle de las chinitas” at some point before 1790.⁷¹ Interestingly, the church of Veracruz in Mexico City also congregated Asians, indios

⁶³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 80v.

⁶⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 115.

⁶⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924 Entierros (1661-1697), f. 26.

⁶⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 129.

⁶⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 102, f. 104, f. 112, f. 117,

⁶⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 37v.

⁶⁹ Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla. AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 5931, ff. 196-200v.

⁷⁰ Miguel Zerón Zapata, *La Puebla de los Ángeles en el siglo XVII* (Mexico: Editorial Patria, 1945, originally published in 1714); Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112. When Veytia wrote his *Historia de la Fundación de la Ciudad de Puebla* some time before 1780, he claimed that the brotherhood, “que acudía a [la capilla] todos los días de fiesta, y muchos de la Cuaresma [...] está casi aniquilada”, 423.

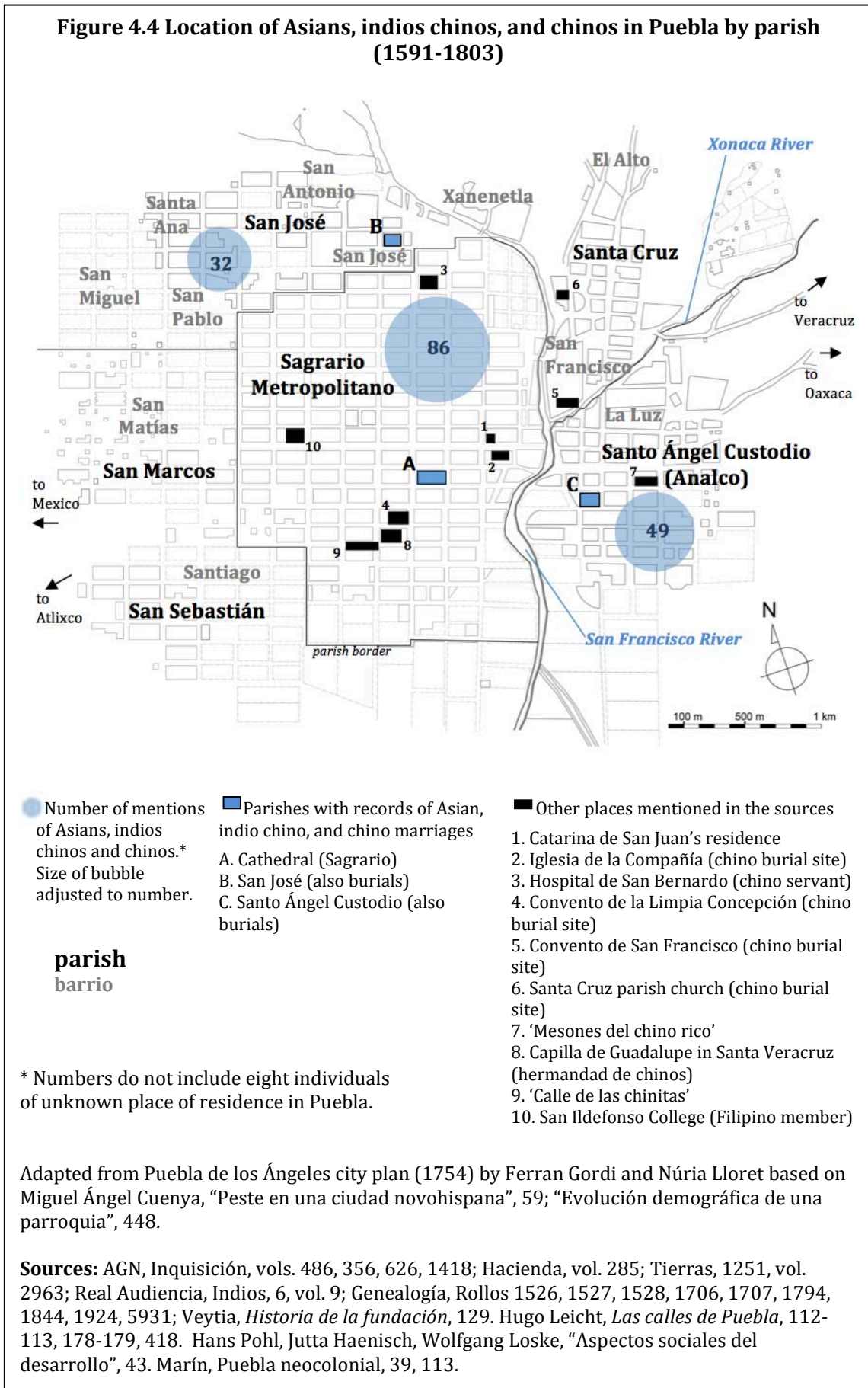
⁷¹ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112-113.

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chinos, and chinos. This coincidence hints at a connection between the chinos of Mexico City and the chinos poblanos, at least in their religious organization.

As for the geographic distribution of this community within Puebla, there seems to have been no specific area of the city the chinos were confined too. Based on the information of the first appearance of each individual in the sources, eighty-six Asians, indios chinos and chinos can be placed within the limits of the Sagrario Metropolitana parish, while forty-nine resided in Analco, and thirty-two in San José, as shown in the map presented in figure 4.4. However, specific information about place of residence seldom appears, and most individuals are simply said to be “de esta feligresia,” members of the churches where they were married or buried, but not necessarily residents in the surrounding area. While the largest number corresponds to the most populated parish, the Sagrario, Asians, indios chinos, and chinos were proportionally more numerous in Analco. Many participated in the woolens industry centered along the banks of the San Francisco River, thus, at least part of the community may have lived close to the river.

Figure 4.4 Location of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Puebla by parish (1591-1803)



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4.3 Occupational patterns

The priests who wrote the parochial records were more thorough when registering occupation than provenance. While sixty-two percent of the entries do not specify provenance, occupation remains unknown in twenty-nine percent of the records. This evidence failed to confirm the hypothesis proposed by researchers like Edward Slack who speculated that Asians must have been employed producing Talavera ceramics, “given the large numbers of skilled Asians in Puebla.”⁷² I located no data linking Asians, indios chinios, or chinios to this particular occupation. A possible explanation for their absence could be restrictions imposed on specific ethnic groups to participate in specific industries.

A project to isolate chino and other casta artisans to become officials of the clothmakers guild of Puebla failed in 1676. When new ordinances were approved that year, a chapter intended to ban chinios from positions of power within the guild was not.⁷³ As for the ceramics industry, blacks, mulatos and other castas—possibly including chinios—did get barred from the examinations to the potter’s guild in 1653.⁷⁴ This may explain why the sources located reveal no direct relation between the Asian, indio chino, and chino immigrants in Puebla and the famous ceramics industry of the city, despite the fact that it, according to Slack, “slavishly imitated the Ming dynasty qingbai (blue and white) style that was all the rage in Europe.”⁷⁵ This researcher states that in 1682, the cabildo ordinances for the potters’ guild read that “in making fine wares the coloring should be in imitation of Chinese ware, very blue, finished in the same style and with relief work in blue, and on this pottery there should be painted black dots and grounds in colors.”⁷⁶

Two thirds of Asians, indios chinios and chinios in Puebla were subjected to some form of servitude, from slavery, to labor in an obraje, to household servitude—sixty-four, twelve, and thirteen instances, respectively. Some of the slaves could

⁷² Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 44.

⁷³ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 43-44. AGN Grupo 82 vol. 6, ex. 39, f. 45-52.

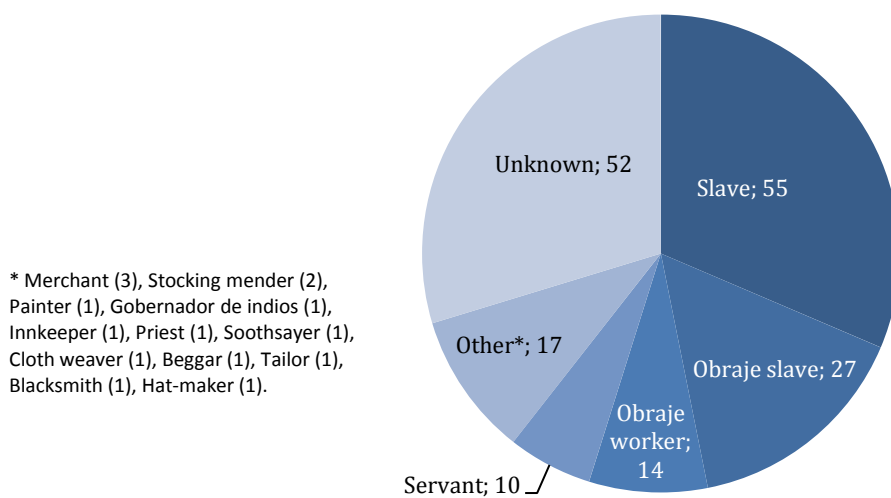
⁷⁴ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 44.

⁷⁵ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 31.

⁷⁶ Kuwayama, *Chinese Ceramics in Colonial Mexico*, 44.

have engaged in the economic activity of their master. Only seventeen individuals were recorded as having a different sort of occupation: two merchants, two candle makers, two stocking makers, a painter, a hat maker, a blacksmith, a tailor, a cloth weaver and a beggar. There is also a reference from 1712 to the “mesones del chino rico,” suggesting there was at least one chino that was an innkeeper.⁷⁷ In 1682, Mateo Peña, a “mulato que era chino,” was elected the ninth “gobernador de los naturales” of Puebla, or “topile” in Nahuatl. This was an important office whose jurisdiction extended to all the naturales of the various barrios of the city.⁷⁸ This survey about occupation starts with Asians, indios chinos, and chinos not subjected to forced labor of any kind; then describes the slaves, the obraje workers, and the servants. At the same time, a brief description of the various marriages records is provided. I summarize this information in graphic form in figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5 Occupation of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Puebla (1591-1803)



Sources:

AGN, Inquisición, vols. 486, 356, 626, 1418; Hacienda, vol. 285; Tierras, 1251, vol. 2963; Real Audiencia, Indios, 6, Vol. 9; Genealogía, Rollos 1526, 1527, 1528, 1706, 1707, 1794, 1844, 1924. Mariano Veytia, *Historia de la Fundación*, 129. Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112-113, 178-179, 418. Hans Pohl, Jutta Haenisch, Wolfgang Loske, ‘Aspectos sociales del desarrollo de los obrajes textiles en Puebla colonial’, *Comunicaciones proyecto Puebla-Tlaxcala*, No. 15, 1978, 43.

⁷⁷ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 113.

⁷⁸ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 178-179; Cuenya and Contreras, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 41.

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I now turn to a more in-depth analysis of the occupational patterns of the Asian minority of Puebla. I organized the information by the legal status of the different individuals, starting with the free *chinos* and moving on to the analysis of slaves. I study the people working in *obrajes*, or textile mills, both free and slave, separately because of the particularities of this form of labor and the copious details about this industry that have been described by previous scholars. These detailed studies have enabled me to put the Asian laborers in *obrajes* in a richer context.

I list the Asians, *indios chinos*, and *chinos* that appear in sources containing no details about their occupation in table 4.5. Because priests duly recorded when somebody was in bondage, individuals whose occupation was not stated were almost certainly free.

Date	Name	Description	Spouse
1591	Agustín Pérez ⁷⁹	chino natural de las islas Filipinas	Ana María de los Ángeles, india servant
1597	Miguel Sánchez ⁸⁰	indio chino	Ana Lucía, india
1612	Juán Pérez ⁸¹	chino natural de Manila	india from the barrio of San Francisco
1618	Juan de Robles ⁸²	indio chino natural de la ciudad de Manila en Filipinas	Free mulata
1618	Marcos ⁸³	chino witness in Juan de Roble's marriage	
1618	Antonio ⁸⁴	chino witness in Juan de Roble's marriage	
1618	Juan ⁸⁵	chino witness in a marriage between indios	
1619	Luis Pérez ⁸⁶	natural de Filipinas	Magdalena Hernández, india from Juxtlahuaca
1620	Domingo de Mercado ⁸⁷	indio chino natural de la Manila en Filipinas y vecino de Puebla	María de Carvajal, india

⁷⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Matrimonios (1585-1607), f. 118.

⁸⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 63.

⁸¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Matrimonios (1605-1624), f. 21.

⁸² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Matrimonios (1605-1624), f. 52.

⁸³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Matrimonios (1605-1624), f. 52.

⁸⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Matrimonios (1605-1624), f. 52.

⁸⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 137v.

⁸⁶ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, 6, vol. 9, exp. 155.

⁸⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Matrimonios (1605-1624), f. 64v.

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1638	Juan del Huerto ⁸⁸	mestizo benido de Filipinas married in Manila	Agustina de Jesús, china
1638	Agustina de Jesús ⁸⁹	china married in Manila	Juan del Huerto, mestizo de Filipinas
1639	Martín de la Cruz ⁹⁰	chino dead before 1639	His widow, María, remarried in 1639.
1649	María López ⁹¹	india china. Mother of Miguel Ruiz (who married in 1676)	Cristóbal de Velasco, free mulato
1649	Francisco de la Cruz ⁹²	Freed chino slave	María, india
1650	María ⁹³	china dead in 1650	Diego, chino
1650	Juana de la Cruz ⁹⁴	china daughter of Antonio de la Cruz, indio chino	Joseph de la Cruz, mestizo
1651	María de la Cruz ⁹⁵	china daughter of Antonio de la Cruz, indio chino	Nicolás de Aguilar, mestizo
1651	Diego ⁹⁶	chino, dead in 1651	María, china
1652	Ana de la Cruz ⁹⁷	china daughter of Antonio de la Cruz, indio chino	Andrés de Carvajal, mulato
1652	Damiana de la Cruz ⁹⁸	china daughter of Antonio de la Cruz, indio chino	Diego Pacheco, mestizo
1654	Gaspar de los Reyes ⁹⁹	chino natural de la ciudad de Manila	Josepha de Nava, negra
1655	Ignacio Francisco ¹⁰⁰	chino libre criollo de Puebla	Gertrudis de los Ángeles, mestiza from Chiapa
1656	Francisca de los Reyes ¹⁰¹	china	Tomás de la Cruz, mulato

⁸⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794, Libro de entierros de San José (1630-1659), f. 19v.

⁸⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794, Libro de entierros de San José (1630-1659), f. 19v.

⁹⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Matrimonios de morenos San José (1629-1657), f. 12.

⁹¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 102v

⁹² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 36v.

⁹³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794, Libro de entierros de San José (1630-1659), f. 60.

⁹⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 104.

⁹⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 112.

⁹⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794, Libro de entierros de San José (1630-1659), f. 68v.

⁹⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 117.

⁹⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 117.

⁹⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 45.

¹⁰⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 46.

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1656	Isabel de San Alberto ¹⁰²	china libre natural de Puebla	Antonio Guzmán, mulato
1659	Inés de Córdoba ¹⁰³	china natural de la India de Portugal. Died in 1659.	
1674	Antonio de la Cruz ¹⁰⁴	chino natural de la ciudad de Manila en Filipinas. Arrived in Puebla in 1674 and married in 1686.	mestiza
1676	Miguel Ruiz ¹⁰⁵	chino libre natural y vecino de Puebla, son of Cristóbal de Velasco, mulato, and María López, india china	Juana Zurita, mestiza from Tlaxcala
1678	Josepha de la Cruz ¹⁰⁶	china	Francisco Duran, mulato, journeyman hatter
1680	Pedro de la Cruz ¹⁰⁷	chino	Juana, mulata zambaiga
1680	Antonia de la Cruz ¹⁰⁸	china from Puebla married in Mexico	Pedro Gutiérrez, chino from Lubao in Pampanga
1680	Pedro Gutiérrez ¹⁰⁹	chino natural del pueblo de Lubau en la Pampanga married in Mexico	Antonia de la Cruz, china from Puebla
1680	Ángela María ¹¹⁰	china	Miguel de Soto, free mulato
1681	Francisco de Perea ¹¹¹	chino	María de la Cruz, india; Sebastiana de la Cruz, india
1682	Clara de la Cruz ¹¹²	china daughter of Antonio de la Cruz, indio chino	
1682	Agustín de la Cruz ¹¹³	chino natural del lugar de Parañaque en las islas Filipinas. He arrived in Puebla in 1666.	María de la Cruz, mulata from Puebla

¹⁰¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 134/125.

¹⁰² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 47v.

¹⁰³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794, Libro de entierros de San José (1630-1659), f. 74.

¹⁰⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro en que se asientan los nombres de los negros*, f. 38v.

¹⁰⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 15.

¹⁰⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 36v.

¹⁰⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 62v.

¹⁰⁸ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 277-278.

¹⁰⁹ Oropeza, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España", 277-278.

¹¹⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 68.

¹¹¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 76.

¹¹² Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla. AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 5931, f. 197.

¹¹³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 107v.

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1683	María de Ávalos ¹¹⁴	china muy vieja. Died in 1683.	
1685	Pablo de la Cruz ¹¹⁵	de nación chino	Josepha de la Cruz, mestiza
1693	Pascual Tenorio ¹¹⁶	chino. Died in 1693.	Elena de la Cruz, china
1693	Elena de la Cruz ¹¹⁷	china	Pascual Tenorio, chino
1694	Juana Pacheco ¹¹⁸	china	Diego Monterroso, mestizo
1695	Juan de la Cruz ¹¹⁹	chino	Ana de Ortega, mestiza

Two of these documents warrant a few lines. The first one¹²⁰ evidences the participation of chino witnesses in chino marriages, a fact that lends support to the idea that chinos formed networks. I interpret this as a sign of a certain social cohesion. The second document reveals that Asians were migrating to Puebla on their own accord. Luis Pérez “natural de Filipinas” was granted a license to move from Juxtlahuaca in Oaxaca to Puebla with his family in 1619. He had been living in that town at least since 1609, when he married his wife, Magdalena Hernández, a local india.¹²¹ What attracted him to Puebla specifically is unclear. Perhaps the economic boom the city underwent in the previous decades made it seem a prosperous location full of opportunity. It could also be that Pérez expected to receive support from other Asians already settled in the city. His case is interesting because it shows that among the chinos poblanos there were not only servants and slaves coerced to migrate to the city. Some of them traveled to Puebla willingly, presumably seeking to better their condition.

A number of the sources do register occupation. The majority of the people in these sources were slaves, and a sizeable number, both free and slave chinos, worked in the obrajes, or textile mills of the city. Because of the specific conditions

¹¹⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 39.

¹¹⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 45.

¹¹⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 70.

¹¹⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 70.

¹¹⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 84v?.

¹¹⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1661-1697), f. 92v?.

¹²⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Matrimonios (1605-1624), f. 52.

¹²¹ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios, 6, vol. 9, exp. 155.

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involved in obraje labor, I analyze these individuals separately below. I first address the free chinos that worked outside the obras, summarized in table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Occupation of free Asians, indios chinos, and chinos outside obras (1594-1697)			
Date	Name	Description and occupation	Spouse
1594	Miguel de Mendoza ¹²²	indio chino servant	María Catalina, india
1594	Alonso Pérez ¹²³	indio chino natural del puerto de Lubao en las islas Filipinas, servant in Luis de Carmona's house	Ana María, india china
1594	Ana María ¹²⁴	india china del puerto de Camarín en Filipinas, servant in Luis de Carmona's house	Alonso Pérez, indio chino
1596	Pedro ¹²⁵	chino de Malaca en la India, servant of Felipe de García	María Isabel, india from Cuscatlán
1606	Guillermo ¹²⁶	indio chino servant of Andrés Lorenzo	Francisca Magdalena, india servant in the same household
1609	Antón de Soto ¹²⁷	indio chino criado en la casa de Chávez	Ana de Chávez, india servant in the same household
1612	? ¹²⁸	chino de nación. Painted two canvases located at the cathedral.	
1639	Antonio de la Cruz ¹²⁹	indio chino merchant resident of Analco. His is the best-documented chino family. He owned slaves.	Magdalena Luisa, india; Francisca de la O, mestiza
1639	Mateo de Córdoba ¹³⁰	chino natural de la ciudad de Seilan en la Gran China. Tailor possibly working for Juan de Cortes, master tailor.	Ana Domínguez, mestiza from Puebla, Juan Cortes' servant

¹²² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 48.

¹²³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 124.

¹²⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 124.

¹²⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 126v.

¹²⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 159.

¹²⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 9.

¹²⁸ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, pp. 112, 418.

¹²⁹ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, Contenedor 07, vol. 11, exp. 166, f. 136v. AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 22, doc. 71, asunto 5, 24/4/1648, f. 153v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 112v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, Antonio Gómez de Escobar, *Protocolo años de 1682*, f. 196v.

¹³⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 12.

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1646	Jacinto de la Cruz ¹³¹	chino libre de la ciudad de México, servant in Hospital de San Bernardo	María Inés, india from San Salvador
1650	Nicolás de la Cruz ¹³²	chino merchant son of Antonio de la Cruz	María Ortiz de Alarcon, española
1674	Melchor de la Cruz ¹³³	"chino libre al servicio de doña Juana Revalle." Buried at the convent of San Francisco in 1674.	
1679	Lázaro de Balsilla ¹³⁴	chino. Hatter	María Vázquez
1680	Juan Bautista ¹³⁵	chino natural de la villa de Carrión. Weaver.	Ana María Sánchez, mestiza
1680	Juan de la Cruz ¹³⁶	natural de las islas filipinas, journeyman candlemaker	Petrona de Rojas, china from San Salvador el Seco
1680	Petrona de Rojas ¹³⁷	china from San Salvador el Seco	Juan de la Cruz, Filipino
1680	Gabriel de la Cruz ¹³⁸	chino hosier	Isabel Rodríguez, india
1682	Juan de la Cruz ¹³⁹	chino, candlemaker (cerero) and confiteur	María de la Encarnación, mulata; Inés de Guitargo, mulata
1682	Mateo de la Cruz ¹⁴⁰	chino hosier	Josepha de San Miguel, india
1689	Juan de Dios Pacheco ¹⁴¹	chino libre sirviente de la ciudad de México	Tomasa Antonia, mestiza
1697	Juan Francisco ¹⁴²	chino natural de la ciudad de Manila, beggar (pordiosero)	Teresa Gutiérrez, mestiza

¹³¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 31.

¹³² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 102v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, Antonio Gómez de Escobar, *Protocolo años de 1682*, ff. 196-200v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, *Entierros Analco (1661-1697)*, f. 37v.

¹³³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, *Entierros Analco (1661-1697)*, f. 12.

¹³⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro octavo de Matrimonios de los indios desta sta cathedral*, f. 376.

¹³⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1657-1681), f. 380.

¹³⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1657-1681), f. 388.

¹³⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1657-1681), f. 388.

¹³⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 75.

¹³⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 124v.

¹⁴⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 122v.

¹⁴¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro en que se asientan los nombres de los negros*, f. 40v.

¹⁴² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro en que se asientan los nombres de los negros*, f. 168v.

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As shown in table 4.6, several chinos worked as domestic servants in the houses of the rich. An interesting case is that of Jacinto de la Cruz, a “chino libre de la ciudad de México” who married an india in San José in 1646.¹⁴³ Rather than serving a rich Poblano merchant or official, Jacinto was a servant in the Hospital de San Bernardo. This hospital, also known as San Juan de Dios, was founded in 1629.¹⁴⁴ By 1632, it was home to around a dozen clergymen who tended the sick.¹⁴⁵

But the Asians, indios chinos and chinos of Puebla also performed occupations other than servitude. Two cases stand out from the rest. According to Mariano Fernández de Echeverría y Veytia (1717-1780), there was a painting of “Nuestro Redentor con la cruz auestas, que se dice haberla pintado un chino de nación, el año de 1612.”¹⁴⁶ Another one, Mateo de Córdoba “chino natural de la ciudad de Seilan [sic] en la Gran China” is interesting because he managed to become a tailor, a highly competitive, and hermetic profession. In 1639, he married Ana Dominguez a mestiza from Puebla “del serbicio de Juan de Cortes maestro de sastre,” who may have been Córdoba’s employer.¹⁴⁷ As previously noted, Mateo de Córdoba got into a legal dispute in 1642, for which the judges assigned by the cabildo forced him to pay 142 pesos.¹⁴⁸

I infer that these individuals, along with their fellow chino artisans, such as candlemakers¹⁴⁹ and hosiers,¹⁵⁰ arrived freely in Puebla pursuing improvement in

¹⁴³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 31.

¹⁴⁴ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 103-104.

¹⁴⁵ María Luisa Rodríguez-Sala, Verónica Ramírez, Alejandra Tolentino, Cecilia Rivera, Alfonso Pérez, Ángel Mireles, *Los cirujanos de hospitales de la Nueva España (siglos XVI y XVII), ¿miembros de un estamento profesional o de una comunidad científica?* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Academia Mexicana de Cirugía, Patronato del Hospital de Jesús, Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia, 2005), 200-201.

¹⁴⁶ Veytia, *Historia de la Fundación*, vol. 2, 129. See also Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 112, 418.

¹⁴⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 12.

¹⁴⁸ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, Vol. 19, doc. 228, asunto 4, 07/29/1642, f. 335.

¹⁴⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1657-1681), f. 388. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 124v.

their material and social standing. The extent to which they succeeded is unclear in most cases. However, I interpret the trajectory of two families, whose genealogy I have been able to reconstruct, as success stories.

The first one is Lorenzo de la Cruz's family. Lorenzo was a "chino de Manila" slave, property of Cristóbal Barbero Barrientos, who in 1646 married a free china born in Puebla called Andrea de los Reyes in the parish of Santo Ángel Custodio.¹⁵¹ Andrea's marriage to a newcomer from Asia seems to be a reflection of her family's part in a chino network. This is also evidenced by the 1651 record of the marriage between two chinos, Antonio de San Juan and Isabel Díaz, where Andrea's father, Pedro Álvarez, also described as "chino," is listed as one of the witnesses.¹⁵² The reason why this family's history can be understood as a success story is the fact that Lorenzo and Andrea's son, Francisco de la Cruz, did not share in his father's bondage. It is unclear whether Francisco was born free or slave, or if his father managed emancipation before he died in 1679.¹⁵³ But by the time Francisco married in 1683, not only was he not a slave, he had also become a blacksmith.¹⁵⁴ Thus this family was able to improve their condition in the course of one generation, perhaps helped by a network of free chinos, which could have contributed for instance in buying Lorenzo's freedom.

The second case of a success story of a chino family deserves a more detailed analysis. One chino stands above the rest in terms of the apparent success he had as a merchant and shopkeeper, and in the number of documents referring to him and his family. His is the best-documented family history of the Asian Diaspora of Puebla. His name was Antonio de la Cruz. It seems that he had no relation to Lorenzo de la Cruz.

¹⁵⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 75. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 122v.

¹⁵¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 80v.

¹⁵² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 115.

¹⁵³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924 Entierros (1661-1697), f. 26.

¹⁵⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 129.

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Antonio was an “indio chino” who lived in Analco. The first document mentioning this individual is a petition to the *Juzgado de indios*, the tribunal in charge of indio affairs, dated in 1639.¹⁵⁵ According to this petition, Antonio de la Cruz made a living selling *petates*, or hemp mats, anise, cotton, and other local products with his wife, an indigenous woman called Magdalena Luisa. From this activity they were able to feed their seven children and pay their due tribute to the Crown. But when a directive from the *alcalde mayor* ordered the *alcabala*, an excise or internal tax imposed on the sale of commodities, to be levied on them, Antonio petitioned the *Juzgado de indios* in Mexico City to exempt them from this new duty. He argued that *indios chinos* and *indios* were subjects to the Crown and therefore free from the excise,

[Antonio de la Cruz] ha echo relación, que no embargase que esta declarado por auto de Don Juan de Cervantes Carvajal, *alcalde mayor* que fue de la Ciudad de los Ángeles, no estar obligado a pagar esta *alcabala* respecto de ser como es él y la dicha Magdalena Luisa su muger naturales y como tales han pagado y pagan tributo a su magestad.¹⁵⁶

Despite his successful plea, in 1648, the Puebla *cabildo* denied Antonio de la Cruz’s request to not being charged more than 100 pesos in *alcabala*.¹⁵⁷

The parochial records of Santo Angel Custodio contain several documents pertaining this man and his family. His daughter Juana de la Cruz, described as *china*, married a mestizo called Joseph de la Cruz in 1650.¹⁵⁸ Another one of his daughters, María de la Cruz, was also dubbed *china* when she married Nicolas de Aguilar, a mestizo from Chalco, the following year.¹⁵⁹ Juana and María’s mother, Magdalena Luisa, Antonio’s first wife, died sometime before 1651, since Antonio

¹⁵⁵ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, Contenedor 07, vol. 11, exp. 166, f. 136v.

¹⁵⁶ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 58, Contenedor 07, vol. 11, exp. 166, f. 136v.

¹⁵⁷ AGMP, Actas de Cabildo, vol. 22, doc. 71, asunto 5, 24/4/1648, f. 153v.

¹⁵⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 104.

¹⁵⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 112.

was remarried that year to Francisca de la O, a mestiza. Their wedding was attended by “mucho concurso del pueblo,” suggesting Antonio de la Cruz was a prominent figure in his community.¹⁶⁰ Two more of his daughters, both described as chinas, married on the same day in Santo Ángel Custodio in 1652; Ana de la Cruz married a free mulato, while Damiana de la Cruz married a mestizo tailor apprentice named Diego Pacheco.¹⁶¹

There is more extant information about Antonio’s son, Nicolás Antonio de la Cruz. Nicolás is the only chino that married an *española*, or person of European descent, located in the Puebla parochial sources. Her name was Magdalena Ortiz, and they married in 1650 at a ceremony attended by many.¹⁶² Advantageous interracial marriage was a way to achieve upward social mobility in New Spain’s racially determined social stratification system. Nicolás’ father’s prominent social position, and the fact that Magdalena Ortiz was a “hija de la iglesia” of unknown parenthood, certainly facilitated this union. Nicolás worked with his father and it seems he inherited his business.

These marriages are testament to Antonio de la Cruz’s prosperity, assuming he paid a dowry for each of his daughters, and that he was able to afford welcoming an española with no parents into his household. Further proofs of his success were his slaves. He owned at least two, Juan de la Cruz “negro de tierra maçambique” and Isabel María “negra” who married each other in 1648.¹⁶³ It is possible these and other slaves from Mozambique, a territory inside the Portuguese *Estado da India*’s sphere of influence, arrived to New Spain on the Manila Galleon.¹⁶⁴ All the people located in the parochial registers from Mozambique, a total of seventeen

¹⁶⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 112v.

¹⁶¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 117.

¹⁶² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 102v.

¹⁶³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 95v.

¹⁶⁴ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 28.

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individuals, were recorded at the height of the Manila Galleon indio chino slave trade, between 1600 and 1648.¹⁶⁵

I located no information regarding Antonio de la Cruz's death, except that his second wife and his son Nicolás were executors of his will.¹⁶⁶ Conversely, the record of his son Nicolás' death survives, dated in 1683.¹⁶⁷ That document states that Nicolás made a testament, which he registered in Antonio Gómez de Escobar's clerkship in 1682. According to his burial record, the *albaceas*, or executors of Nicolás' will were his widow, María Ortiz de Alarcón, his son in law Cristóbal Bravo, and a priest called Francisco de la Cruz.¹⁶⁸ It is interesting to note that, by the time of his death, neither Nicolás, nor any of his family members were dubbed "chino" either on his wife's burial record¹⁶⁹ or on his will.

I was able to locate Nicolás' will in the Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla through a microfilmed copy stored in the Genealogía section of the AGN in Mexico City.¹⁷⁰ Next to the biographies of Catarina de San Juan, this document is arguably the most revealing source about the lifestyle of a member of the Asian minority of Puebla. For this reason I believe this will warrants closer examination. Nicolás asked to be buried at the Santo Ángel Custodio parish and petitioned the customary prayers for his soul to be paid from his belongings. He left ten gold pesos for the cause of "canonización o beatificación" of María de Jesús Tomelín who, as previously stated, was a close friend of Catarina de San Juan. He asked for five hundred masses for his soul's salvation. He ordered his debts to be settled after his death. After these formulaic provisions, Nicolás stated that his father had

¹⁶⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Matrimonios* (1585-1607), ff. 135v, 144v, 148v, 149, 149v, 157, 158v, 162; Rollo 1528, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Matrimonios* (1605-1624), ff. 9, 18, 33; Rollo 1706, San José, *Matrimonios de morenos* (1629-1657), f. 7; Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios* (1632-1670), f. 95v.

¹⁶⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, Antonio Gómez de Escobar, *Protocolo años de 1682*, f. 196v.

¹⁶⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, *Entierros Analco* (1661-1697), f. 37v.

¹⁶⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Entierros pertenecientes a los años de 1661 a 1697*, f. 37v.

¹⁶⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Entierros pertenecientes a los años de 1661 a 1697*, f. 37v.

¹⁷⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, Antonio Gómez de Escobar, *Protocolo años de 1682*, ff. 196-200v.

left him real estate and other goods as inheritance. Nicolás owned “una casa grande de vivienda de altos y bajos,” that is, a large house with two floors. The exact address of this dwelling in Analco is provided: “en la calle que sube de la serrada del convento del señor San Agustín, y sale al camino de Guautinchan [Cuauintinchán, Puebla].”¹⁷¹ It adjoined a house property of Clara de la Cruz. Clara was Nicolás’ sister and the last of Antonio de la Cruz’s children documented in the sources. Antonio left her the house where she lived according to Nicolás’ will.¹⁷² Apart from his residence in Puebla, Nicolás also owned a single story house in Tlaxcala, and a second plot of land in Analco, next to another plot property of his son-in-law. Nicolás de la Cruz owned eleven black and mulato slaves, seven male, one adult, two teenagers, three boys and an eight-month-old infant, as well as four women, a grown woman and three girls.¹⁷³ Another slave who served Nicolás’ son ran away and had not been located when the will was written.¹⁷⁴

Nicolás valued the goods he stored in his house in 2000 gold pesos. He also declared having 200 pesos worth in merchandise kept in his store located in the city center. Nicolás valued the furnishings and tableware of his household in sixty silver marks. He listed pieces of jewelry, including two pearl short necklaces, two golden broaches, one studded with diamonds, and another with emeralds, eight golden rings, one of them studded with emeralds. He also owned twenty-nine mules and two riding saddles.¹⁷⁵ Nicolás stated he conducted business with Joseph de Navarro, a merchant who still lived in Mexico City in 1708.¹⁷⁶ Nicolás left all his belongings to his wife Magdalena, and his children, Luis, Antonia, María, and Juan Francisco de la Cruz.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, *Protocolo años de 1682*, ff. 196-200v.

¹⁷² Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla. AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 5931, f. 197.

¹⁷³ Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla. AGN, Genealogía, Rollo 5931, f. 197v.

¹⁷⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, *Protocolo años de 1682*, ff. 199.

¹⁷⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, *Protocolo años de 1682*, f. 198.

¹⁷⁶ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios 69, vol. 214, exp. 3.

¹⁷⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 5931, Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, Notaría 4, *Protocolo años de 1682*, f. 198.

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Nicolás de la Cruz's will reveals how wealthy the son of an Asian immigrant could become. Aside from the substantial value of the goods attested in the document, the family's prominent social position is evident in the marriages of the family members, both in terms of the ethnicity of the partners they chose, as well as the amount of people who attended the ceremonies. No other Asian family in Puebla is as well documented, and, perhaps, none achieved as much material comfort as Antonio de la Cruz and his progeny. The many Asian slaves who forcibly migrated to central New Spain were not as fortunate.

As many as 20,000 slaves were bought and sold in the Puebla slave market in the seventeenth century, a reflection of the city's importance, and the collapse of the indigenous population.¹⁷⁸ The city was located near areas with a high demand for slave labor. This demand stemmed from sugar plantations developed in nearby Izucar throughout the seventeenth century together with the city's own industries, specially agriculture and obrajes. Thus it is not surprising that the largest contingent of Asian, indio chino, chino individuals for whom a description of occupation is provided are slaves—forty four men and seven women with no further information, in addition to thirteen obraje slaves, including one woman. While the number is tiny compared to the overall slave population of Puebla, its relevance lies in the proportion of slaves within the Asian minority. It is worth remembering that unlike the Middle Passage, the Manila Galleon was never meant to be a slave-trading route. Slaves were incidental extra cargo transported to provide a little extra income, while Asian manufactures yielded almost all the profits. According to Déborah Oropeza, the price of Asian slaves in central New Spain oscillated between 200 and 420 pesos,¹⁷⁹ while a twenty-four year old chino slave cost his buyer, an obrajero from Texcoco, 145 pesos.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Pablo Sierra, "Urban Slavery in Colonial Puebla de los Angeles, 1536-1708" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2013).

¹⁷⁹ Oropeza, "La esclavitud asiática", 17.

¹⁸⁰ Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Serie Texcoco, rollo 5, 6-XI-1642, cited in Carmen Viqueira and José Ignacio Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España, 1530-1630* (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1990), 251.

This survey does not include people who did not officially marry. The majority of the chino slaves were recorded in the first half of the seventeenth century, suggesting that the bulk of the slave trade happened in this period. This also coincides with the period of Iberian unity. With a shared monarch, Portuguese slave traders may have been more active. It is possible the chino slaves helped their masters with their work; thus, the seldom-included information about a master's occupation could also indicate more specifically the kind of work the slaves carried out. Once again, I provide a list of all Asian, indio chino, and chino slaves in table 4.7.

Date	Name	Description	Spouse	Owner
1597	Antón ¹⁸¹	negro de tierra malaca en la China	Angelina, india	Miguel Pérez
1604	Juan Pacheco ¹⁸²	indio chino	Luisa de Alcazar, negra slave of the same owner	Isabel de Padierna
1606	Gaspar González ¹⁸³	indio chino	María Hernández, Gaspar's owner's maid	Francisco Ligeró's widow
1610	Anna ¹⁸⁴	india china	Juan, "moro biafra" slave of the same owner	Luis Sánchez
1610	Catalina ¹⁸⁵	china natural de Malaca	Pedro, negro chino natural de Camboya slave of the same owner	Juan de Castro, [glover?]
1610	Pedro ¹⁸⁶	negro chino natural de Camboya	Catalina china natural de Malaca slave of the same owner	Juan de Castro, [glover?]
1612	Salvador de Morillo ¹⁸⁷	indio chino	Luisa de la Cruz, negra slave	Alonso de ?, hatter
1616	Lucas Pérez ¹⁸⁸	indio chino	María Magdalena, india from Mexico city	Jusepe de Rivas

¹⁸¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 128v.

¹⁸² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 148v.

¹⁸³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 161v.

¹⁸⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 15v.

¹⁸⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 15v.

¹⁸⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 15v.

¹⁸⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 22.

4. The lesser-known chinos poblanos

1616	Ana ¹⁸⁹	china	Juan, negro; Domingo, chino slave of the same owner	Luis Sánchez
1616	Domingo ¹⁹⁰	chino	Ana, china slave of the same owner	Luis Sánchez
1617	Andrés Pérez ¹⁹¹	chino	Francisca, india ladina	Alonso Ruiz, hatter
1618	Juan ¹⁹²	chino	Agustina, india	
1618	Diego García ¹⁹³	chino	María, negra slave of the same owner	Lope de la Carrera, alférez, alcalde ordinario de [Puebla]
1619	Ignacio ¹⁹⁴	de nación chino	María del Valle, china slave of the same owner	Pedro Marín del Valle, alférez
1619	María del Valle ¹⁹⁵	china	Ignacio, chino slave of the same owner	Pedro Marín del Valle, alférez
1619	María de Trujillo ¹⁹⁶	china	Antón de Trujillo, chino slave of the same owner	Sebastián de Trujillo
1619	Antón de Trujillo ¹⁹⁷	chino	María de Trujillo, china slave of the same owner	Sebastián de Trujillo
1621	Antonio ¹⁹⁸	chino	Inés Conqueda, india natural de Caracas	Juan de Castro, glover
1622	Baltasar Antonio ¹⁹⁹	chino	Mariana india, Durango's maid	Juana Durango

¹⁸⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollos 1527, 1528, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 98.

¹⁸⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 44.

¹⁹⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 44.

¹⁹¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 46v.

¹⁹² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 51v.

¹⁹³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 58.

¹⁹⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 59.

¹⁹⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 59.

¹⁹⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 60.

¹⁹⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 60.

¹⁹⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 73.

¹⁹⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 79v.

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1624	Pedro ²⁰⁰	chino	Margarita, negra de tierra angola	María Serrano
1631	Francisco ²⁰¹	chino criollo de Manila, buried in San José in 1631		Alonso
1631	Magdalena de Jesús ²⁰²	china que se crió en Manila	Bartolomé Salvador, negro angola slave of the same owner	Hernán Martín de Badía, stonemason
1641	Fabián ²⁰³	chino de nación y natural de la India de Portugal	Ana María, negra slave of the same owner	Belisario Bautista's widow, Juana de Mena
1643	Domingo de la Cruz ²⁰⁴	chino natural de la India de Portugal, resident in the San Francisco ward	Francisca María, india	Jacinto de Soria
1644	Francisco de Habreo ²⁰⁵	chino chingala	Teresa negra libre (first marriage); María Teresa, china criolla de este barrio [Analco], daughter of Francisco Diego, chino	Francisco de Aguilar, presbyter
1645	Isidro de Silva ²⁰⁶	chino natural de la India de Portugal	María de Rivera, vecina of Puebla	Clemente Patiño, [baker]
1645	Juan de la Cruz ²⁰⁷	chino natural de Manila	María de Jesús, negra angola slave	Clemente Patiño, [baker]
1646	Lorenzo de la Cruz ²⁰⁸	chino de Manila; fathered Francisco de la Cruz, chino blacksmith ²⁰⁹ ; buried at the convent of the Limpia Concepción in 1679 ²¹⁰	Andrea de los Reyes, china natural deste barrio [Analco], daughter of Pedro Álvarez, chino ²¹¹	Cristobal Barbero Barrientos

²⁰⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 90v.

²⁰¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1794, Libro de entierros de San José (1630-1656), f. 4v.

²⁰² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 3v.

²⁰³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 21.

²⁰⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 25.

²⁰⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 68v.

²⁰⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 29v.

²⁰⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 30v.

²⁰⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 80v.

²⁰⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 129.

²¹⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Santo Ángel Custodio, Entierros (1661-1697), f. 26.

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1646	Antonio Remijo ²¹²	chino natural de Manila	Josepha de Nava, mulata slave	Clemente Patiño, [baker]
1648	Juan Francisco ²¹³	chino de tierra bengala	Francisca, india	Jacinto de Rivas, captain at one time stationed in the Philippines
1649	Domingo Pérez ²¹⁴	chino	Pascuala de los Reyes, negra criolla slave of the same owner	Clemente Patiño, baker
1649	Francisco de la Cruz ²¹⁵	chino	María de la Cruz, india buried in Analco in 1656 ²¹⁶	Francisco Hernández, pork butcher (tocinero)
1651	Pedro Álvarez ²¹⁷	chino, witnessed the union of Antonio de San Juan and Isabel Díaz, chino slaves in Gerónimo Carrillo's obraje		Juan Ortiz de Castro
1652	Melchor de la Cruz ²¹⁸	chino buried in Analco in 1652		Juan de Soria's widow, María Falcón
1653	Juan Cristóbal ²¹⁹	chino	Josepha Sánchez, mestiza from Puebla	Bartolomé Infante's widow, María de Esquivel
1654	Antonio Díaz ²²⁰	chino	Juana de la Cruz, india	
1657	Ignacio Marín ²²¹	chino	Catalina de San Joseph, china, widow of Juan, indio	María de Esquivel
1662	Pedro de la Cruz ²²²	de nación bengala, demanded recognition of his freedom		Alonso de Herrera, regidor of Puebla

²¹¹ Pedro Álvarez, served as a witness at the wedding of chinos Antonio de San Juan and Isabel Díaz in 1651. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 115.

²¹² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 31bisv.

²¹³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 33.

²¹⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 35.

²¹⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 36v.

²¹⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Analco (1633-1657), s.n.

²¹⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 115.

²¹⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924 Entierros (1633-1657), f. 56v.

²¹⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 43v.

²²⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 45v.

²²¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 49.

²²² AGN, Tierras contenedor 1251, vol. 2963, exp. 69. Oropeza, "La esclavitud asiática", 42.

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1663	Manuel Díaz ²²³	chino buried in Analco in 1663	Felipa de la Cruz, mulata slave of the same owner	María Falcón
1670	Cosme Damián del Brocal ²²⁴	chino	Agustina de la Cueva, mulata enferma en cama	Captain Antonio de la Cueva
1670	Nicolás Ventura ²²⁵	chino muy viejo buried in Analco in 1670	Ana	[Francisco?] de Aguilar, [presbyter?]
1676	Ana de los Ángeles ²²⁶	china natural de la ciudad de Filipinas	Matías Medina, mulato from Cádiz, Spain slave of the same owner	Captain Juan Valera
1677	Juan de Alvarado ²²⁷	chino natural de la ciudad de Manila	Teresa Bernal, mestiza from Tepeaca	Diego de Alvarado, merchant
1677	Agustín Sánchez ²²⁸	chino	Elena Jimena, mulata slave	Pedro Salgado, presbyter assigned to the parish of San José in 1693 ²²⁹ , and Analco in 1698 ²³⁰
1677	Agustín Pérez ²³¹	chino	Rita de San Joseph, free mulata from Alvarado	Antonio de Villa Beltrán
1681	Joseph Ortiz ²³²	chino	María de la Cruz, india	Captain Diego de Aranda
1681	Salvador Antonio ²³³	chino	Antonia de los Reyes, mulata libre from Mexico	Captain Bartolomé Ortiz
1682	Catalina de San Antonio ²³⁴	china criolla natural de Puebla		Inés de la Cruz widow of sargeant major Diego Flores
1683	Alonso de la Cruz ²³⁵	mulato chino	Sebastiana de Sibú [Cebu]; María Priscila	Sebastián Carrasco

²²³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924 Entierros (1661-1697), f. 5.

²²⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 114bis.

²²⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 26v.

²²⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 13v.

²²⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 17v.

²²⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 22.

²²⁹ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D38, exp. 325, f. 396.

²³⁰ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D36, exp. 226, f. 236v.

²³¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 26.

²³² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 84v.

²³³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 88.

²³⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 103v.

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			de la Peña	
1684	Nicolás de la Cruz ²³⁶	chino criollo	María de la Candelaria, mulata libre	Capitan Diego de Aranda
1685	Francisco de León ²³⁷	chino	Ana María, mestiza	Captain Diego de Aranda
1692	Pedro Martín ²³⁸	negro de la India de Portugal	María Josefa negra de nación Cabo Verde slave of the same owner	Gabriel del Castillo, alcalde mayor of Puebla

It is interesting to note that sometimes they took the names of their proprietors²³⁹. Their owners influenced them in other ways as many chino slaves married other slaves of the same owner, often, fellow chinos,²⁴⁰ but mostly people of African descent.²⁴¹ Often they married their master's servants.²⁴² These marriages indicated that the marriage patterns of Asian slaves were influenced by their bondage. These individuals tended to marry the people they interacted with the most: their fellow slaves, or the servants of their owners. The case of Francisco de Habreo, a "chino chingala" who married Maria Teresa, "china criolla," daughter of Francisco Diego "chino" in 1644²⁴³ again reinforces the hypothesis of the existence of a chino network.

²³⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 130v.

²³⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 161v.

²³⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 171v.

²³⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro en que se asientan los nombres de los negros*, f. 92v.

²³⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 59. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 60. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 17v.

²⁴⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 15v.

²⁴¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 148v. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 15v.

²⁴² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 161v. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 79v.

²⁴³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 68v.

As shown in table 4.7, the occupations of the owners varied, from stonemason,²⁴⁴ to pork butcher,²⁴⁵ to merchant,²⁴⁶ to priest.²⁴⁷ It is worth noting several cases where chino slaves served the widows of their former masters.²⁴⁸ Among these, the case of María Falcón's slaves stands out. María Falcón owned at least two chino slaves.²⁴⁹ Her case is relevant because it is possible these slaves lived and worked at Falcón's hacienda in Amalucan,²⁵⁰ less than eight kilometers northeast of Analco where the chinos married and buried. This suggests that a number of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos who married in Puebla may have resided outside the city.

Another chino slave owner worth highlighting is Clemente Patiño. Patiño was "the person who always" supplied the bizcocho for the Manila Galleon, according to a 1654 complaint against the alcalde mayor of Puebla for failing to pay for a shipment of 200 quintales of bizcocho "para las razones ordinarias de la gente de la nao San Diego" a vessel which was to set sail from Acapulco to the Philippines.²⁵¹ As previously discussed, bizcocho baking was closely related to the Manila Galleon. It was one of the main ways the city of Puebla was connected to Asia. Thus Clemente Patiño's profession explains why he owned four out of ten of the chino slaves who married in the San José parish of Puebla in the 1640s.²⁵² He may have acquired them in Acapulco when he travelled there to sell his bizcocho. It is possible the chino slaves were given to him as a form of payment.

²⁴⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 3v.

²⁴⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 36v.

²⁴⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 17v.

²⁴⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 22.

²⁴⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 43v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 49.

²⁴⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924 Entierros (1661-1697), f. 5. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924 Entierros (1633-1657), f. 56v.

²⁵⁰ AGN, Real Audiencia, Grupo 110 Tierras, Contenedor 1251, vol. 2963, exp. 21.

²⁵¹ *Denuncia hecha por Clemente Patiño, vecino de la Ciudad de los Ángeles, en contra del Alcalde Mayor de Puebla, por no hacerle el pago correspondiente de un flete que le solicitó.* AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Alcaldes Mayores Caja 1261, exp. 20, 1654.

²⁵² AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) ff. 29v, 30v, 31bisv, and 35.

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The occupation of other owners also reflects a connection to Asia. For instance, Juan Francisco, a “chino de la tierra bengala” who married Francisca, “india” in 1648,²⁵³ belonged to Jacinto de Rivas, a militia captain who, according to his *Relación de Méritos*, had served in the Philippines.²⁵⁴ Rivas was among several men with a military rank, such as *alférez*, or who served as captains of vessels, who owned chino slaves.²⁵⁵ For instance, Captain Diego de Aranda owned at least three chino slaves.²⁵⁶ One of Aranda’s slaves, a mulato called Juan del Campo, married Catalina de San Antonio, a slave described as a “china criolla natural de Puebla” belonging to Inés de la Cruz, widow of sergeant major Diego Flores, in 1682.²⁵⁷ This case is interesting because it suggests there was a correlation between military officers and the marriages of the chino slaves they owned.

Lastly, it is worth noting the slaves owned by Puebla city officials. One of the *alcaldes ordinarios* of Puebla owned Diego García, a “chino’ slave.”²⁵⁸ The *alcalde mayor* of Puebla, general Don Gabriel del Castillo owned Pedro Martín “negro de la India de Portugal.”²⁵⁹ Pedro de la Cruz, “de nación Bengala,” got into a legal dispute in 1662 against Alonso de Herrera, *regidor* of Puebla, demanding the recognition of his freedom, arguing he had never been a slave, nor had his people been subjected

²⁵³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707 Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657), f. 33.

²⁵⁴ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D41, exp. 67, ff. 167-169.

²⁵⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 59. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 114bis. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 13v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 88.

²⁵⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 84v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 161v. AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 171v.

²⁵⁷ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de mulatos*, f. 103v.

²⁵⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 58.

²⁵⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro en que se asientan los nombres de los negros*, f. 92v.

to bondage²⁶⁰. Pedro de la Cruz's case is particularly interesting because it is an instance of direct resistance by an Asian slave to fight against his master in order to acquire his freedom. These individuals once again reflect the intricate relation between the city of Puebla and Asia.

Textile production employed a larger workforce, and was more profitable than any other sector of the Puebla economy throughout the colonial period.²⁶¹ Fittingly, close to a quarter of the Asians, *indios chinos*, and *chinos* recorded in the parish registers of Puebla worked in or were related to *obrajes*, or the owners of *obrajes*. *Obrajes* were large workshops specialized in producing wool and, later, cotton textiles. On occasion, the priest performing a marriage involving a *chino* would write down the name of the *obrajero* they labored for. This makes it possible to relate Asians, *indios chinos*, and *chinos* to a specific *obraje*, whose size, workforce or other details have been studied by other scholars, thus drawing a clearer picture of the life and working conditions of these individuals.

The presence of Asians in *obrajes* is a phenomenon not exclusive to Puebla. Deborah Oropeza located Asians in five out of six *obrajes* in Coyoacán, and four more in an *obraje* in Mixcoac, both townships near Mexico City.²⁶² Juan de Vega, “a native of the Philippine Islands,” was held prisoner in an *obraje* in Coyoacán in 1660, where the owner of the *obraje*'s son, aided by black slaves, beat him and other men and women.²⁶³ Despite these cases, so far the evidence suggests Puebla had a much larger proportion of individuals engaged in *obrajes* than any other place. Compared to the other Asian populations in New Spain that have been surveyed, Puebla is remarkable in that Asians worked in the *obrajes* in a larger proportion. I argue that this reflects the weight this industry had in the Pueblan economy rather than a hypothetical specific Asian skill set that would have made

²⁶⁰ AGN, Tierras contenedor 1251, vol. 2963, exp. 69. Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 42.

²⁶¹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 55.

²⁶² Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 40.

²⁶³ Samuel Kagan, “The Labor of Prisoners in the *obrajes* of Coyoacan”, in *El trabajo y los trabajadores en la historia de México*, eds. Elsa Cecilia Frost et al. (El Colegio de México and University of Arizona Press, 1979), 201-214, 207-211, cited in Alberto Carabarrín García, *El trabajo y los trabajadores del obraje en la ciudad de Puebla, 1700-1710* (Puebla: Centro de Investigaciones Históricas y Sociales, 1984), 28.

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them more adept at working with textiles. This may seem a strange point to stress, but as I stated in the introduction to this chapter, previous scholars have argued that Asians' skills at producing porcelain led to them being employed in the Pueblan ceramics industry which, consequently, imitated Chinese types. This survey provides evidence that the value of the "Asians working in the *Talavera* industry" hypothesis needs to be reassessed. Asian laborers, both coerced and free, engaged in the sectors of the economy that demanded most labor, not their supposed particular skill set. In the case of Puebla, this sector was the obraje.

To fully comprehend the importance of the textile mills and their capacity for attracting immigrant labor, I briefly synthesize some of the major themes I found in the works of previous scholars. For this section I heavily rely on studies by Richard Salvucci, Manuel Miño, and Carmen Viqueira and José Uriquiola. I found the most relevant elements in those analyses for my work are the scale, the working conditions, and the variations in geographic location of the obrajes overtime. After establishing this context, I proceed to list the Asians, indios chinos, and chinos I found working in obrajes and then highlight trends that inform the literature on the obrajes of Puebla, and the Asian migrants working in them.

Throughout the colonial period, most of these textile mills were located in the central valleys of Mexico and Puebla and, increasingly during the eighteenth century, the Bajío region.²⁶⁴ Richard Salvucci cites a 1690 source defining them as "factories for wool or cloth [...] that need more than twenty workers, skilled laborers and apprentices."²⁶⁵ They were commonly housed in large buildings ranging from just over 1700 to close to 12000 square meters.²⁶⁶ Within this range, some of the obrajes in Puebla were so large they filled entire blocks of the city's grid.²⁶⁷ More specifically, in 1746, the size of two obrajes of Puebla was reported at

²⁶⁴ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 55.

²⁶⁵ *Consulta* written by don Alonso de Arriaga Agüero, México, Jan. 28, 1690, AGI, Contaduría 806, Ramo 3, cited in Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 11.

²⁶⁶ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 38.

²⁶⁷ Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 19.

10098 and 3093 square meters, respectively.²⁶⁸ According to Salvucci, inside these facilities, several dozen specialized, poorly compensated laborers²⁶⁹ worked, ate, slept,²⁷⁰ and even prayed,²⁷¹ “governed by a system that found free, indentured, convict, forced, and slave labor working side by side, often in the same place.”²⁷² These workers spun the wool, and weaved and dyed the fabric for the garments worn by the poor and the members of religious orders,²⁷³ while subjected to harsh, exploitative working conditions.²⁷⁴

Salvucci states that,

Many obrajes had a resident population of convict laborers or peons for whom meals had to be provided. So it fell to the galley to prepare what diet the obraje offered. [...] In the obraje of Balthasar de Sauto in San Miguel el Grande, [...] a royal inspector discovered conditions of terrible overcrowding. [...] The inspector was showed the galera where spinners and carders worked up the yarn, a room with two barred doors, “like a jail.” There, “all together, one atop the other” in the space between the spinning wheels and their seats slept “as many as fit.” Those who could not fit slept on the patio. This was not a unique case.²⁷⁵

Salvucci cites another source further detailing the violence inflicted upon the workers,

[The obrajes] hold [the workers] in such violence, that if one of them should happen to die, or to flee, they seize their wives and children as slaves. Poorly

²⁶⁸ Assessment of the obraje of María de León Coronado, Puebla, Mar. 27, 1736, AJP (Archivo Judicial de Puebla), leg. For 1732; assessment of the obraje of Mendoza y Escalante, Puebla, Apr. 28, 1746, AGNM, Civil, vol. 178, 2d part, cited in Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 38.

²⁶⁹ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 99.

²⁷⁰ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 33.

²⁷¹ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 100.

²⁷² Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 40.

²⁷³ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 59.

²⁷⁴ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 109.

²⁷⁵ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 37. Salvucci quotes *Primer auto de visita to the obraje of don Balthasar de Sauto*, San Miguel, Aug. 14, 1758, AGI, México 1047.

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instructed in the faith, and worse fed, they suffer in a Christian land what is unknown among barbarians.²⁷⁶

These working conditions in eighteenth-century obrajes in el Bajío resembled those found by Santiago del Riego's inspection in 1588 in Puebla and Tlaxcala. His report revealed that, "many of the Indians [were] injured...imprisoned in perpetual hunger [and] worked inhumanely."²⁷⁷ And these circumstances were the norm for the entire colonial period, with barely any consequences to the owners since

For example, an inspection in Puebla in 1632 [...] found conditions unimproved. Indians were systematically imprisoned, flogged, beaten, enslaved—indeed, bought and sold. One owner threatened to drown them in the Atoyac River if they refused to work. Others hustled workers out of sight on hearing of impending inspection. Royal officials were furious. They sentenced one owner to be hanged, his mayordomo to be executed, and several others to be flogged or transported from the colony. But the death sentences were overturned on appeal, and nothing other than fines were levied.²⁷⁸

A worker in a Puebla obraje described himself "doing the hardest and most dislikable work a human being can experience," adding that his employers "made [him] work continually [...] without pay [...] [and] they whipped [him]."²⁷⁹

Alexander von Humboldt recorded his distaste for the way the obrajes in Querétaro were run after a visit in 1803,

On visiting these workshops, a traveler is disagreeably struck not only with the great imperfection of the technical process in the preparation for dyeing, but in a particular manner also with the unhealthiness of the situation and the bad

²⁷⁶ *Informe del Exmo. Señor Duque de Linares al Señor Marqués de Valero en el año 1716*, copy in AHINAH (Archivo Histórico del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia), cited in Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 97.

²⁷⁷ Riego to the Crown, Mexico, Dec. 10, 1588, AGI, México 7, cited in Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 109.

²⁷⁸ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 123.

²⁷⁹ Petition of Miguel de los Santos, Mexico, Oct. 22, 1722, AGNM, Indios, vol. 45, no. 179, fs. 232-34, cited in Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 122.

treatment to which the workmen are exposed. Free men, Indians and people of color are confounded with the criminals distributed by justice among the manufactories in order to be compelled to work. All appear half naked, covered in rags, meager and deformed. Every workshop resembles a dark prison. The doors, which are double, remain constantly shut and the workmen are not permitted to quit the house. Those who are married are only allowed to see their families on Sundays. All are unmercifully flogged if they commit the smallest trespass on the order established in the manufactory.²⁸⁰

Even seemingly benign improvements in wages did not translate into better living conditions. For instance, generally speaking, the period from 1570 to 1630 saw an increase in the wages of obraje workers in Puebla and the surrounding cities.²⁸¹ This rise in wages illustrates the labor shortage obrajeros faced, as did the incorporation of convicts into their workforce.²⁸² However, the purchasing power of the workers was curtailed by concurrent fluctuations in the prices of basic commodities, most importantly maize.²⁸³ Thus it seems the higher wages did not translate into higher standards of living.

Obraje worker's rations could be withheld if their labor did not meet their master's expectations.²⁸⁴ In Puebla they were charged for the food they ate.²⁸⁵ Many workers contracted debts to their employers to pay for their livelihood. Santiago de Riego's inspection in 1595 reported virtually unpayable debts averaging forty-nine pesos.²⁸⁶ By making workers essentially forced labor, debt remained a problem throughout the period; from a sample of seven obras of Puebla in 1700-1701, Carabarán extracts that almost sixteen percent were slaves, and nine percent

²⁸⁰ Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, trans. John Black, ed. Mary Maples Dunn (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972, originally published in 1811), 189.

²⁸¹ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 218.

²⁸² Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 210.

²⁸³ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 225.

²⁸⁴ Visitas to various Puebla obras in early 1700, Archivo de la Secretaría Municipal de Puebla, vol 224: "Expediente sobre obrajes y talleres, cited in Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 128-129.

²⁸⁵ Pohl, Haenisch, and Loske, "Aspectos sociales del desarrollo", 45. Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 128-129.

²⁸⁶ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 231.

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were forced to work to pay off debts.²⁸⁷ Humboldt lamented the acquisition of forced labor by the Querétaro obrajes through debt as late as the nineteenth century.²⁸⁸

The obrajes became important to the Pueblan economy very early in its history. In 1539, merely eight years after the foundation of Puebla, an immigrant from Segovia, the main woolens-producing town in Spain, opened the first obraje in the city.²⁸⁹ The obrajes in Puebla benefited from relatively easy access to the wool of the sheep grazed on the Sierra Madre Oriental near Veracruz²⁹⁰ as well as potential markets for the finished products, both domestic and overseas. Spurred by a growing silver mining economy, and the emergence of a market that the metropolis could not fully supply, the woolens industry of Puebla expanded in the following years²⁹¹. It did not take long before the city became a major textile-manufacturing center that reached its maximum expansion between 1570 and 1634, selling high and low quality products throughout New Spain, and exporting them to Peru.²⁹² The latter market seems to have been of crucial importance to the obrajes of Puebla. Carabarán argues that commerce with Peru was key to the establishment, not only of the woolens, but also the ceramics, hat-making, and locksmith industries of Puebla, and that it allowed obrajeros to amass fortunes, multiply their obrajes, and expand their workforce.²⁹³

By 1579 there were forty obrajes functioning in Puebla,²⁹⁴ mostly located along the banks of the San Francisco River,²⁹⁵ where the river's power could be harnessed and its water used in the manufacturing process. Although there were subsequently less obrajes in the city, the figure remained almost the same between 1597 and 1604, when there were thirty-four or thirty-five obrajes—more than any

²⁸⁷ Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 29.

²⁸⁸ Humboldt, *Political Essay*, 190.

²⁸⁹ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 135.

²⁹⁰ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 46.

²⁹¹ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 36.

²⁹² Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 36-37.

²⁹³ Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 18.

²⁹⁴ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 135.

²⁹⁵ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 56.

other city of the viceroyalty—,²⁹⁶ operating 215 looms producing various types of woolens.²⁹⁷ As for the size of their workforce, in 1588 thirty-three obrajes in Puebla²⁹⁸ employed an average of 100 workers.²⁹⁹ Some of the largest in the city were the obrajes of Francisco de Viruega (1583), Pedro de Hita (1608), and Alonso Gómez (1610), which had 117, 136 and 257 workers, respectively.³⁰⁰ These were mostly “indio and mulato” workers. Ten black slaves labored carding, spinning and weaving the wool in Pedro de Hita’s obraje.³⁰¹ Viqueira and Urquiola’s research suggests slaves were mostly men and generally employed in specialized operations like shearing and carding.³⁰² The collapse of the indigenous population of New Spain, coupled with promulgation of laws directed at reducing the number of indigenous laborers, including Royal and viceregal decrees in 1569, 1595, 1601,³⁰³ 1609, and 1627,³⁰⁴ forced obrajes in Puebla and elsewhere to gradually shift from what had been an almost exclusively indigenous workforce,³⁰⁵ to incorporate a growing number of slaves and castas.³⁰⁶ This process was consolidated by the convergence of the rapidly decreasing indigenous workforce and a vast expansion of the profitability and scale of trade of New Spain at home and abroad.³⁰⁷ The new workers grew in number in obrajes throughout New Spain and in Puebla.

²⁹⁶ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 133; Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 17. Israel argues there were 35 obrajes in Puebla, 25 in Mexico City, 11 in Tlaxcala, 8 in Texcoco, 5 in Tepeaca, and 4 in Celaya and Xochimilco, respectively in 1604, in Israel, *Razas, clases sociales y vida política*, 30.

²⁹⁷ Manuel Miño Grijalva, “Las dimensiones productivas de los obrajes de Puebla y México en 1597”, *Relaciones. Estudios de historia y sociedad* 34, 134 (2013): 196.

²⁹⁸ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 135.

²⁹⁹ Salvucci calculates the average from a report of Santiago Riego to the Crown, México, Dec. 10, 1604, AGI, Mexico 25, Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 101.

³⁰⁰ Pohl, Haenisch, and Loske, “Aspectos sociales del desarrollo”, 42; Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 103; Miño, “Las dimensiones productivas”, 197; Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 18.

³⁰¹ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 161.

³⁰² Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 284.

³⁰³ Velasco and Sierra, “Mine workers and Weavers”, 108.

³⁰⁴ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores de Nueva España*, 38; Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 131.

³⁰⁵ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 139.

³⁰⁶ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 104; Pohl, Haenisch, and Loske, “Aspectos sociales del desarrollo”, 42; Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 12-13.

³⁰⁷ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores de Nueva España*, 39.

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According to Salvucci, “by 1661, slaves represented nearly 60 percent of their capital stock.”³⁰⁸

I contend that this shift in the ethnic composition in the obraje workforce influenced the way the Asians interacted with other groups. In this I follow Velasco and Sierra’s observation of this phenomenon among the much larger African workforce employed in the textile mills. They argue that “it is possible to surmise that the first large-scale interaction between African slaves and indigenous workers took place within the confines of Puebla’s textile mills during the 1560-1620 period.”³⁰⁹

Work in the obraje also influenced marriage patterns. As in the case of slaves as a whole, obraje laborers often married their co-workers. Viceroy Velasco’s 1595 regulations concerning obrajes allowed women to legally work in obrajes, and to remain with their husbands if married to a fellow laborer.³¹⁰ Pedro de Hita’s obraje had eighty men and fifty-six free men and women, among whom there were thirty-one marriages, while two of the slaves were married to each other.³¹¹ That this situation was commonplace is suggested by data from another two obrajes in the Puebla-Tlaxcala region, which report seventeen and thirty-three marriages among their workforce two decades later.³¹² Matching these trends found by previous scholars, among the data summarized in table 4.8, I located several Asian, indio chino, and chino, free and slave, obraje laborers married their co-workers.

Table 4.8 also shows that among the obraje Asians we find a mixture of free and slave workers in the textile mills of Puebla. Some of the chinos laboring in obrajes were slaves. The twenty-seven chino slaves confirmed to have worked in obrajes represent a third of the total chino slaves in Puebla. However it is likely many of

³⁰⁸ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 110; Pohl, Haenisch, and Loske, “Aspectos sociales del desarrollo”, 41-42.

³⁰⁹ Velasco and Sierra, “Mine Workers and Weavers”, 109.

³¹⁰ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico*, 105.

³¹¹ Memoria de los bienes y obraje de Pedro de Hita, MNAH, Serie Archivo Judicial de Puebla, rollo 15, Puebla, 1609, cited in Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 273.

³¹² Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrajes en la Nueva España*, 159, 164.

the free chinos and chino slaves whose workplace is unknown, also worked in obrajes, especially during the first decades of the seventeenth century, when the number of obrajes was higher. All information about free chino laborers associated with obrajes is dated between 1593 and 1620, suggesting there were less free Asian laborers in this sector after this period. Thus the periods of maximum expansion of the Pueblan obrajes paralleled a period of relative high number of Asian arrivals.

Date	Name	Description	Spouse	Obraje owner
1593	Alonso Farfán ³¹³	indio chino, free	María de Rojas, india china serving Gaspar de Rojas	Gaspar de Rojas
1593	María de Rojas ³¹⁴	india china, free	Alonso Farfán, indio chino serving Gaspar de Rojas	Gaspar de Rojas
1598	Alonso Pérez	indio chino, free	[?] María, worker in García's obraje	Juan García
1602	Juan Bautista ³¹⁵	indio chino, free	Gerónima María, india working in Roja's obraje	Gaspar de Rojas
1602	Agustín Pérez ³¹⁶	indio chino natural de Manila, free	Isabel María, worker in Fuente's obraje	Juan de Fuentes
1604	Francisco de la Cruz ³¹⁷	indio chino del pueblo de Pasig en las islas Filipinas, free	Magdalena, india worker in Candela's obraje	Martín de Candela
1604	Nicolás Muñoz ³¹⁸	indio chino, free	María Francisca, india worker in Ortega's obraje	Juan de Ortega
1604	Alonso Hernández ³¹⁹	indio chino, free	Marías Coscatl, india from the Santiago ward	Miguel González
1605	Juan Bautista ³²⁰	chino natural de Manila, free, weaver	Elena Ursula, india worker in Rodríguez's	Melchor Rodríguez

³¹³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 41.

³¹⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 41.

³¹⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 144v.

³¹⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 143v.

³¹⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 148.

³¹⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 149.

³¹⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 152v.

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			obraje	
1608	Juana de Aguilar ³²¹	india china, free	Francisco Rubio, indio chino obraje co-worker	?
1608	Francisco Rubio ³²²	indio chino, free	Juana de Aguilar, india china obraje co-worker	?
1608	Antón ³²³	chino, slave	Francisca Juana, india worker in Aranda's obraje	Hernando de Aranda
1616	Pedro Juan ³²⁴	chino, slave	María Fernandez, india servant of Agustina	Bartolomé de la Torre's widow, Agustina
1620	Antón de Armijo ³²⁵	chino, free	Gracia worker in Gomez's obraje	Pedro Gómez
1620	Gracia ³²⁶	chino, free	Antón de Armijo worker in Gomez's obraje	Pedro Gómez
1620	Juan Alejo ³²⁷	chino, free	Francisca, mestiza worker in Gomez's obraje	Pedro Gómez
1630	Mateo Vázquez ³²⁸	chino natural de Manila, slave	Juana María, india, Tapia's servant	Bartolomé de Tapia
1631	Ambrosio Vázquez ³²⁹	mulato natural de la ciudad de Manila, slave	María Magdalena, mulata slave in Fuente's obraje	Juan de Fuentes
1634	Andrés de los Reyes ³³⁰	chino, branded slave	Ana María, india from Puebla	Bartolomé de Tapia
1646	Juan Bautista ³³¹	chino, slave	María Hernandez, negra (first marriage);	Joseph de Tapia

³²⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 153.

³²¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 6v.

³²² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 6v.

³²³ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 36v.

³²⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, 1528, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 99.

³²⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 68.

³²⁶ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 68.

³²⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 68.

³²⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 2v.

³²⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 3.

³³⁰ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 10.

³³¹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 31v.

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			Gracia Vázquez mulata, slave in Tapia's obraje	
1648	Roque ³³²	five- or six-year-old "chinito" [almost certainly a slave] buried in 1648		Miguel Carrillo
1650	Antonia ³³³	china, slave, Roque's mother, buried in 1650	?	Miguel Carrillo
1651	Pablo de Ojeda ³³⁴	chino, slave	Josepha de Herrera, india	Gerónimo Carrillo
1651	Antonio de San Juan ³³⁵	chino, slave	Isabel Díaz, china from Puebla	Gerónimo Carrillo
1651	Isabel Díaz ³³⁶	china natural y vecina desta ciudad [Puebla]	Antonio de San Juan, chino slave in Gerónimo Carrillo's obraje	
1653	Juan de la Cruz ³³⁷	chino, slave	Antonia Mora, mestiza raised in the convent of the Limpia Concepción, Puebla	Antonio Rodríguez [jerguetero]
1653	Sebastián de Zúñiga ³³⁸	chino, slave buried in 1653		Gerónimo Carrillo
1657	Gonzalo ³³⁹	chino, slave buried in 1657		Diego Carrillo

Among these individuals, it is worth highlighting those who worked in well-studied obrasjes because we can better reconstruct their specific work and living conditions. For example, Miño asserts Gaspar de Rojas had an income of 40500 reales from his obraje in 1597.³⁴⁰ His was a medium-size obraje. Rojas had at least

³³² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 30.

³³³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 42.

³³⁴ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 113.

³³⁵ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 115.

³³⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, f. 115.

³³⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1707, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 43.

³³⁸ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 59v.

³³⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), unnumbered.

³⁴⁰ Miño, "Las dimensiones productivas", 200.

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three indio chino slaves working for him,³⁴¹ one of them, Juan Bautista, certainly worked in his obraje and married a co-worker.³⁴²

Another case worth mentioning is that of Pedro Gómez, who inherited from his father Alonso Gómez the obraje with the largest workforce in 1597, from which he earned an income of 77,820 reales.³⁴³ There were 130 indio workers and four black slaves in this obraje at this time.³⁴⁴ After his death in 1610, Pedro inherited the obraje. 171 indios worked for him, along with 21 slaves, 17 black, “dos criollos y dos mulatos,” and 4 female black slaves.³⁴⁵ The obraje had a group of six house servants owing six, five, four and two years of work, respectively.³⁴⁶ Additionally, Pedro Gómez owned at least one chino slave.³⁴⁷ According to Viqueira and Urquiola, Alonso Gómez acquired the obraje from Bartolomé de la Torre in 1594 for 6,100 pesos, along with its 10 looms, 50 threading machines, 20 combs, five pairs of scissors and two working boards.³⁴⁸ The widow of Bartolomé de la Torre also owned a chino slave, Pedro Juan, who in 1616 married an indigenous servant of her proprietor.³⁴⁹ These cases illustrate the tendency of Asians in obrasjes to marry their co-workers.

Another example is dated in 1608, when a chino slave called Antón married Francisca Juana, an indigenous woman, both workers in an obraje owned by Antón’s proprietor, Hernando de Aranda.³⁵⁰ It is likely that the couple endured hardships working for Aranda since in 1611 he was accused of hurting and locking

³⁴¹ The document reads ‘indios chinos de casa de Gaspar de Rojas’. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 41.

³⁴² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 144v.

³⁴³ Miño, “Las dimensiones productivas”, 200.

³⁴⁴ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrasjes en la Nueva España*, 266.

³⁴⁵ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrasjes en la Nueva España*, 276-278.

³⁴⁶ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrasjes en la Nueva España*, 278.

³⁴⁷ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1528, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1605-1624), f. 68.

³⁴⁸ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrasjes en la Nueva España*, 265.

³⁴⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, 1528, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 99.

³⁵⁰ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de indios*, f. 36v.

up indios in his obraje.³⁵¹ Another obrajero, Bartolomé de Tapia, may have also mistreated his slaves. One of his two chino slaves³⁵² was branded.³⁵³

Miguel Carrillo is the obrajero who employed the most chinos in this survey. One of them, Antonia, buried her five- or six-year-old son, Roque, in 1648,³⁵⁴ before dying in 1650.³⁵⁵ It is impossible to ascertain from the sources whether their working conditions hastened their death. Apart from them, there were seventy-two slaves in Carrillo's obraje in 1655, including fifteen "chinos" that were, according to Carmen Ramos, 'probably Filipino' in origin³⁵⁶. According to Velasco and Sierra, Miguel Carrillo's obraje employed seventy-nine slaves, including thirty-seven male "Afro-Poblano" specialized workers, and twenty-seven women, the authors believe most likely "restricted to domestic service."³⁵⁷ Possibly related to Miguel, Gerónimo Carrillo owned at least three chino slaves recorded in the early 1650s.³⁵⁸ The death, of a chino named Gonzalo "esclavo del obraje de Diego Carrillo" occurred in 1657.³⁵⁹ All these chinos belonging to people with the surname 'Carrillo' may have worked under the roof of the same family obraje. The members of the Carrillo family were prominent neighbors in Analco since at least 1612.³⁶⁰ It is possible that at least the family occupation, if not the obraje, endured past the end of the century. Gabriel Carrillo de Aranda, who became alcalde in

³⁵¹ AGN, Real Audiencia, Tierras (110), Contenedor 1251, vol. 2962, exp. 46.

³⁵² AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) ff. 2v, 10.

³⁵³ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1706, Libro de matrimonios de morenos...San José (1629-1657) f. 10.

³⁵⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 30.

³⁵⁵ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 42.

³⁵⁶ Pohl, Haenisch, and Loske, "Aspectos sociales del desarrollo", 43; Carmen Ramos Escandón, *Industrialización, género y trabajo femenino en el sector textil mexicano: el obraje, la fábrica y la compañía industrial* (Mexico: CIESAS, 2004), 60; Carmen Ramos Escandón, "La diferenciación de género en el trabajo textil mexicano en la época colonial", *Boletín Americanista*, Universitat de Barcelona, 50 (2000): 243-268.

³⁵⁷ Velasco and Sierra, "Mine Workers and Weavers", 113.

³⁵⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1844, Santo Ángel Custodio, *Matrimonios correspondientes a los años de 1632 y 1670*, ff. 113, 115. AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), f. 59v.

³⁵⁹ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1924, Entierros Santo Ángel Custodio (1633-1657), unnumbered.

³⁶⁰ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 73.

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1689, owned an obraje.³⁶¹ As late as 1701, there is evidence of an obraje owned by Antonio Carrillo still employing twenty-nine workers in Puebla.³⁶² The family reached such prominence that a street in Analco was named after them, first appearing in a 1770 map.³⁶³ By introducing Asian workers to their obrasjes the Carrillos increased the number of chinos in Analco.

I have found no information pertaining the specific tasks that these individuals carried out in the obrasjes, except for one document. Juan Bautista, a free “chino natural de Manila,” was a weaver in Melchor Rodríguez’s obraje.³⁶⁴ His case is interesting because weavers were the best-paid workers in an obraje. Based on data from an obraje in Tlaxcala in 1624, Viqueira and Urquiola calculate weavers earned four pesos per month; two pesos for every canvas weaved.³⁶⁵ Salvucci argued weavers earned fourteen reales for every piece they produced in Puebla in 1629, four times as much as some of the other occupations.³⁶⁶ Thus it is possible Juan Bautista managed to earn a decent living, being among a minority of obraje laborers who benefited from their own work.

4.4 Marriage patterns

Interesting marriage patterns emerge by taking a step back and looking at the parochial marriage records as a whole. These patterns reveal some hints about the social position of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos. Since the specific marriages have been listed in detail above, this section deals with the development of marriage patterns overtime from a macro perspective. I located information about 120 marriages in the Puebla parochial records where at least one of the spouses was Asian, indio chino, or chino. Because of the relatively small total number of marriages, the data do not allow easy interpretation. Especially in terms of the patterns seen over time, the interpretation can only be an approximation.

³⁶¹ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 73.

³⁶² Carabarán, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 22.

³⁶³ Leicht, *Las calles de Puebla*, 73.

³⁶⁴ AGN, Sección Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Libro de matrimonios del Sagrario Metropolitano (1585-1607), f. 153.

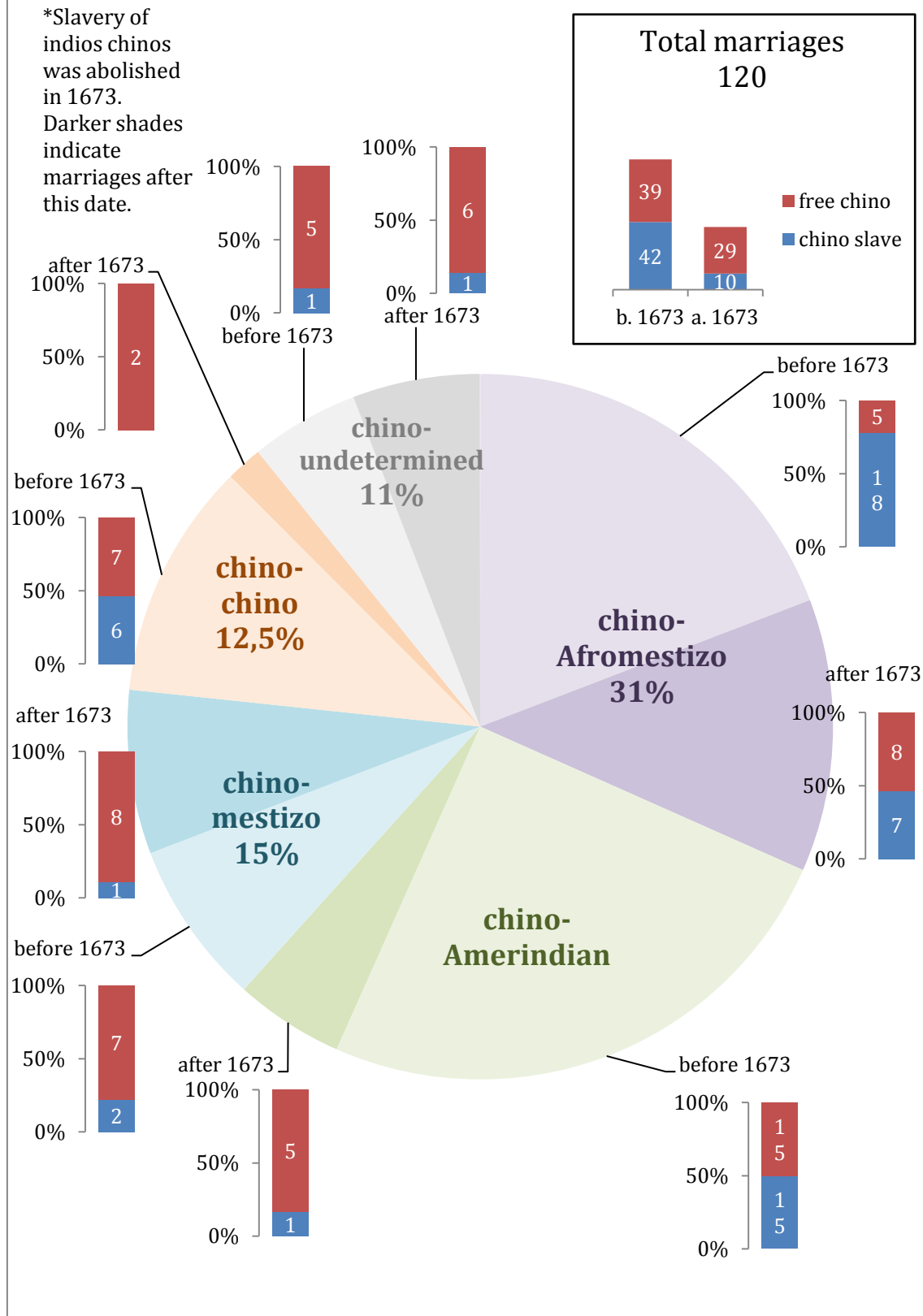
³⁶⁵ Viqueira and Urquiola, *Los obrasjes en la Nueva España*, 158.

³⁶⁶ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 125-126.

Thirty-one percent of these were unions where the chino was marrying a person of African descent. Thirty percent married a native Mesoamerican of Amerindian descent. In fifteen percent of the marriages, the Asian, indio chino or chino joined a person described as mestizo. The fact that most chinos were men resulted in that endogamic unions between chinos occurred only in one of every eight instances. This is not an unusual feature in marriages within migratory groups, where males frequently precede females and marry locally, but in chino marriages it was a more pronounced phenomenon than among the African diaspora. Only in thirteen of the located marriages involving Asians, indios chinos or chinos, did the priests recording the union neglect to record the ethnicity of the spouse. The priests of Puebla recorded a single marriage where a chino joined an española, a person of European descent, the previously discussed marriage between Nicolás de la Cruz, the wealthy chino shopkeeper, and María Ortiz de Alarcón, the española orphan. I have organized these statistics in figure 4.6 where I also show the correlation between slavery and choice of the partner's ethnicity, and represented the impact of the 1673 ban on indio chino slavery.

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Figure 4.6 Ethnicity of partner and percentages of chino slaves in chino marriages with at least one Asian, indio chino, or chino spouse before and after 1673*



These statistics suggest some behavioral patterns when the members of the Asian Diaspora of Puebla selected a partner. The selection of the partner's ethnicity varied over time. Unions of Asians, indios chinos and chinos to a person of Amerindian descent were more common in the years before 1673, with thirty marriages taken place before that date, and only six afterwards. Conversely, the rate of marriages to people of African descent dropped less sharply; twenty-three instances before 1673, to fifteen after this date. Exactly half of the eighteen "chino-mestizo" marriages happened after the abolition of indio chino slavery. This numbers might be related to the fact that the process of mestizaje began only after 1650,³⁶⁷ and so there were less people labeled *mestizo* before this date. Chino-chino marriages mostly took place before 1673.

Marrying into a specific ethnic group was important in New Spain's racially determined hierarchical social stratification system. For castas, marriage could signify an opportunity for upward social mobility.³⁶⁸ Like other cities in Spanish America, Puebla de los Ángeles is an interesting case study of this phenomenon, because despite being an ethnically hierarchical society, cities provided a space of interaction. Cities were the arenas where the various groups were forced to interact in an always-shared space. As I argue in the preceding sections of this chapter, the occupation of these individuals influenced their marriage patterns; slaves and obraje workers tended to marry fellow slaves and obraje workers who were, for the most part, people of African descent.

A related issue is the correlation between slavery and selection of the partner's ethnicity. In these cases the slave's owners may have played an important role because slaves were required to get permission from their masters before marrying.³⁶⁹ Forty percent of the total chino marriages involve a slave spouse. Close to eighty percent of chino slaves married Amerindians or Afromestizos. In nearly half of the chino-Amerindian and two thirds of the chino-Afromestizo

³⁶⁷ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 48.

³⁶⁸ Thomas Calvo, "Calor del hogar: las familias del siglo XVII en Guadalajara", in *Sexualidad y matrimonio en la América hispánica. Siglos XVI-XVIII*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Mexico: CONACULTA-Grijalvo, 1991), 311-312; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 85.

³⁶⁹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 103.

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marriages the chino spouse was a slave. Only three of the eighteen chino-mestizo marriages involved a chino slave. In nearly half of the chino endogamous unions before 1673, at least one of the spouses was a slave. Chino slaves were more likely to marry Afromestizos, with whom they shared the condition of bondage and sometimes a common workspace, such as the obraje. Slack contends that the “process of Africanization” of Asian immigrants happened faster in Mexico City and Puebla, where they married “lower caste negros, mulatos, pardos, and other Africanized groups in greater proportion than in the smaller pueblos scattered in the sierras, coasts, and frontiers.”³⁷⁰ The results of this analysis of the Puebla parochial records lend support to this notion. The evolution of the marriage patterns shows the shift from the original tendency to group chinos with the local indios, predominant in the late 1500s and the early 1600s, to the grouping of chinos with Afromestizos. This phenomenon also occurred in the case of people of African descent. Velasco and Sierra’s analysis of Afromestizo marriage patterns shows that marriages between indios and people of African descent became less frequent towards the end of the seventeenth century.³⁷¹ The rate of marriages between chinos and blacks and mulatos did not drop as sharply after 1673 as did the chino-Ameridian unions, which fell from thirty to just six marriages after that date.

At the turn of the eighteenth century marriages between chinos and blacks and mulatos were much more common, and the chino-Afromestizo association easier to make. The process of mestizaje contributed to the final disappearance of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos from the Puebla records. The mestizo group absorbed mulatos and, moriscos, as well as, presumably chinos.³⁷² After independence from Spain and the creation of the First Mexican Empire in 1821, the new government mandated that the origin or *casta* of people in parochial records “en lo sucesivo se omite,” declaring everyone an equal citizen.³⁷³ Other reasons for the fading out of the Asian Diaspora in Puebla are discussed in detail in the following section.

³⁷⁰ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 22.

³⁷¹ Velasco and Sierra, “Mine Workers and Weavers”, 116.

³⁷² Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 176.

³⁷³ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 112.

The exogamous nature of chino marriages differed from the general tendencies observed in other groups. Throughout the eighteenth century, despite the ongoing process of *mestizaje*, people tended to favor marriages within their own ethnic group. Miguel Marín observed that seventy percent of the marriages registered in Puebla in 1777 were endogamous unions.³⁷⁴ Velasco and Sierra argue that people of African descent “preferred to marry within they broader ethnic networks.”³⁷⁵ According to Lourdes Villafuerte’s analysis, the pattern was similar in Mexico City during the same period, with eighty-six percent of *españoles*, fifty-three percent of *mestizos*, and forty-four percent of *mulatos*, blacks and other *castas* choosing a partner within their own group.³⁷⁶ Researcher Edgar Love observed that groups of African descent were relatively more prone to exogamy.³⁷⁷ In Puebla, Chino unions, that is, marriages involving at least one Asian, indio chino, or chino partner, were mostly exogamous. A smaller number of women, and of chinos in general certainly favored this pattern.

It is also worth observing when these marriages took place. The majority of the marriage records are dated before 1673, date when the slavery of indios chinos was banned, perhaps signaling a decrease in the number of new Asian immigrants to Puebla and central New Spain as a whole. The number of “chino marriages” increased consistently from 1591 through 1620. Possibly due to the lack of records from the cathedral in subsequent decades, the number of records found dated in the 1620s, 1630s, and 1640s is significantly smaller. Several marriages located were dated in the 1650s. In this decade the number of marriages surpassed the levels seen in the 1610s. Six of the 1650s marriages concerned members of Antonio de la Cruz’s family. The 1660s register the lowest number of chino

³⁷⁴ Marín Bosch, *Puebla 1777-1831*, 125-126; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 91.

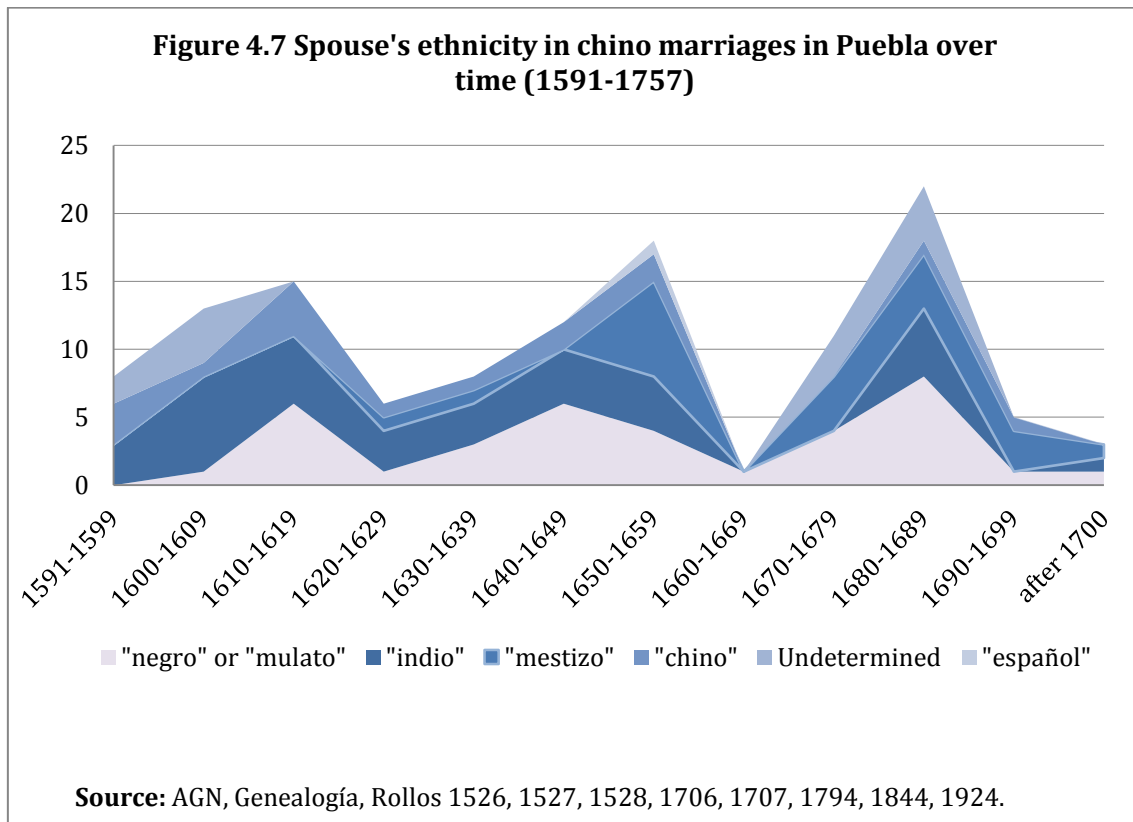
³⁷⁵ Velasco and Sierra, “Mine Workers and Weavers”, 118.

³⁷⁶ Lourdes Villafuerte García, “El matrimonio como punto de partida para la formación de la familia. Ciudad de México, siglo XVIII”, in *Familias novohispanas. Siglos XVI al XIX. Seminario de Historia de la Familia*, ed. Pilar Gonzalbo Aispuru (Mexico: Centro de Estudios Históricos, El Colegio de México, 1991), 91-99; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 108-109.

³⁷⁷ Edgar Love, “Marriage Patterns of Persons of African Descent in a Colonial Mexico City Parish”, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 51, 1 (1971): 79-91; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 108-109.

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marriages. In the seventies there were just over ten marriages, while the largest number of chino unions per decade was registered in the 1680s. There were five marriages in the 1690s and only three for the entire eighteenth century. I have synthesized this information in graphic form in figure 4.7, which shows how chino-Amerindian marriages became less frequent, while chino-Afromestizo and chino-mestizo marriages grew in proportion over time.



4.5 Decline of Asian migration and decadence of Puebla

The presence of Asians, indios chinos, and chinos in Puebla in the eighteenth century was far less noticeable than in the preceding century. Only a handful of marriages were registered in those years, and only one chino from Puebla appeared in any kind of the revised sources in the nineteenth century. All can be summarized in a single paragraph. In the eighteenth century three Filipinos married in Puebla. Andrés Antonio López a “mulato natural de la ciudad de Manila en las islas Filipinas” arrived in 1725; he was a free servant who married a mestiza

in 1739.³⁷⁸ Alonso de Lisarraga “chino natural del puerto de Cavite en las Filipinas” arrived in 1739 and married Felipa de Vera, a “parda” from Puebla in 1742.³⁷⁹ When a Filipino called Miguel Roldán left the colegio de San Borja in 1752, there was a petition to collect from him the expenses generated for this decision³⁸⁰. Antonio de los Santos Fernández, “chino natural de la ciudad de Madrassa que está en el obispado de Manila,” arrived in 1755 and married Laureana, an india from Puebla in 1757.³⁸¹ Miguel Marín located only one chino in the marriage records of Puebla after 1777.³⁸² The last mention of an Asian living in Puebla during the colonial period is dated in 1803 when a woman accused his son-in-law of falsely claiming a noble lineage.³⁸³

The reasons for the dilution of the Asian Diaspora in the 1700s are the continuing process of mestizaje, the drop in number of new entries of Asian immigrants, due in part to the 1673 abolition of chino slavery, and the decadence of the city of Puebla itself, which made it less attractive to immigration. At the beginning of the eighteenth century commerce with Asia began to falter as evidence by fall of custom dividends earned through goods sales, Manila Galleon products traded in the city, and repartos among merchants.³⁸⁴ With the outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession, increasing numbers of French contraband ships were spotted near Acapulco and Veracruz between 1698 and 1701 and 1701 and 1707, respectively.³⁸⁵ These factors could also have contributed to the decrease in Asian migration.

Cuenya and Contreras argue that Puebla managed to attract some immigrants from its immediate hinterland, the far-off mining North, and places outside central New

³⁷⁸ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 33.

³⁷⁹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 73v.

³⁸⁰ AGN, Archivo Histórico de Hacienda, vol. 285, exp. 10, fs. 1.

³⁸¹ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 213.

³⁸² Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 39, 113.

³⁸³ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1418, exp. 15, ff. 180-181.

³⁸⁴ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 117.

³⁸⁵ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 117.

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Spain, such as Seville and Manila, during the eighteenth century.³⁸⁶ However, migratory flows cannot be compared to those seen in the seventeenth century, at the height of the city's prosperity. This is most clear in the case of Asian migration. More generally, the city of Puebla lost a substantial part of its population during the 1700s.

In 1678 Puebla had a population of 69,800 communicants. Since these were only adults who could take part in the Eucharist, the total population must have been larger, with Cuenya estimating it to be as high as 98,000 inhabitants,³⁸⁷ virtually equal to Mexico City.³⁸⁸ By 1746 the city had lost a quarter of its population³⁸⁹ shrinking to 50,366 inhabitants, and by 1777 this number stagnated between 47,295 or 53,798.³⁹⁰ The period between 1768 and 1810 registered the lowest birth and highest mortality rates. According to Miño, "there were sixteen epidemics and the worst starvation in the city's history, together with a drop in productivity".³⁹¹ Population stagnated through 1791, when the Revillagigedo census registered 56,859 inhabitants, and then slowly recovered to reach 67,800 in 1803 according to Alexander von Humboldt's account.³⁹² In the eve of the War of Independence (1810-1821) Puebla was isolated and weakened, while the cities of Guadalajara and Querétaro were growing in population and thriving commercially.³⁹³ In figures 4.8 and 4.9, I show the fluctuations in the city of Puebla and in several of its parishes throughout the colonial period.

³⁸⁶ Cuenya and Contreras, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 141.

³⁸⁷ Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía", 22.

³⁸⁸ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 88.

³⁸⁹ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 59.

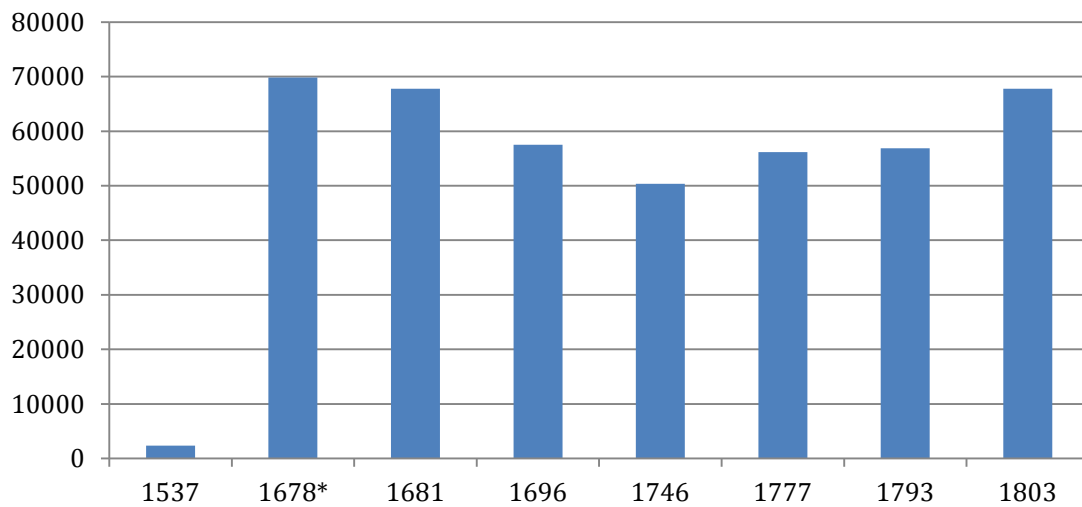
³⁹⁰ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 88. Cuenya's estimate for 1777 is 56,674 inhabitants, Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía", 23.

³⁹¹ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 154.

³⁹² Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía", 52.

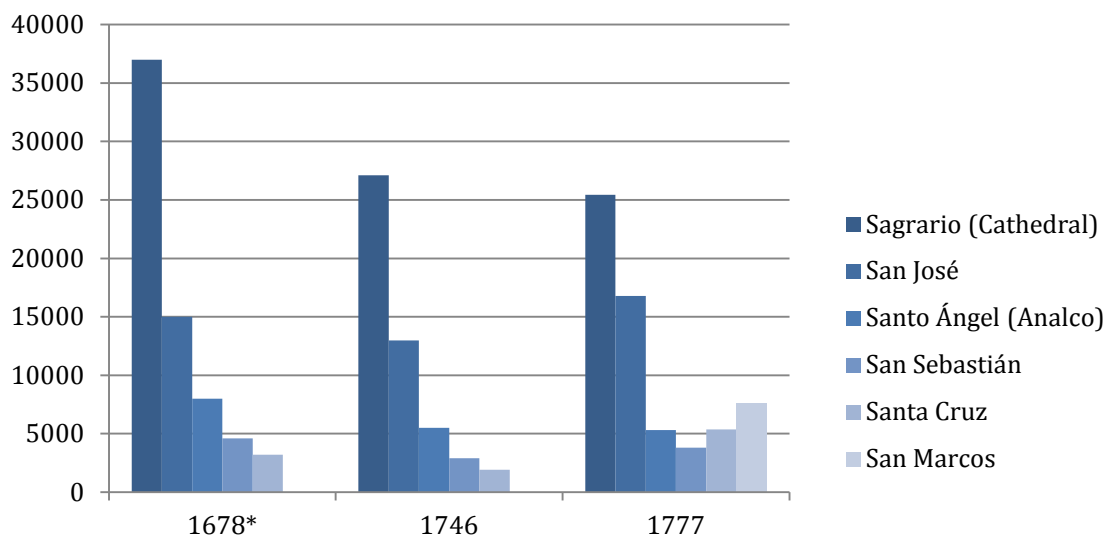
³⁹³ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 33.

Figure 4.8 Population changes in Puebla (1537-1803)



Source: Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 65.

Figure 4.9 Population changes in the parishes of Puebla (1678-1777)



Adapted from: Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía", 72. Incomplete data series are omitted (1771, 1790). Data for San Marcos in Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 66.

* Figures for communicants, not entire population (estimated 90,000 for the whole city).

Chronicler Juan Villa Sánchez gave two reasons to explain the sharp drop in the city's population between 1678 and 1746,

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The first are the two plagues that have been endured, one they called measles in 1692, another one in 1737 known as the *matlazahuatl*, from both of which thousands died; the other reason, [is] the great decline in commerce [...] and the poverty the larger part of the populace is reduced to, which has forced many family to leave the city for other places, especially Mexico [City].³⁹⁴

According to Manuel Miño, overall, the economy of New Spain grew noticeably from 1680 to 1760, on the basis of an expanding industry, the colonization of its northern regions, and the recovery of its population.³⁹⁵ But Puebla did not follow the general pattern of prosperity. In their 1690s description of Puebla, the authors of the *Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez* described the hardships the title character endured in the city, which pushed him to migrate to a relatively more prosperous Mexico City,

During the six months' time that I wasted [in Puebla], I experienced even greater hunger than back home in Puerto Rico. Cursing my unbusinesslike resolution to abandon my home for a land where generous liberality is not always forthcoming, I proceeded to add myself to a group of traveling mule drivers and, without too much trouble, landed in Mexico. [...] Whatever I had learned back in Puebla about urban grandeur was struck from my memory in an instant the moment I stepped on Mexico's causeway.³⁹⁶

Alonso Ramírez's experience was not isolated. In the eighteenth century, emigration from Puebla to nearby towns and villages, and to places like Mexico City was significant.³⁹⁷

A drought in 1691-92 resulted in poor harvests. In combination with epidemics, this context caused serious structural problems in industry and trade, in addition

³⁹⁴ Fray Juan de Villa Sánchez, *Puebla Sagrada y Profana* (Puebla: Centro de Estudios Históricos de Puebla, 1972, originally published in 1746), 36, cited in Cuenya, "Puebla en su demografía", 56.

³⁹⁵ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 15.

³⁹⁶ Ramírez and Sigüenza y Góngora, *Misfortunes*, 108.

³⁹⁷ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 152.

to a political crisis that prompted the riot of July 1692.³⁹⁸ The crisis started in 1691 when there were manifestations of anger in Mexico City and Puebla over shortages of wheat and maize. In the midst of this crisis, Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora counted *chinos* among the mob that rioted and set fire to the viceroy's palace in 1692 in Mexico City.³⁹⁹ Adding to these hardships, an epidemic of measles spread throughout the country. The mortality caused by the epidemic produced a shortage in labor.⁴⁰⁰ The disease struck primarily children under the age of five, killing 3,000 in a single parish of Puebla.⁴⁰¹

An even worse pandemic occurred in 1736-1737. Based on the description of its symptoms—yellow eyes, high fever—Miño suggest the malady could have been a contagious variety of hepatitis.⁴⁰² In chapter 5, I suggest that this epidemic may have been caused by a combination of malaria and yellow fever and that this process influenced the disappearance of Asian provenance in reference to *chinos*. The disease spread to every city in New Spain, with chronicler Cayetano Cabrera y Quintero setting the death toll at 192,000, and the Jesuit Francisco Javier Alegre, deeming it had killed “two thirds of the Kingdom's inhabitants.”⁴⁰³ The *matlazahuatl* of 1737, as it was called, killed more than 50,000 in Puebla and its surrounding region.⁴⁰⁴ Half the dead in Puebla were *indios*, twenty-seven percent *españoles* and *mestizos*, and five percent *negros*, *mulatos*, *chinos* y *pardos*.⁴⁰⁵ Although these figures seem too high, studies of the effects of the pandemic in Puebla reveal the city lost 15 percent of its population, which stabilized at 50,366 inhabitants in 1746, ten years after the outbreak.⁴⁰⁶ That year Puebla was in the midst of great decay in commerce and mired in poverty, to the extent that,

³⁹⁸ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 30.

³⁹⁹ Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, *Alboroto y Motín de los indios de México* (Mexico: Talleres gráficos del Museo nacional de arqueología, historia y etnografía, 1932, originally published in 1692); Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 60.

⁴⁰⁰ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 31.

⁴⁰¹ Antonio de Robles, *Diario de sucesos notables, 1665-1703*, cited in Elsa Malvido, “Factores de despoblación y de reposición de la población de Cholula (1641-1810)”, *Historia Mexicana* 28, 1 (1973): 80-81; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 147.

⁴⁰² Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 15; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 148.

⁴⁰³ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 148.

⁴⁰⁴ Marín, *Puebla neocolonial*, 59.

⁴⁰⁵ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 255-256; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 148.

⁴⁰⁶ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 15; Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 148.

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according to Guy Thompson, the boys on the streets were naked, and the grown men and women were in tatters.⁴⁰⁷ The 1737 epidemic may have influenced how chinos were increasingly perceived as *Afromestizos* during the eighteenth century. In chapter [4 or 5] I will further develop the argument that if the 1737 epidemic was a case of yellow fever, the chinos who did not have any African ancestry were more likely to perish. In this hypothesis, chino offspring of Asians and Amerindians were more susceptible to yellow fever and died in greater proportion and chino children of *Afromestizo-chino* unions. I argue that this could be a factor in the Africanization of the Asian group in eighteenth century Mesoamerica.

Puebla did not only lose population during the eighteenth century. Along with this drop in inhabitants, the city's economy suffered as many of the industries that made it prosperous in the previous century faltered. Fray Juan de Villa Sánchez pointed to a drop in commerce when he wrote,

The commerce of Puebla has declined greatly. [...] One will not find in Puebla six neighbors with fortunes exceeding 100,000 pesos. [...] The poverty of the place, [...] has forced many families to leave to other regions, especially to Mexico [City].⁴⁰⁸

Contemporary historian Francisco Javier Clavijero wrote in the late eighteenth century that “despite the industriousness of its inhabitants and the wealth of some of them [...], this can be deemed a poor city,”⁴⁰⁹ Antonio de Villa-Señor wrote in 1746 that Puebla's economy had not improved, especially since the year 1710, because commerce had fallen.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁷ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 93.

⁴⁰⁸ Villa Sánchez, *Puebla sagrada y profana*, 39, 44-46; Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 92.

⁴⁰⁹ Francisco Javier Clavijero, “Breve descripción de la Provincia de México de la Compañía de Jesús”, in *Tesoros documentales de México*, ed. M. Cuevas (Mexico: Editorial Galatea, 1944, originally written in 1767), 327.

⁴¹⁰ José Antonio de Villa-Señor, *Theatro Americano. Descripción general de los reynos y Provincias de la Nueva España y sus jurisdicciones* (Mexico: Viuda de Don Joseph Bernardo de Hogal, 1746), 246.

An important factor in this decadence was the decline of the wool *obrajes*. Salvucci argues that,

Puebla and its hinterland underwent a complex pattern of transformation. The city suffered a series of random economic shocks in the early eighteenth century and lost population, even as its agricultural hinterland expanded. The woolen *obrajes* [...] were largely abandoned, their demise hastened by access to the seacoast and to contraband.⁴¹¹

After 1630, the ever-important wool *obrajes* began their decadence. In the second half of the seventeenth century, Puebla (along with Tlaxcala, Mexico City, and Texcoco) declined as a textile-manufacturing center. By 1790, there were only two *obrajes* left in Puebla.⁴¹² The crisis of the *obrajes*, brought about by the end of commerce with Peru, along with the emergence of new competing centers, is related to the decline of the city.⁴¹³ Jan Bazant noted that, by the early 1700s, the “decline [in production of woollens] was quite evident,” citing chronicler Bermúdez de Castro who wrote in 1746 that “only the very poor and miserable people in this city dress in the locally produced cloth, for even apprentices of any guild wear Castilian imported fabrics.”⁴¹⁴ According to Garavaglia and Grosso, the prohibition of trade with Peru coincided with a severe overall economic depression in New Spain, and it was merely the starting point of the Puebla *obrajes* crisis.⁴¹⁵ The fate of these enterprises was sealed by a ‘series of complex’ processes, one of which was the viceroy Marques de Galves’ policy against *obrajeros* and in defense of their indigenous workers,⁴¹⁶ together with the emergence of competing centers.⁴¹⁷ According to Bazant, labor problems, specifically those related with slavery, were to blame for the ultimate demise of the wool textile production industry in Puebla.

⁴¹¹ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 146.

⁴¹² Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 90.

⁴¹³ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 92-93.

⁴¹⁴ Diego Antonio Bermúdez de Castro, *Theatro Angelopolitano o historia de la ciudad de Puebla, Escrita por..., Escribano Real y Notario Mayor de la Curia Eclesiástica del Obispado de Puebla*, 127-128, cited in Carabarrín, *El trabajo y los trabajadores*, 21; Bazant, “Evolution of the Textile Industry”, 64.

⁴¹⁵ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 109.

⁴¹⁶ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 109.

⁴¹⁷ Garavaglia and Grosso, “La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala”, 110.

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Bazant argues that the viceregal ordinances of 1767 and 1781 directed at curbing slave labor in the obrajes were followed in Puebla, making business less profitable, while Querétaro thrived by not abiding to the restrictions.⁴¹⁸

In summary, the contraction of the mining economy and the ban to trade with Peru in the 1630s, had direct effects on the woolens industry in New Spain, and by 1650 wool obrajes had practically disappeared in Puebla, and other traditional manufacturing centers such as Cholula, Texcoco, Tlaxcala, and Valladolid, giving way to the emergence of new centers,⁴¹⁹ primarily Querétaro. In the eighteenth century the area surrounding Puebla had become a secondary obraje area,⁴²⁰ which, according to Salvucci, despite the small number of obrajes,⁴²¹ still supplied a large area “stretching from Guatemala in the south, to Zacatecas and Sonora in the north and to Guadalajara in the west.”⁴²² However, he adds, “by 1800, Puebla no longer counted for much in woolen production,”⁴²³ while Querétaro became “indisputably” the “core of the late colonial woolen industry,” despite its modest population of 20,000 in 1778.⁴²⁴ Figure 4.10 shows the drop in the number of Pueblan obrajes.

⁴¹⁸ Bazant, “Evolution of the Textile Industry”, 65.

⁴¹⁹ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 37; Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 144.

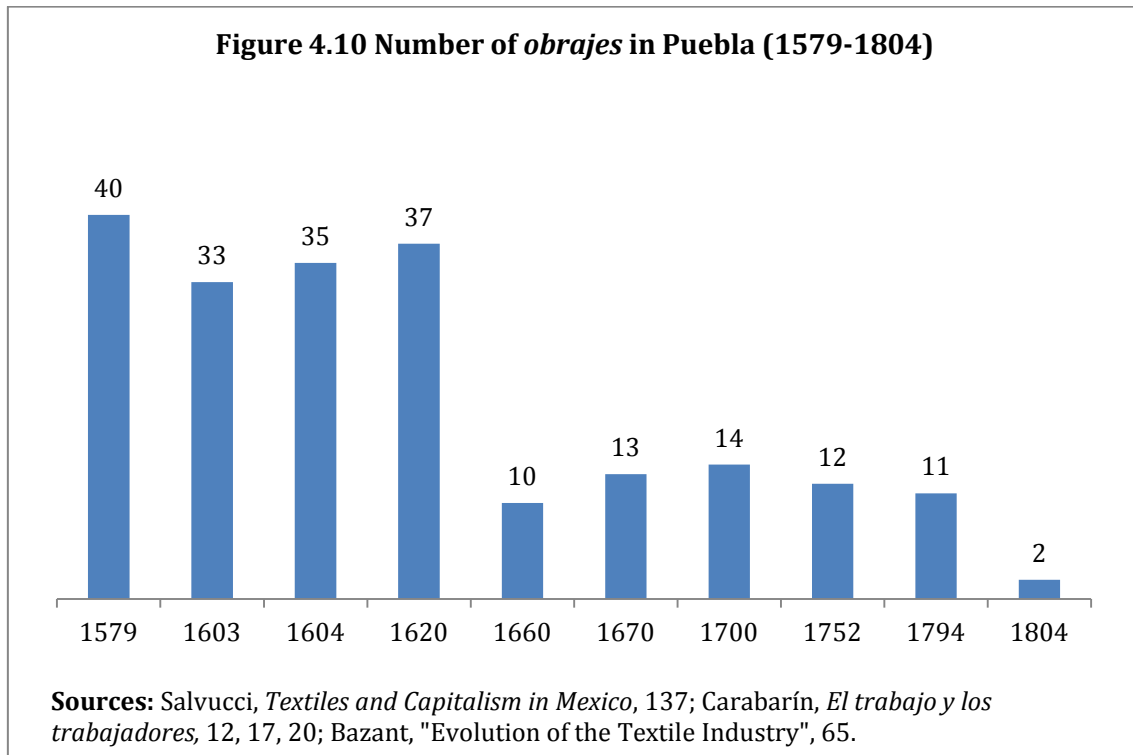
⁴²⁰ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 55.

⁴²¹ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 84-85.

⁴²² Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 57.

⁴²³ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 135-136.

⁴²⁴ Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism*, 89.



In order to recover from this debacle, Puebla pioneered in producing cotton goods in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.⁴²⁵ The city continued to shift its textile production towards cotton throughout the eighteenth century.⁴²⁶ Instead of large *obrajes*, the new entrepreneurs opted for small production units of cotton taking advantage of the fact this material was easier to process than wool, thus requiring a smaller workforce.⁴²⁷ Emerging also in the wake of the waning of the silk industry,⁴²⁸ Puebla could sell its cotton cloth in the budding mining centers to the north, offering a little respite from the crisis the city was going through.⁴²⁹

The *bizcocho* industry also lost ground to competition. New wheat producing regions such as Michoacán, and the Toluca valley also hurt Puebla.⁴³⁰ Garavaglia and Grosso believe the troubles of wheat farming in Puebla were related to a lower

⁴²⁵ Bazant, "Evolution of the Textile Industry", 66; Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 142.

⁴²⁶ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 37-38.

⁴²⁷ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 143.

⁴²⁸ Jan Bazant, "Evolución de la industria textil poblana (1544-1845)", *Historia Mexicana* 13, 52 (1964): 496; Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 143.

⁴²⁹ Miño, *Obrajes y tejedores*, 144.

⁴³⁰ Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 95-96.

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rate of transatlantic trade from 1710.⁴³¹ The establishment of the Jalapa feria for transatlantic trade from 1720 contributed to Puebla's demise.⁴³² Despite the crisis, in the second half of the eighteenth century the city still traded flour to Havana and was engaged in the production of *grana* and cotton in the Oaxaca region.⁴³³

Chronicler Fernández de Echeverría wrote about how the soap industry was also disrupted by competition,

Formerly there were large quantities of soap that were traded inside and out this Kingdom, and this was one of the most profitable enterprises. In later times this trade has declined as it is produced in other parts, especially in Mexico [City], and although the soap from the City of Angels is still considered of superior quality, its consumption has fallen, due to the abundance of its competitor, which despite being a lower quality product, its cheapness, the fact that it is produced closer to the areas of *Tierra Adentro* where it is taken at less expense, make it easier to sell, and diminishes sales of soap from this city.⁴³⁴

Garavaglia and Grosso believe the chief reason of the downturn in the Puebla economy was that the city was gradually left out of the silver mining economic complex that developed throughout the eighteenth century.⁴³⁵ Lying outside the most important and dynamic sector of New Spanish economy, Puebla stagnated over the period of highest growth in the viceroyalty. Evidence indicates that the economy of competing city Guadalajara grew at a rate six times faster than Puebla, while the viceroyalty as a whole grew four times faster.⁴³⁶ These researchers also point out that one further reason for Puebla's downfall was the *Administración de Azogues*—the institution in charge of mercury dispatches to silver mines—relocation to Mexico City.⁴³⁷

⁴³¹ Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 106.

⁴³² Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 114.

⁴³³ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 94.

⁴³⁴ Veytia, *Historia de la Fundación*, 308, cited in Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 96-97.

⁴³⁵ Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 120-123.

⁴³⁶ Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 85.

⁴³⁷ Garavaglia and Grosso, "La región de Puebla-Tlaxcala", 98.

Other regions and cities of the viceroyalty displaced Puebla as production centers.⁴³⁸ Around 1792, Zacatecas registered a population of about 27,072, of which twenty-nine percent were *castas*.⁴³⁹ Twenty-two percent of people married in the cathedral of Guadalajara between 1695 and 1699 were born elsewhere.⁴⁴⁰ The population of Guadalajara doubled between 1600 and 1700 and had increased six fold to 24,249 inhabitants by 1790.⁴⁴¹ In the middle of the eighteenth century Toluca developed a pork livestock industry. Humboldt reported that the two types of pig introduced in the region from the Philippines and Europe “se han multiplicado muchísimo en el alto llano central, en donde el valle de Toluca hace un comercio de jamones muy lucrativo.”⁴⁴² Research at the local archives of these regions might reveal whether Asian migration was drawn to them throughout the eighteenth century, as these industries developed.

Proof that Asians settled in the urban centers of the Bajío region was recorded when representatives of Ventura del Rosario “chino” sold a jacal of his in Guanajuato in 1690.⁴⁴³ There certainly were Asians in Querétaro and Zacatecas in the seventeenth century. Francisco de Lima “chino libre de nación vengala dueño de requa vecino de Querétaro” received confirmation of his license “para portar daga, espada y arcabuz” in 1653.⁴⁴⁴ Researcher Armando González located records of Filipino goldsmiths living in Zacatecas in 1647, as well as references about chino slaves dated in 1650, 1656, 1664, and 1696.⁴⁴⁵ Regional studies such as this or Thomas Calvo’s classic study of the Japanese in Guadalajara⁴⁴⁶ need to be expanded upon, and new sources uncovered to fully comprehend the history of the first Asian Diaspora in the Americas.

⁴³⁸ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 89.

⁴³⁹ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 81.

⁴⁴⁰ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 84.

⁴⁴¹ Miño, *El mundo novohispano*, 85.

⁴⁴² Alexander von Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre el Reino de la Nueva-España*, Vol. II, Libro IV, chapter X, trans. Vicence González Arnao (Paris: Casa de Rosa, 1822), 410.

⁴⁴³ AGN, Real Audiencia, Indios 17, vol. 30, exp. 381, 349-350 (1690).

⁴⁴⁴ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 6032, exp. 107 (General de Parte Caja 6032) (1653).

⁴⁴⁵ Armando González, *Zacatecas y Filipinas, Miscelánea anecdótica de una lejana historia común* (Mexico: Edición del autor, 2002), cited in Cuauhtémoc Villamar, April 5, 2014, “La gente que vino de Oriente”, *La Nao Va*, accessed 06/04/14, <http://lanaova.blogspot.com.es/2014/04/la-gente-que-vino-de-oriente.html>.

⁴⁴⁶ Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 533-547.

CHAPTER 5

ASIAN MIGRATION AND THE “AFRICANIZATION” OF CHINOS IN NEW SPAIN IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In this chapter I turn to the history of Asian migration in the eighteenth century. Seijas and Oropeza largely overlook this period and focus mainly on the seventeenth century, while Slack provides only a few examples. With this survey of sources on the Manila Galleon and Asian migration from the 1700s I analyze the process of dilution of Asian presence in New Spain in the last century of existence of the trade route. This chapter links the history of the Asian diaspora in the sixteenth and seventeenth century discussed in chapters two, three, and four, with the legacies their presence left behind towards the beginning of the nineteenth century. It shows how the eighteenth century was a period of increasing miscegenation, when, thanks in part to the abolition of slavery in 1673, Asians became less distinguishable from other groups. I argue that chinos were an integral part of the process of *mestizaje*, arguably the most important development in late colonial New Spanish history. I innovate methodologically in order to demonstrate this assertion by incorporating a discussion of how epidemics may have influenced the way chinos were absorbed into other ethnic categories, mainly people of African descent. In this chapter I argue that there were three fundamental reasons for the “invisibilization” of the Asian diaspora, the first two of which have been previously stated by Oropeza, Seijas, and Slack.

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The first reason was the process of *mestizaje*. As Asians increasingly married people of other ethnic backgrounds, the offspring of these unions became increasingly indistinguishable as people of Asian descent. This process was correlated to the effects to perceptions about *chinos* in the aftermath of the 1673 abolition of *chino* slavery. It seems that colonial authorities were successful in curbing transpacific slave trade, as I found no reference to Asian, *indio chino*, or *chino* slaves in the eighteenth century, even though *indio* slavery in the Philippines continued to exist until the middle of the 1700s.¹

The second factor was that the number of new arrivals from Asia was much smaller and homogeneous than in the preceding century. This was another consequence of the end of *chino* slavery, but also the indirect result of growing challenges to Iberian hegemony in Asia and the Pacific from other European and Asian powers that dislocated the Portuguese from many of their colonial possessions in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. As less varieties of people were under the influence of Iberians, Asian immigrants became less heterogeneous, and possibly less numerous.

The third entirely new hypothesis is an epidemiological explanation for the dissolution of the Asian diaspora in New Spain. I argue that higher vulnerability among children of people of mixed Asian and Amerindian descent to diseases such as yellow fever and malaria, as compared to the vulnerability to those diseases in individuals descended from people from regions in Africa and the Caribbean where the illnesses were endemic, caused the surviving *chinos* of African descent to be associated to African traits. In the wake of epidemics such as the *matlazahuatl* of 1737—which, I argue, may have been an epidemic of a combination of yellow fever and malaria—*chinos* that were the children of *chino-chino* and *indio-chino* unions would have been more vulnerable than *chinos* born from *chino-negro* and *chino-mulato* marriages. As a result, *chinos* resulting from the latter marriages would have been less susceptible to malaria and yellow fever. Thus genetic traits such as resistance to these diseases but also phenotypical

¹ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 31.

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characteristics such as skin color would have become more common among *chinos*, thus reinforcing the idea among the general populace that *chinos* were an Amerindian-Afrodescendant-produced *casta*. I suggest this would help explain why there are no references to Asia in any *casta* painting.

The overall structure of the chapter corresponds to each of these three explanations. First, I discuss disruptions in transpacific trade and geopolitical transformations that influenced the history of the Manila Galleon, leading to its abolishment in 1815. In the second section I present various new sources from this period that reference Asians in New Spain in the eighteenth century in order to present an overall survey of the late colonial chino population. In the last section I explicate the process by which Asians became less visible in New Spanish society to the point that virtually no trace was left of their presence in collective memory.

5.1 Transpacific trade in the eighteenth century and the end of the Manila Galleon

In this section I outline the political and economic context in the Spanish empire, with a focus on the Pacific. I discuss changes in South, South East, and East Asian geopolitics, in particular the irruption of European and Asian competitors that dislocated Iberian trade networks in the region. The purpose is to understand and analyze these disruptions in terms of their repercussions on the Manila Galleon trade and show how they influenced directly the rate and composition of Asian migration to central New Spain. I will also analyze the conflicts of interest and political developments in New Spain, primarily the Mexican War of Independence, which led to the abolishment of the trade route in 1815.

A destabilizing factor to Spanish transpacific trade was growing competition from other European powers, primarily Britain and France. In the eighteenth century both countries started sending expeditions to the Pacific with scientific, commercial, and military aims. The eighteenth century saw a renewed British interest in the Pacific after “two hundred years from Drake and Cavendish to Cook

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and Vancouver, [in which] not a lot happened.”² An example of this dismantlement of Spain’s hegemony in the Pacific was George Anson’s circumnavigation journey between 1740 and 1744, “undertaken primarily to attack Spanish possessions in the Pacific,” that resulted “in one of the few successful galleon captures.”³ An even more dramatic event was the British conquest of Manila in 1762 during the Seven Years War.⁴ In the mid-to-late eighteenth century British scientific exploration intensified thanks to the celebrated voyages of James Cook (1768-1779) and George Vancouver (1791-1795), important stepping-stones in Britain’s bid for control over the region.⁵ On their part, the French sent the famous expeditions led by Louis Antoine de Bougainville (1766-1769) and Jean-François de Galaup, comte de Lapérouse (1785-1789), the latter of which was lost at sea.⁶ It should not be forgotten that the Spanish also financed their own scientific investigation of the Pacific, mainly in the form of Alessandro Malaspina’s 1789-1794 expedition.⁷

But European and Asian competition in South and South-East Asia was more directly related to changes in patterns of Asian migration in New Spain than the Pacific Ocean expeditions. This process started early in the seventeenth century with the irruption of the Dutch, who persistently attacked and eventually dismantled to a large extent the extensive Portuguese trade networks, including avenues for human trafficking into Manila and Spanish America.⁸ After the

² Katrina Gulliver, “Finding the Pacific World”, *Journal of World History* 22(1) (2011): 90.

³ Gulliver, “Finding the Pacific World,” 90.

⁴ Nicholas Tracy, *Manila Ransomed: The British Assault on Manila in the Seven Years War* (Exeter and Devon, UK: University of Exeter Press, 1995).

⁵ Relevant studies are Brian Richardson, *Longitude Empire: How Captain Cook’s Voyages Changed the World* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005); Glyndwr Williams, ed., *Captain Cook’s Voyages: 1768-1779* (London: The Folio Society, 1997); Stephen Brown, *Madness, Betrayal and the Lash: The Epic Voyage of Captain George Vancouver* (Vancouver and Berkeley: Douglas and McIntyre, 2010); E. C. Coleman, *Captain Vancouver, North West Navigator* (Whitby UK: Caedmon of Whitby, 2000).

⁶ John Dunmore, *Storms and Dreams: Louis de Bougainville: Soldier, Explorer, Statesman* (Auckland NZ: Exisle, 2005); John Dunmore, *La Pérouse, Explorateur du Pacifique* (Paris: Payot, 1986); Catherine Gaziello, *L’expédition de Lapérouse, 1785-1788: réplique française aux voyages de Cook*, (Paris: CTHS, 1984).

⁷ John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina: Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999); Antonio Orozco Acuaviva, ed., *La Expedición Malaspina (1789-1794), Bicentenario de la salida de Cádiz* (Cadiz: Real Academia Hispano-Americana, 1989).

⁸ Seijas, “The Portuguese Slave Trade”, 19-38.

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establishment of the Dutch East India Company in 1602, “Dutch colonial ventures gravitated towards Asia.”⁹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam shows that the Dutch were able to dislodge the Portuguese from their South Asian zones of influence such as Syriam (1613) and Ceylon (1656) thanks in part to local “third parties [who] often crucially mediated the outcome” of military engagements.¹⁰ Simultaneously, the Dutch consolidated their hold of South East Asia and Insulindia founding a new stronghold at Batavia in 1619, expelling the Portuguese and Spanish from the Moluccas during the 1610s and 1620s, taking Malacca in 1641, and Macasar in 1666.¹¹ The Portuguese were cut-off from their vital Japanese silver supply after the Tokugawa regime expelled most Europeans in 1639 allowing only the Dutch to continue trading in the artificial island of Dejima in Nagasaki.¹² Between 1627 and 1662, the Dutch established themselves in Formosa, present day Taiwan, competing against the Spanish who settled in Jilong in 1626. The Spanish stronghold fell to the Dutch in 1642, but the famous military leader Zheng Chenggong, also known as Koxinga, forced the conquerors out of the island in turn, twenty years later.¹³ Koxinga’s untimely death due to malaria may have saved the Spanish in Manila from a similar fate.¹⁴ The triumphant Dutch would be faced by a new challenge as the English East India Company accelerated its imperial agenda in Asia.

Like the Dutch, the English were a constant threat to Iberian interests in Asia. England launched privateer attacks on Portuguese Asian trade routes from the late

⁹ Bert Oostindie and Bert Paasman, “Dutch Attitudes Towards Colonial Empires, Indigenous Cultures, and Slaves”, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31(3) (1998): 349-355, 349.

¹⁰ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500-1700: A Political and Economic History* (London and New York: Longman, 1993), 145.

¹¹ Jean-Noël Sánchez Pons, “Clavados con el clavo’ Debates españoles sobre el comercio de las especias asiáticas en los siglos XVI y XVII”, in *Un océano de seda y plata: el universo económico del Galeón de Manila*, eds. Salvador Bernabéu and Carlos Martínez Shaw (Sevilla: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2013): 107-132.

¹² Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*; John Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, 134; David Blake Willis, “Dejima. Creolization and enclaves of difference in transnational Japan”, in *Transcultural Japan: At the Borderlands of Race Gender and Identity*, eds. David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu (New York: Routledge, 2008), 241-243.

¹³ Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan Became Chinese. Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

¹⁴ Manel Ollé, “Manila in the Zheng Clan Maritime Networks”, *RC Revista de Cultura / Review of Culture. Instituto Cultural de Macau* 29 (2009): 90-104.

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1500s, most famously during Francis Drake famous circumnavigation (1577-1580), forced the fall of the Portuguese stronghold at Ormuz to an Anglo-Persian force in 1622, and, through a protracted series of conflicts, contributed to the decline of the Portuguese empire in Asia.¹⁵ The English and, from 1707, British East India Company spearheaded British operations of empire building in Asia. By the late 1600s the company shifted its interest in spices towards Indian textiles and focused its activities on the Bengal region.¹⁶ In the eighteenth century Britain was able to assert itself in European continental conflicts by military gains in the Americas and Asia. As C. A. Bayly argues,

European wars in the 1740s and 1760s became wars of the Asian and American littoral, with Britain often bargaining for advantage with the continental powers by using forts and trades it had captured in Asia or the Americas.¹⁷

In this context, and taking advantage of the decline of the Mughal empire, the British East India Company effectively inaugurated European inland imperialism in Asia with its conquest of Bengal after the battle of Plassey in 1757,¹⁸ “an event that,” according to Elizabeth Mancke, “scholars of early modern Asia increasingly use to date the onset of European imperialism there.”¹⁹ British exploits in Asia, aside from the previously mentioned capture of Manila in 1762, and the seizure of Dutch enclaves in Ceylon, were mostly made at the expense of the French.

In spite of the organization of several expeditions and trading companies in the 1500s and early 1600s, French presence in South and South East Asia during this period has received less attention by scholars in comparison to the British, Portuguese, and Dutch empires, partly because, according to Glenn Ames, “the French were simply less successful in the Asian trade during this period than their

¹⁵ G. V. Scammell, “England, Portugal and the Estado da India c. 1500-1635”, *Modern Asian Studies* 16(2) (1982): 177-192.

¹⁶ Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, 144.

¹⁷ C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: global connections and comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 92.

¹⁸ Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, 145-148.

¹⁹ Elizabeth Mancke, “Early Modern Expansion and the Politicization of Oceanic Space”, *Geographic Review* 89(2) Oceans Connect (1999): 228.

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European rivals.”²⁰ Even so, the *Compagnie Royale des Indes Orientales* created in 1665 on initiative of minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683), was a noteworthy attempt to project French influence in the region, as was Colbert’s organization of the Persian Squadron sent to Asia in 1670-1672 to challenge the power and influence of the Dutch East India Company.²¹ These initiatives however, failed to get the necessary momentum. In the 1680s France developed diplomatic relations with Siam, and French Jesuit missionaries penetrated and wrote about China. Finally, from the 1720s the French began to successfully establish a mercantile and territorial presence in India. From their base in Pondichery, established in 1674, the French exerted increasing influence over nearby Indian polities. Turmoil ensuing from the disintegration of the Mughal empire increased the fragmentation of the subcontinent’s political landscape and accelerated British and French rivalry that culminated in the Seven Years War, which resulted in British domination of much of India.²²

All these conflicts influenced the composition of the Asian diaspora in New Spain because, as the array of territories under Iberian influence decreased, so too did the heterogeneous nature of the group collectively known as *chinos*. As discussed further in the following section, the majority of Asians during the eighteenth century were characterized as “*indios filipinos*.” Bengalis, Japanese, Sinhalese, Malaccans, etc. no longer accompanied the Filipinos to New Spain, because their places of origin no longer lay in the Iberian sphere of influence. The dissolution of the Iberian Union and independence of Portugal in 1640 had similar consequences to the range of peoples that migrated from Manila to Acapulco. It is likely that these changes also influenced the volume of Asian migration on the Manila Galleon. The transpacific trade route, however, endured throughout the eighteenth century.

Regardless of geopolitical and economic changes in Asia and the Pacific, the Manila Galleon trade continued to thrive in the 1700s. The expansion of the economy of

²⁰ Glenn Joseph Ames, “Colbert’s Indian Ocean Strategy of 1664-1674: A Reappraisal”, *French Historical Studies* 16(3) (1990): 536.

²¹ Ames, “Colbert’s Indian Ocean Strategy”.

²² Daniel A. Baugh, *The global Seven Years War, 1754-1763: Britain and France in a great power contest* (Harlow UK and New York: Longman, 2011).

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New Spain produced new sources of capital and investment destined to transpacific commerce. Even though the regulations stipulated that only Spanish merchants residing in the Philippines could participate in the Manila Galleon trade, during the 1700s Mexican merchants consolidated their control over these transactions.²³ Members of the New Spanish elite sent samples of fabrics across the Pacific to be imitated luxuriously by Asian artisans in places like Manila and Macao; their taste for Asian materials and fabrics remained throughout the century.²⁴

However, the Manila Galleon system began a protracted process of decay in the eighteenth century, driven in part by efforts in Spain to complement the Manila-Acapulco route with a direct connection between the metropole and the Philippines. At first, efforts were directed at restricting the right to participate in the Manila Galleon to Spanish merchants in Manila. Seeking to protect and strengthen the peninsular silk industry and favor merchants in Cadiz, king Phillip V banned the importation of Asian textiles to Mexico in 1718. From 1718 to 1724 all sorts of textile products from brocades, to bed linens, to *batas*, to *quimones* were not allowed. Conversely, merchants could still trade gold, cinnamon, elephants, wax, ceramics, clover, pepper, and textiles such as *cambayas*, *lienzos pintados*, *zarazas*, *chitas*, and *mantas*.²⁵

Another issue that generated tension was smuggling, treated in detail by Bonialian. In the mind of Spanish authorities and merchants, smuggling of Asian silk on the Manila Galleon, allegedly instigated by Mexican merchants, was to blame for the poor performance of Spanish textile traders in the feria de Jalapa (present-day state of Veracruz), where the negotiations over merchandise from the Atlantic trade took place.²⁶ Mexicans argued that Spanish restrictions to the Manila Galleon strengthened the position of Spain’s competitors in Asia. English, Dutch and French

²³ Carmen Yuste, *Emporios transpacíficos. Comerciantes mexicanos en Manila, 1710-1815* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2007).

²⁴ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 160, 164.

²⁵ AGN, Indiferente virreinal, caja 3552, exp. 26, ff. 2-3; Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 73.

²⁶ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 69.

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merchants were able to secure their position by trading with Mexican and Peruvian pesos obtained in Cadiz through the slave trade.²⁷ Throughout the mid-eighteenth century debate on this matter continued, while Asian silks continued to be traded for Mexican pesos. By 1734 a new *real cédula* once again permitted importation of silk to New Spain.²⁸ The policy was relaxed when the Spanish authorities realized that restricting silk imports from Asia, coupled with Spain’s inability to supply New Spanish demand, could incentivize foreign smugglers.²⁹ Smuggling was a serious concern, with the French being the primary smugglers of Chinese goods from Canton in the Spanish-American Pacific.³⁰ Several cases of contraband “de efectos de China” were reported.³¹ Dutch contrabanders also participated in the illegal trade.³² Arguments against restrictions to the Manila Galleon trade included the notion that it was preferable for Mexican silver to end up in Chinese, rather than English, French or Dutch hands, who would use these resources to undermine the power of the Spanish Empire.³³

Apart from reducing competition in New Spain for Spanish artisans from Asian imports, another set of policies were aimed at fostering direct trade between Spain and the Philippines, bypassing New Spain. Since the 1730s Spanish officials sought to establish a mercantile company to link Spain and the Philippines directly and compete with the *Nao de China*.³⁴ The occupation of Manila (and Havana) by British troops in 1762 during the Seven Years’ War triggered a debate over trade policies throughout the empire, including Manila. From 1765 the Spanish crown increasingly sought to dominate trade in the Philippines and to link the archipelago directly with the Iberian Peninsula through the port of Cadiz. This

²⁷ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 72. The British were granted the monopoly of trade in African slaves, or the *Asiento de negros* as part of the stipulations of the Treaties of Utrecht which ended the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713. Josep Maria Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas imperiales (1650-1796): España, América y Europa en el cambio institucional del sistema colonial español* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2007), 88.

²⁸ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 74.

²⁹ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 77.

³⁰ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 88.

³¹ AGN, Alcabalas, vol. 452, exp. 39, ff. 127-128 (no date); Civil volúmenes, vol. 1301, exp. 22, Acapulco (1802); Indiferente virreinal, cada 2949, exp. 1 (1805-1809).

³² AGN, Marina, vol. 8, exp. 5, ff. 322-405 (no date).

³³ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 64.

³⁴ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 78.

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negatively affected the volume and frequency of the Manila Galleon trade in New Spain, as Mexican merchants struggled against this new competition.³⁵ An important development in this process was the founding in 1785 of the *Real Compañía de Filipinas*.³⁶ This state-sponsored trading company was added to a list of others that were established to increase trade in the Atlantic and, most importantly, Spain’s tax revenues. These were the *Compañía de Honduras* (1714), *Guipuzcoana de Caracas* (1728), *Compañía de Galicia* (1734), *Compañía de la Havana* (1740), and *Compañía Real de Barcelona* (1754), which, according to Bonialian, were formed in reaction to the decadence of previous systems of trade between Spain and its colonies, and to compete against the commerce of rival powers in the Americas and other regions.³⁷

These initiatives were part of the policies of partial deregulation of trade included in the so-called Bourbon Reforms, introduced specially during the reign of Charles III (1759-1788). The commercial aspects of these series of new policies were subordinated to the military ones. They were geared towards maximizing tax revenue generated from trade between Spain and its colonies because the primary objective of the reforms overall was to strengthen Spain militarily in the context of competition with other powers, Britain and France specially.³⁸ The prosperity of local merchants in New Spain, Peru, Manila, or any other colony was irrelevant in the consecution of this objective.

In spite of the magnitude and complexity of these problems, they did not stop proposals for new commercial ventures in the Pacific. Proposals about Spanish settlement of the North American Pacific coast from California to Nootka were

³⁵ Yuste, *Emporios transpacíficos*, 359-398.

³⁶ The classic study of this trade route is María Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, *La Real Compañía de Filipinas* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1965).

³⁷ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 120-121.

³⁸ The literature on the Bourbon Reforms is large. A recent comprehensive study of the evolution of trade, military, and political policies of the Spanish Empire, with a focus on the influence of imperial competition and transoceanic trade is Delgado, *Dinámicas imperiales*. Another recent study of the context for and consequences of the Bourbon Reforms is Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Apogee of Empire. Spain and New Spain in the Age of Charles III, 1759-1789* (Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

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grounded on the prospect of acquiring furs to trade for mercury or *azogue* in China.³⁹ The Spanish crown studied the possibility of importing Chinese mercury for use in Mexican silver mines as early as 1689.⁴⁰ Spanish officials looked for a product that could be exchanged with the Chinese for mercury. One option proposed in addition to silver was Californian furs. At least some Chinese admired the quality of furs that could be found in California, as Roderich Ptak found that there were Chinese texts where California was “praised for its abundance in furs.”⁴¹ It is possible Spanish officials knew about this Chinese inclination as, according to Humboldt, viceroy Galvez sent a shipment of otter hides to exchange for mercury. Unfortunately, he argues, “el azogue chino que se trajo de Cantón y de Manila era impuro, pues contenía mucho plomo.”⁴² However, despite this initial failure, in 1786 a man called Vicente Basandre y Vega received a commission to go to California to gather “pieles de nutrias y lobos marinos para comerciar con los chinos por azogue.”⁴³ Ultimately the enterprise was abandoned, but the search to develop this potential market was ancillary to the need to stop British and Russian advances in the Pacific as the reasons for establishing a permanent Spanish presence in California.

These California initiatives show that, in spite of restrictions, commerce with Asia still played a relevant role in the economy of the American territories of New Spain. As late as 1801, the viceroy still received news about “comercio europeo y chino.”⁴⁴ Nearing the end of Spain’s intervention in the war of the American Revolution, in 1781 the conflagration prompted authorities to issue an order permitting vessels to trade between Canton and the Philippines and ports other than Acapulco, such as San Blas (in present-day state of Nayarit).⁴⁵ Throughout the eighteenth century the galleons continued to arrive in Acapulco and the “efectos de China” made their way inland to population centers such as León, in present-day

³⁹ Valdés, *De las minas al mar*, 198.

⁴⁰ Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 89.

⁴¹ Ptak, *Birds and Beasts*, 119.

⁴² Humboldt, *Ensayo político*, Vol. III, Libro IV, chapter XI, 199.

⁴³ AGN, General de Parte, vol. 67, exp. 65, ff. 24-24v.

⁴⁴ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Correos, caja 3271, exp. 12 (1801).

⁴⁵ AGN, Marina, vol. 49, exp. 197, (1781).

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state of Guanajuato.⁴⁶ At least on one occasion Chinese silks entered Mexico City by a route different from the traditional road from Acapulco. In 1796 a cargo of these goods were introduced to the capital “proveniente de Valladolid,” present-day Morelia, Michoacán.⁴⁷ While Acapulco remained the center of transpacific trade in New Spain, a clear sign that Spanish hegemony in the Pacific was coming to an end and that new actors were entering the scene was an instance when a Danish vessel was allowed to disembark and trade “512 bultos de mercancías chinas” in Acapulco in 1806.⁴⁸ This example shows that, while France and Britain were consolidating their presence, even lesser powers, such as Denmark, were beginning to displace Spain even in the port city that spearheaded the connection between the Spanish Americas and Asia.

As with almost every other aspect of life in New Spain, the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821) obstructed trade between Mexico and Manila. The military campaigns led by rebel leader José María Morelos y Pavón were the most detrimental to the Manila Galleon. From late 1810 Morelos conducted the insurgency in the southern provinces of New Spain, managing to establish substantial rebel control in the area. By 1815, convoys transporting “efectos chinos” that traversed the region towards Mexico City had to be accompanied by military escorts.⁴⁹ From 1810 Morelos led a series of failed attempts to capture Acapulco until he finally succeeded in 1813. Less than a year later he was forced to abandon the port city, but not before setting it on fire.⁵⁰ The ravaged city then saw the last manifestations of its long commercial relations with Asia. The frigate *Victoria* sailed into Acapulco harbor “con cargamentos de efectos de China” in 1815.⁵¹ A proclamation suppressing the *Nao* was issued the following year,⁵² and the 250

⁴⁶ AGN, AHH, Filipinas, legs. 1242 (1715-1728), 1311 (1742-1785); AGN, AHH, Aduanas, legs. 1219, 1220 (1792), 1721 (1792).

⁴⁷ AGN, AHH, Dirección General de Rentas 142, Estado de México, caja 79, exp. 10 (1796).

⁴⁸ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Filipinas, caja 2037, exp. 22 (1806).

⁴⁹ AGN, Operaciones de Guerra, vol. 469, exp. 74, ff. 231-233; exp. 75, ff. 234-236; exp. 76, ff. 237-239.

⁵⁰ Marley, *Historic Cities of the Americas*, 214-215.

⁵¹ AGN, Filipinas, vol. 62, exp. 6, ff. 199-234

⁵² AGN, Bandos, vol. 28, exp. 127, f. 236 (1816).

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years of history of the Manila Galleon ended when last vessel, the *Magallanes*, left Acapulco and no galleon came back the following season.⁵³

As much as the Mexican War of Independence caused the end of the Manila Galleon, the long history of exchanges with the Philippines precipitated the final stages of the conflict as well. Agustín de Iturbide (1783-1824), a royalist officer who decided to switch sides and proclaim Mexican independence after Riego’s 1820 liberal uprising in Spain, financed the decisive campaign of the long war early in 1821 with 525,000 pesos that were to be sent to the Philippines under his escort. In the words of biographer Carlos Navarro, Iturbide “tuvo muy bien cuidado de declararse su dueño.”⁵⁴ Shortly after the event a Spanish coronel alerted his superiors that Iturbide was conspiring “para independenciam de las provincias quedándose con los caudales de los filipinos que estaban bajo su custodia.”⁵⁵ After the proclamation of Mexican independence and his entrance to Mexico City in September, Iturbide invited both Cuba and the Philippines to join the newly independent nation.⁵⁶ Although Iturbide’s proposals were rejected, they reflect the long historical relationship with the Philippines and Cuba. This factor was surely behind the decision of the Mexican lawmakers who drafted the second “Ley de Expulsión de Españoles” in 1829 and allowed children of Spaniards born in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines to remain in Mexico.⁵⁷

Transpacific trade relations between Asia and Mexico where Asian merchandise was exchanged for silver and sold in Mexico continued in some form even after independence. John McMaster found, for instance, that in the 1830s and 40s the Barron, Forbes and Company, based in San Blas, used Mexican silver to purchase

⁵³ Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, 55, 63. See also Curiel, “Perception of the Other”, 19.

⁵⁴ Carlos Navarro y Rodrigo, *Vida de Agustín de Iturbide* (Madrid: Editorial América, 1919, originally written in 1869), 47.

⁵⁵ AGN, Operaciones de Guerra, vol. 804, exp. 217, ff. 498-499 (1821). “Filipinos” in this case refers to Euro-descended people who had commercial interests in the Philippines.

⁵⁶ Andrés del Castillo “Los infidentes mexicanos en filipinas” in *El Galeón de Manila un Mar de Historias*, ed. Gemma Cruz et al. (Mexico: Consejo Cultural Filipino Mexicano, JGH Editores, 1997), 172; Andrés del Leopoldo Zea, *Desarrollo económico de América Latina y el Caribe* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia, 1999), 68.

⁵⁷ Harold D. Sims, *La expulsión de los españoles de México* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1985).

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Chinese products for sale in Mexico, as well as other ventures that tried to send cochineal to Asia from Mazatlan (in present-day Sinaloa).⁵⁸

5.2 *Chinos* and *Filipinos* in New Spain in the eighteenth century

In this section I discuss the various sources I located pertaining Asian migration in New Spain dated after 1700. The purpose is to show the drastic drop in new arrivals from Asia during this time period compared from the numbers registered in previous centuries. Additionally, I show that the majority of them were dubbed “*filipino*,” suggesting that the Asian migratory flow during this period was less heterogeneous. I also briefly comment on rare instances of “*chino*” legacy, such as an enduring establishment in Mexico City called “*el Mesón del Chino*” possibly founded by Asian immigrants or their descendants.

During the eighteenth century Asians were perhaps most visible in the Pacific coastal region. Slack argues “that prior to 1729 Asian paramilitary units were routinely patrolling the regions adjacent to Acapulco,” and that throughout the 1700s *chinos* participated in various militias protecting the coast, from Zihuatanejo to Acapulco from predation by Dutch and British pirates.⁵⁹ According to José Antonio de Villaseñor y Sánchez (1703-1759), around 1746 Acapulco was inhabited by “cerca de quatrocientas familias de *chinos*, *mulatos*, y *negros* y solo ocho de *españoles*.”⁶⁰ One document provides some curious insights by a man who claimed he had fallen victim to the superstitions of a group of *chinos* in Acapulco. In 1719, a *mulato* called José de la Asención declared to the Inquisition commissioner in Acapulco that an “*indio o chino de Philipinas*,” whose name he did not know, showed him an incantation to get women. The *Filipino* instructed José he needed to make the prospective woman suck some tobacco containing three of

⁵⁸ John McMaster, “Aventuras asiáticas del peso mexicano”, *Historia Mexicana* 8, 3 (1959): 380-383.

⁵⁹ Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 51-52.

⁶⁰ Josep Antonio de Villaseñor y Sánchez, *Theatro Americano descripcion general de los reynos y provincias de la Nueva-España, y sus jurisdicciones* (Mexico: Imprenta de la Viuda de D. Joseph Bernardo de Hogal, 1746), 186. See also Alejandro Espinosa Pitman, *José Antonio de Villaseñor y Sánchez, 1703-1759* (San Luis Potosí: Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, 2003), 76.

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his hairs chopped in it. José claimed he tried to follow the Filipino’s instructions to no avail. He declared this Filipino also revealed to him a technique to get lucky in bets by slicing the head of a snake eating a toad. He told the authorities he knew of a group of muleteers who sold “hierbas para jinetear y ganar [...], y conseguir mujeres.” José declared he talked to some “indios o chinos de Philipinas que alguno llaman el Chino Gago” that knew more incantations to win bets and conquer women.⁶¹

As stated in chapter two, one of the most important chino communities settled in the town of Coyuca, near Acapulco. In the eighteenth century there was still a thriving chino community in a *doctrina*, a parish or barrio under the jurisdiction of Coyuca, called San Nicolás Obispo, or “San Nicolás de los chinos.”⁶² According to Villaseñor, this community was inhabited by “ciento y veinte familias” of chinos.⁶³ Oropeza states that in 1744 the alcalde of San Nicolás, Pedro Zúñiga, “chino criollo,” claimed that the barrio originated “desde los tiempos antiguos que los indios philipinos” came with the Manila Galleon, and many decided to stay in Coyuca, “y como se fuesen quedando muchos de ellos y casándose con indias de otras poblaciones,” and its inhabitants grew rice, maize, and cotton, and picked fruit “de cuya suerte se mantienen.”⁶⁴ Oropeza also located references to thirteen chinos, “criollos” and “de Manila” using a canoe in a river in Coyuca in 1758.⁶⁵

Almost all confirmed Asians in this century were from the Philippines. I present all the examples I was able to locate in order to show how the composition of the diaspora was relatively more homogeneous, and how they continued to settle throughout much of New Spain. In the eighteenth century the use of the epitome chino to describe people from Asia in the cities of the central highlands declined. Instead, newcomers from the Philippines were dubbed “indios filipinos.” Although their numbers did not compare with that of the seventeenth century migration,

⁶¹ AGN Inquisición, vol. 1169, exp. 16 (1719).

⁶² Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 101.

⁶³ Villaseñor, *Theatro Americano*, 189.

⁶⁴ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 101. See also Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 151, n. 25.

⁶⁵ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 101, n. 310.

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there is evidence of Filipinos scattered throughout the viceroyalty. As discussed in chapter 3, three Filipinos married in Puebla during the eighteenth century.⁶⁶ There were other such marriages in other places in New Spain. Several Filipinos appear in marriage licenses. In 1706, a witness in the marriage between a mestizo and a española, Joseph de la Cruz, “dijo ser chino libre [...] vecino de esta ciudad tejedor de frazadas que trabaja [con el contrayente] en el barrio de Necatitlán [in Mexico City].”⁶⁷ In 1712, Manuel de León, “chino vecino de esta ciudad [de México] de oficio barbero con tienda en el callejón de San Bernardo en casas de la ciudad,” also served as witness in the marriage of two mulatos.⁶⁸ The same year, Joseph de la Cruz “negro esclavo, criollo de la India de Portugal” married a mestiza.⁶⁹ In 1728 Ignacio de Alvarado witnessed a marriage in Mexico City.⁷⁰ A 1743 padrón, or tributary census, of the jurisdiction of Ixmiquilpan, in present-day state of Hidalgo, registers Nicolás de la Cruz, a sixty-year-old chino widower who lived with his nephews, José and Francisco, both eighteen and unmarried.⁷¹ José Aguirre, “indio filipino,” married María Francisca Mendoza in 1758.⁷² The same year Juan de Torres “indio filipino” testified at another union.⁷³ In 1764, Joseph de Carvallido, a Filipino “castizo” married María Anna Gertrudis, española, in Toluca.⁷⁴ In 1774, Mariano Salazar “indio filipino” married Rafaela de Alcantara española at the parish of Santa Veracruz. One of the witnesses was Guillermo Panduic, “indio filipino, portero.”⁷⁵ This was one of the very rare cases of a marriage of an Asian and a person of European descent in New Spain. Finally, an “indio filipino” gardener witnessed a marriage in 1791.⁷⁶

⁶⁶ AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 33; AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1526, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 73v; AGN, Genealogía, Proyecto JIT, Rollo 1527, Sagrario Metropolitano, *Libro de matrimonios de negros, mulatos y chinos*, f. 213.

⁶⁷ AGN, Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios, vol. 118, exp. 94, ff. 212-213 (1706).

⁶⁸ AGN Regio Patronato Indiano, Matrimonios, vol. 154, exp. 8 (1712).

⁶⁹ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 308, exp. 85, (1712).

⁷⁰ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 89, exp. 70, ff. 221-224 (1728).

⁷¹ Anonymous. (1743). *Jurisdicción de Ixmiquilpan* [Relaciones geográficas del Arzobispado de México]. Madrid: Francisco de Solano et alii, CSIC, 1988, 81.

⁷² AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 1584, exp. 16 Matrimonios (1758)

⁷³ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 71, exp. 34, ff. 152-154 (1758).

⁷⁴ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 16, exp. 40, ff. 162-172 (1764).

⁷⁵ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 99, exp. 27, ff. 142-146 (1774).

⁷⁶ AGN, Matrimonios, vol. 82, exp. 95, ff. 404-409 (1791).

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The presence of other *indios filipinos* in New Spain was recorded in other types of sources as well. When twenty Filipinos arrived in Veracruz from Manila en-route to Spain in 1771, they were not permitted to continue their journey, and subsequently aid was requested to help them return to the Philippines.⁷⁷ In 1774 Antonio Nicolás “*indio filipino*” certified payment of a stipend.⁷⁸ After being taken to the archiepiscopal prison in Mexico City, Joseph Antonio Ugarta “*indio filipino*” made a formal request to be informed of the reason of his imprisonment.⁷⁹ In 1762, Joseph de Villanueva, “*filipino*,” was imprisoned “*por mala administración de una vinatería*.”⁸⁰ In 1810 the viceroy of New Spain inquired about the marriages of “*nobles con notoria limpieza de sangre*” with “*negros, mestizos y chinos*.”⁸¹

One of the most remarkable pieces of evidence of the Asian diaspora in the eighteenth century were several documents allude to an *indio filipino* called Policarpo de Vera who died in Mexico City in the 1760s. Juana de Echeverría and Raymundo Manuel Manrigue solicited their salary to be paid from the sale of part of de Vera’s assets after his death. An inventory and assessment of his belongings reveals he had “*herederos ultramarinos*,” most likely in the Philippines.⁸² These documents show that, despite the huge distances, there were members of the diaspora in New Spain that maintained their connections to their places of origin back in Asia.

Some *chinos* appear in sources written even after Mexican independence and the elimination of the Manila Galleon. However, in most of these sources the term was used as a nickname, which became increasingly popular since the early 1800s. In 1827, for example, a man called Alfonso “*llamado el chino*” was processed for wounding a man in Tacubaya [then a separate town, now engulfed by Mexico

⁷⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Marina, caja 6368, exp. 11 (1771). See also Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 55.

⁷⁸ AGN, Tribunal de Cuentas, vol. 50, exp. 5, ff. 50-55 (1774).

⁷⁹ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 5088, exp. 89, (no date).

⁸⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 1165, exp. 3 (1762-1763).

⁸¹ AHDF, Gobierno del Distrito, Bandos, caja 92, exp. 235 (1810).

⁸² AGN, Civil, vol. 494, exp. 1-5 (1761-1763).

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City].⁸³ In the same year and place, another prisoner was recorded as “Vicente chino.”⁸⁴ Also in Tacubaya, in 1855, there was another prisoner called José María Serranus “el chino.”⁸⁵ In 1852 Guadalupe Jiménez was tried “por faltas a un chino.”⁸⁶

Some usages of the word “chino” carried on into the 1700s. An interesting example is the so-called “Mesón del chino.” This was an inn or tavern located, accordingly, on the “calle de los Mesones” in Mexico City. It is possible the founder of this establishment was a chino Asian immigrant or descendant of Asian immigrants. In one of her charts, Seijas mentions a chino tavern owner, without providing the precise reference.⁸⁷ Oropeza, on her part, references a chino called Juan de Baeza who lived in the “calle de los Mesones” around 1672, but provides no indication of his profession.⁸⁸ Regardless of whether Baeza was its founder, this inn existed at least as early as 1725. That year a man called Domingo Robals asked for a license to build a bridge over the canal that ran behind the “meson que llaman del chino en calle de mesones.”⁸⁹ The following year the owner of the establishment, Pablo Félix de Sea, initiated a legal procedure against Jerónimo Francisco Murillo claiming 190 pesos Murillo owed him for accommodation at the “mesón nombrado del Chino.”⁹⁰ AGN preserves accounting data about the mesón dated between 1729 and 1743.⁹¹ In 1746 the mesón was referenced in a dispute over a plot of land. Domingo Robals, referenced as the owner, disputed with the neighboring convent of Regina Coeli over possession of a plot of land next to the plaza of Regina.⁹² The tavern was referenced once again in 1762, when a claim was issued over a debt of “175 pesos por la compra de 80 arrobas de queso, para el mesón del chino ubicado en la Calle

⁸³ AHDF, Municipalidades, Tacubaya, Oficios, caja 9, exp. 12 (1827).

⁸⁴ AHDF, Municipalidades, Tacubaya, Oficios, caja 9, exp. 35 (1827).

⁸⁵ AHDF, Municipalidades, Tacubaya, Justicia y Juzgados, caja 15, exp. 18 (1852).

⁸⁶ AHDF, Ayuntamiento, Justicia, Juicios Criminales, vol. 2893, exp. 16 (1852).

⁸⁷ Seijas, “Transpacific Servitude”, 151.

⁸⁸ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 118, 271. Her cited sources are: AGN, Genealogía, Sagrario Metropolitano Matrimonios de Castas, Defunciones de Castas, Rollo 519, 559; Archivo General de Notarías, vol. 1264, f. 29.

⁸⁹ AHDF, Fondo: Ayuntamiento, Sección: Puentes, Vol. 3716 Exp. 17.

⁹⁰ AGN, TSJDF Colonial, Sección: Alcaldes Ordinarios, serie: Civil, caja 15A, exp. 2, fs. 31. México.

⁹¹ AGN, Indiferente virreinal, industria y comercio, caja 4827, exp. 12, fs. 15 (1743).

⁹² AHDF, Ayuntamiento, Terrenos, vol. 4025, exp. 96.

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de los Mesones.”⁹³ A more precise description of the exact location of this establishment appears in a 1795 document citing a “vinatería llamada del chino ubicada a mitad de la cuadra de los mesones.”⁹⁴ In 1808 Joaquín Vega “arrendatario del Mesón del Chino,” claimed a debt incurred by the intendente of San Luis Potosí.⁹⁵ In 1810 the alcalde Manuel Orcasita wrote the viceroy “dando parte de los visitantes que acuden al mesón de Regina y del Chino en la Ciudad de México.”⁹⁶ It is certain that the tavern still existed more than half-a-century later because in 1865 Mariana Arpide de Cuevas asked authorization to close a doorway or “ancón que se halla en la Plazuela de Regina a espaldas del mesón llamado del Chino,” in a document that provides the exact address, “Calle segunda de Mesones número 17.”⁹⁷ What is remarkable about this establishment is its longevity. These sources demonstrate that a business most likely founded, and perhaps owned for many decades, by Asian immigrants or their descendants, endured in Mexico City for approximately 200 years. Further research about this location could reveal more details about social interactions of the *chinos* with New Spanish society at large, being as it was a successful and enduring place of business.

During his voyage in New Spain (1803-1804), Humboldt observed: “son muchos los individuos de origen asiático, ya chino, ya malayo, que se han establecido en Nueva-España.”⁹⁸ However, paradoxically, Humboldt also noted that “los descendientes de negros y de indias son conocidos en Méjico, Lima, y aun en la Habana, con el estraño nombre de *Chinos*.”⁹⁹ Slack argues that “the waters became increasingly muddied by colonial authorities that began to lump *chinos* with the African mixed-race castes by the middle of the 17th century.”¹⁰⁰ The coexistence of the use of the word *chino* to refer to one of the many *castas*, and the continued presence of Asian immigrants in New Spain is an element that adds difficulty to understanding the process of dissolution of this population from collective

⁹³ AGN, TSDJDF Colonial, Alcaldes Ordinarios, serie: Civil, caja 20A, exp. 5, fs. 20.

⁹⁴ AGN, Indiferente virreinal, Consulado, caja 1898, exp. 2 (1795).

⁹⁵ AGN, Civil, leg. 225, unnumbered file, parte 6, nos. 70/1 (1808).

⁹⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 4934, exp. 44 (1810).

⁹⁷ AHDF, Ayuntamiento, Terrenos, vol. 4037, exp. 743 (1865).

⁹⁸ Humboldt, *Ensayo político*, Vol. I, Libro II, chapter VI, 145.

⁹⁹ Humboldt, *Ensayo político*, Vol. I, Libro II, chapter VII, 261.

¹⁰⁰ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 21.

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memory. I analyze the reasons for this phenomenon, which Slack calls “the social amnesia [...] regarding the origins of the *chino* caste,” in the following section.¹⁰¹

5.3 An epidemiological hypothesis for the dissolution of the Asian diaspora in New Spain

In this section I analyze the key aspects of the diminishment of references to Asian migration in New Spain, and the processes by which the meaning of the word *chino* was transformed. By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the term was used almost exclusively to talk about one of the many castas, resulting from mixed *Afromestizo* and *Amerindian* ancestry.¹⁰² Some scholars, however, have mistakenly concluded that this means that the *chino* population overall throughout the entire colonial period had little to no relation to Asia.

In this respect, I strongly disagree with Marco Polo Hernández Cuevas’ assertion that the term *chino* was used exclusively to talk about descendants of *Amerindian* and *African* parents in New Spain. Hernández suggests that research that highlights the Asian origin of the term *chino*, “if left unchallenged would erase from the Mexican national memory a major portion of *African Mexican* archival research and lead to further misinterpretation of Mexican historical data.”¹⁰³ Although he is correct in pointing out that the *chinos* were not necessarily Chinese, and that Slack’s estimate of the volume of this migration might be too elevated, it is highly likely that many of the *chinos* were in fact *sangleys*, and thus Chinese, as argued in chapters one and two. Hernández argues that researchers are unaware of the many meanings of the word *chino* in Spanish, and that to suggest that there was a substantial Asian diaspora in New Spain “besides being a physical impossibility is based on a mistranslation [of the word *chino*].”¹⁰⁴ However, as this thesis and the extensive research conducted by Oropeza, Seijas, Slack, and Machuca show, there

¹⁰¹ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 25.

¹⁰² See Ben Vinson III, “Estudiando las razas desde la periferia: Las castas olvidadas del sistema colonial mexicano (Lobos, Moriscos, Coyotes, Moros y Chinos)”, in Juan Manuel de la Serna, ed., *Pautas de convivencia étnica en la América Latina colonial (Indios, negros, mulatos pardos y esclavos)* (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2005), 247-307.

¹⁰³ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 126.

¹⁰⁴ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 126.

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were hundreds, if not thousands, of Asians collectively called *chinos* in New Spain from the late sixteenth, until the early nineteenth century.

Hernández’s assertions can be proven inaccurate by the data presented in this thesis, as well as in the work of other scholars. For example, this author cites Aguirre Beltrán’s suggestion that “the name ‘chino’ in Colonial Puebla, Mexico was a referent to the offspring of a Black male and a First Nations woman,” but, while I located dozens of Asians clearly marked “*chinos*” in the Pueblan parochial archives, I failed to find a single reference to a *chino* with documented Amerindian and African parents and no indication of Asian provenance.¹⁰⁵ Hernández also argues that the use of “*chino*,” meaning Chinese, emerged in nineteenth-century Philippines “as a synonym of *Sangley*,”¹⁰⁶ but, in this thesis I cite numerous much earlier New Spanish documents with the usage of this term, including a reference to a “*chino de casta sangley*,” proving not only that there were *sangleys* in New Spain, but that there were other types of *chinos*.¹⁰⁷ I also disagree with his assertion that “the ethnically diverse people who entered Mexico via Acapulco were called ‘*chinos*’ because they were perceived as people with tainted blood.”¹⁰⁸ Rather, as discussed in previous chapters, I argue that they were thus tagged because they came from “China,” which was a term used to refer to a vast area including South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Asia-Pacific in Spanish sources since the late sixteenth century. The case of “*la china Cruzat*”, a woman of European descent born in the Philippines and who later emigrated to Mexico, further disproves that *chino* was always used as a marker of racial impurity.¹⁰⁹

Instead of pursuing a futile line of inquiry trying to distinguish between “Asian *chinos*” and “African *chinos*” in New Spain, the more interesting effort is to try to determine why and when people of African descent began to *also* be called *chinos* next to the Asians, and why eventually the term was used almost exclusively to talk

¹⁰⁵ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 127.

¹⁰⁶ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 125.

¹⁰⁷ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 2173, exp. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 127.

¹⁰⁹ Tomás Otezia Iriarte, *Acapulco, La ciudad de los Navíos de Oriente y de las Sirenas Modernas* (Mexico: Diana, 1973, originally published in 1965), 131-136.

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about them. While Oropeza admits “no sabemos con certitud cuándo y por qué se empezó a utilizar el vocablo con este significado,”¹¹⁰ and recognizing that there is room for debate, I argue that “chino” meaning an Afro-descended casta became widespread only in the eighteenth century.

I mostly disagree with Slack’s assertion that Mexican nationalism was a cause for the vanishing of Asian cultural and economic legacies.¹¹¹ While it is true that the independence of Mexico ushered a new period in which authorities made an effort to eliminate ethnic differences and enforced a policy aimed at ending the polarization of society, which ultimately led to a less diversified population, the process of dilution of the Asian element mainly took place in the last century of colonial domination. I argue that the well-intentioned albeit ultimately unsuccessful efforts by Mexican authorities to racially equalize the citizens of the new nation were far less significant than, for example, the elimination of the Manila Galleon by colonial authorities. On the other hand, I agree with Slack’s explanation for the increasing “Africanization” of the *chinos* of New Spain that states that this process was catalyzed by a decrease in new arrivals from Asia and the ongoing racial mixing or *mestizaje*.¹¹² As stated in the introduction to this chapter, this development can be attributed to three correlated factors.

The first one is that the number of new Asian immigrants entering yearly through the Manila Galleon fell sharply as a result of the abolishment of chino slavery in 1673, and the disruptions in transpacific trade brought about by competition from other European powers and the policies initiated from Madrid to combat them, discussed in the first section of this chapter.¹¹³ With fewer Asians entering New Spain the number of exogamous marriages increased, and the ongoing process of *mestizaje* intensified. Additionally, as shown in section 2 of this chapter, there was less variety of Asian newcomers than in previous centuries, with most hailing from

¹¹⁰ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 20.

¹¹¹ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 25.

¹¹² Slack discusses the “Africanization of the term *chino/china*” in Slack, “The *Chinos* of New Spain”, 61.

¹¹³ The end of chino slavery was previously suggested as a factor by Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 23-24; and Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 192.

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the Philippines, which facilitated the spreading of the term “indio filipino” in substitution of the traditional “chino” to refer to them.

The second factor was also triggered by the abolishment of chino slavery in 1673 and gradual enforcement of this policy. As mentioned in chapter two, the abolishment prompted several slave owners to free their chino slaves. Others, however, may have been tempted to actively hide the Asian provenance of their slaves, emphasizing their Afro-descendant heritage, if they had any, in order to keep their slaves and their offspring. It is possible newly freed *chinos* contributed in this process as they distanced themselves from the traditional label and sought to be identified as *indios* or *mestizos*, as Seijas suggests.¹¹⁴ In so doing, they accentuated the notion that *chinos* were of African and Amerindian heritage. Since many Asians did marry *negros* and *mulatos*, as shown in previous chapters, many of this *chinos* did in fact have African genetic heritage. By continuing calling *chinos* born of such marriages “*chinos*,” while emphasizing the African aspect, the word eventually became synonymous with *zambo* or *zambaigo*, the earlier word used to denote the offspring of Afro-Amerindian unions.¹¹⁵ This process reinforced the notion that *chinos* resulted from unions between *indios* and *negros* and *mulatos* until, “by the 1750s, the commonly-held assumption by elites in New Spain was that a *chino* was the result of a union between individuals with African and Indian blood.”¹¹⁶ This idea was thus reproduced in *casta* paintings from the mid-to-late eighteenth century. These paintings represented the misguided idea that, in the words of Slack, “*chinos* did not arrive to the shores of New Spain via the Philippines, but were produced by mating between *mulatos* and *indios*.”¹¹⁷

Finally I argue that a third factor also influenced, and perhaps accelerated this process: asymmetrical resistance to disease. The offspring of chino and people of African descent were genetically better equipped to resist mosquito-borne diseases, such as malaria and yellow fever, than the *chinos* descended from

¹¹⁴ Seijas, “Native Vassals”, 153-164. This is also the main argument of her dissertation and her book *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*.

¹¹⁵ Humboldt, *Ensayo político*, Vol. I, Libro II, chapter VII, 261.

¹¹⁶ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 22.

¹¹⁷ Slack, “Sinifying New Spain”, 22.

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exclusively Asian, and Asian and Amerindian unions.¹¹⁸ Malaria is caused by different kinds of plasmodia: *Plasmodium vivax*, *Plasmodium falciparum*, and, much less frequently, *Plasmodium ovale* and *Plasmodium malarie*.¹¹⁹ Several mosquito species in the *Anopheles* genus serve as vectors of this illness.¹²⁰ While the question of whether inherited immunity to yellow fever—which is caused by a virus—exists, it is clear that people descended from inhabitants of areas in Africa where malaria is endemic are more likely to inherit a condition consisting of a deformation of red blood cells known as sickle cell trait, which provides resistance to malaria.¹²¹ As John McNeill argues:

Most people in Africa between the Sahara and the Kalahari are immune to *P. vivax* because of genetic characteristics (the absence of Duffy antigen in red blood cells), as are many people of African decent elsewhere. This immunity is the result of

¹¹⁸ This argument is largely inspired by John McNeill’s research in McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*.

¹¹⁹ Thomas E. Wellems, Karen Hayton and Rick M. Fairhurst, “The impact of malaria parasitism: from corpuscles to communities”, *The Journal of Clinical Investigation* 199, 9 (2009): 2496-2505, accessed 06/07/2014, <http://www.jci.org/articles/view/38307>.

¹²⁰ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 54. For species and range of *Anopheles* mosquitos in Mexico see Casas Martínez and Orozco Bonilla, “Diversidad y distribución geográfica del género *Anopheles* en el sur de México”, *CONABIO, Biodiversitas* 67 (2006): 12-15.

¹²¹ For yellow fever resistance and immunity, see McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 44-47. Sickle cell is a form of anaemia caused by a genetic mutation. Some recent publications in medical journals about the propensity of the sickle cell trait in people from areas in Africa where malaria is endemic, and the resistance that this condition provides against malaria are Lauren Gong, Sunil Parikh, Philip J. Rosenthal and Bryan Greenhouse, “Biochemical and immunological mechanisms by which sickle cell trait protects against malaria”, *Malaria Journal* 12, 3 17 (2013), accessed 06/06/2014, <http://www.malariajournal.com/content/12/1/317>; Eunha Shim, Zhilang Feng, Carlos Castillo-Chavez, “Differential impact of sickle cell trait on symptomatic and asymptomatic malaria”, *Math Biosci Eng* 9, 4 (2012): 877-898; Lucio Luzzatto, “Sickle Cell Anaemia and Malaria”, *Mediterranean Journal of Hematology and Infectious Diseases* 4, 1 (2012) accessed 06/06/2014, <http://www.mjhid.org/article/view/10928>; Franklin Bunn, “The triumph of good over evil: protection by the sickle gene against malaria”, *Blood* 121, 1 (2013): 20-25; Moukalia A. Billo, Eric S. Johnson, Seydou O. Doumbia, Belco Poudiougou, Issaka Sagara, Sory I. Diawara, Mahamadou Diakitè, Mouctar Diallo, Ogobara K. Doumbo, Anatole Tounkara, Janet Rice, Mark A. James, and Donald J. Krogstad, “Sickle Cell trait Protects Against *Plasmodium falciparum* Infection”, *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 176, 7 (2012): 175-185; Michael R. DeBaun and Joseph Telfair, “Transition and Sickle Cell Disease”, *Pediatrics* 130, 926 (2012); Emily Riehm Meier and Jeffrey L. Miller, “Sickle Cell Disease in Children”, *Drugs* 72, 7 (2012); Nigel S. Key and Vimal K. Derebail, “Sickle-Cell Trait: Novel Clinical Significance”, *Hematology Am Soc Hematol Educ Program* (2010): 418-422. See maps correlating sickle cell trait and malaria endemic areas in Africa and other scattered regions in the Indian Ocean basin in A. C. Allison, “Genetic Factors in Resistance to Malaria”, *Annals New York Academy of Sciences* 91, 3 (1961): 711-712.

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hundreds of human generations of exposure to malaria and rigorous selection for resistance to *P. vivax*. Moreover, long exposure to the deadly *falciparum* strain has favored the evolution and survival of genetic resistance among West and Central Africans [...] This comes in the form of the so-called sickle cell trait, common but not universal among people of West African origin and descent. The sickle cell makes one's hemoglobin indigestible to *P. falciparum* [...] Malaria is most dangerous to people whose genetic inheritance does not include either of the two heritable shields, to small children in general, and to adults whose background does not equip them with the necessary antibodies through prior exposure to malaria.¹²²

It is important to stress, as McNeill does, that “resistance or immunity to yellow fever [and malaria], [...] is a result of the disease environment of one's ancestors—not a matter of race or skin color,” adding that dark-skinned people from regions in Africa where these diseases are not endemic are just as vulnerable as people with lighter skin.¹²³ Thus *chinos* born from *chino-indio* marriages that lived in the warm tropical lowlands where *Anopheles* were abundant were more vulnerable to malaria than their counterparts descended from *chino-negro* and *chino-mulato* couples, many of whose ancestors came from areas in Africa where malaria was endemic. Those who lived in Coyuca, for example, lived in close proximity to the mosquito because, as stated earlier in this chapter, they grew, among other things, rice and as McNeill asserts, “wherever irrigated rice is raised, *Anopheles* are raised along with it.”¹²⁴ The people living in the lowlands were also vulnerable to yellow fever. This illness, which originated in Africa, became endemic in lowland cities such as Veracruz and Mérida as early as the 1640s.¹²⁵

Counter intuitively, people living in urban centers at high elevations, such as Mexico City and Puebla (2.250m and 2.135m above sea level, respectively) may have been equally exposed to malaria and yellow fever carrying mosquitoes. Outbreaks of either one of the diseases, or a combination of the two, may have

¹²² McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 53.

¹²³ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 46.

¹²⁴ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 57.

¹²⁵ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 64.

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turned into epidemics, as in the case of the famous *matlazahuatl* of the late 1730s. Although the diagnose for this particular epidemic is the subject of an old debate, descriptions of symptoms in primary sources and environmental conditions conducive to mosquito reproduction, such as the expansion of sugar plantations and a series of droughts, are consistent with a diagnosis of malaria, most likely in combination with other infections possibly including yellow fever.

While it would seem the high altitude of the urban centers that had the largest Asian populations kept them safe from mosquito-borne diseases, the maladies could spread directly from the lowland coastal regions. As Velasco and Sierra argue, “Puebla’s proximity to Veracruz [...] and its *tierra caliente* (tropical climate) sugar plantations greatly increased the odds of having a larger population of African-born slaves,”¹²⁶ as well as, I would add, a larger population of disease-carrier mosquitoes. Mexico City was similarly vulnerable to tropical diseases since, as Malvido argues:

Las enfermedades eruptivas [...] generalmente comenzaban en los puertos de Veracruz, Salina Cruz [in present-day state of Oaxaca] y Acapulco, desde donde se extendían hasta la ciudad de México y de aquí al norte de Nueva España, cubriendo el reino en pocos meses.¹²⁷

This pattern matches the observations by the authors of a recent paper on the presence of *Aedes aegypti*, the mosquito that serves as a vector for yellow fever, at high altitudes in Mexico. They argue that in present-day:

Mexico City and Puebla City have local climates that are currently poorly suited for establishment and proliferation of *Ae. aegypti*. However, these cities are linked through transportation routes to lower-elevation communities, where warmer and wetter local climates are suitable for the mosquito to establish and thrive.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Velasco and Sierra, “Mine Workers and Weavers”, 110-111.

¹²⁷ Malvido, “Factores de despoblación”, 55.

¹²⁸ The study was conducted because global warming may cause the mosquito to reproduce in areas of higher elevation and propagate dengue, a tropical disease which *Aedes aegypti* also carries. Saul Lozano-Fuentes et al., “The Dengue Virus Mosquito Vector *Aedes aegypti* at High Elevation in Mexico”, *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and*

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In the colonial period, these two cities were already connected to the lowlands, even if the volume and rate of exchanges were those of a pre-industrial society.

A more direct threat was created by the development of sugar cane plantations near both cities, which provided an opportunity for *Anopheles* and *Aedes aegypti* to thrive. McNeill observed that the ecological transformation that the Caribbean underwent as a result of the development of the sugar cane plantation complex from the 1640s incentivized the growth of mosquito population.¹²⁹ In a much smaller scale, similar transformations happened in areas of the central highlands of New Spain from the mid-seventeenth century, also as a consequence of the development of sugar plantations. Thomas Gage described Puebla and its outskirts in 1648 commenting how that area “abounded” with,

Sugar-farms; among the which, not far from this City, there is one so great and populous [...] that for the work only belonging unto it, it maintained in my time above two hundred Black-more Slaves, men and women, besides their little Children.¹³⁰

These plantations were also home to a large population of *Anopheles* and possibly *Aedes* mosquitoes. Research indicates that a minor recent rise in temperature can create an environment suitable to this mosquito in these areas. Researchers have located scattered populations of *Aedes aegypti* in Mexico at high altitudes. They also found that “potential larval development sites were abundant in Puebla City and other high-elevation communities,” and suggested that a rise in temperature would allow the mosquito to become abundant.¹³¹ Only few mosquitoes were present in Puebla, but the authors located over fifty-times more in nearby Atlixco, which the authors classify among the places “with robust *Ae. aegypti*

Hygiene 87, 5 (2012): 902-909, accessed 29/04/14,
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22987656>.

¹²⁹ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 32-33.

¹³⁰ Gage, *A New Survey*, 82.

¹³¹ Lozano-Fuentes et al., “The Dengue Virus Mosquito”.

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populations.”¹³² On foot Atlixco is less than eight hours away from Puebla, while Izúcar, a major sugar producer, is less than fifteen hours away. This proximity increased the odds of outbreaks of malaria and yellow fever in Puebla in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The same was true of Mexico City as the sugar producing regions in present-day state of Morelos are twenty hours away on foot from Mexico City. These distances would have been an absolutely negligible distance for *A. aegypti* because they are able to traverse long distances, even across oceans, since “their affinity for water casks make them good stowaways on board ships, allowing eggs, larvae, and full grown mosquitoes to travel across seas and oceans.”¹³³ With supplies flowing into both Mexico City and Puebla daily from their respective surrounding hinterlands, there would have been no shortage of possibilities for them to reach the cities.

Once introduced in the larger cities, the mosquitoes (as well as the plasmodia and viruses they carried) would have found suitable environments to proliferate. Canals of essentially still putrefied water, into which the inhabitants would throw out their refuse, crisscrossed Mexico City. Being adjacent to tens of thousands of humans and livestock, this created an ideal ecosystem for *Anopheles*. The San Francisco river in Puebla would have also been a suitable home and breeding ground for these mosquitoes. As for yellow fever, its vector *Aedes aegypti* “is closely associated with humans and human habitation [...] [in] that [it] feeds almost exclusively on humans and exploits artificial containers as sites to deposit her eggs.”¹³⁴ McNeill lists “wells, cisterns, open barrels, buckets, or pots,” as breeding areas that “suit it nicely.”¹³⁵ Being two of the most populated cities in the Americas at the time, both cities had a ready supply of such containers and large numbers of humans and other animals for the mosquitoes to feed on.

¹³² Veracruz, Córdoba, Coatepec, Orizaba, Río Blanco, Ciudad Mendoza, Xalapa, Acultzingo, and Atlixco, were the cities where the researchers found ≥ 149 *Ae. aegypti* identified to species per community. See table 2 in Saul Lozano Fuentes et al. “The Dengue Virus Mosquito”, accessed 29/04/14, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3516267/table/T2/>.

¹³³ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 42.

¹³⁴ Lozano-Fuentes, “The Dengue Virus Mosquito”.

¹³⁵ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 40-41.

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For most of the year, while not ideal, the temperature in both Mexico City and Puebla is warm enough to accommodate both *A. aegypti* and anophelines. According to McNeill, *Aedes aegypti* “need temperatures above 10°C to survive, above 17°C to bite, and above 24°C to feel their best. Their ideal range is 27-31.”¹³⁶ As for *Anopheles*, a recent study found that mortality among these mosquitoes was lowest in temperatures from 20 to 26°C.¹³⁷ Temperature data for Mexico City during the rainy season from June to October—when mosquitoes are most active—collected since the 1950s show that temperatures can range from 20 to 27°C.¹³⁸ In Puebla, it ranges from 25 to 29°C.¹³⁹

There are no temperature data for the eighteenth century, but it is reasonable to assume that the temperatures were similar, even though the climate was drier. At the end of the so-called Little Ice Age (ca. 1550-1850), New Spain experienced a series of severe droughts, aggravated in the mid-to-late eighteenth century,¹⁴⁰ to the point that Georgina Enfield and Sarah O’Hara call this period “The Little Drought Age.”¹⁴¹ There was a sharp rise in the price of maize in the second half of the 1730s, indicating adverse weather conditions, possibly related to drought.¹⁴² It

¹³⁶ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 42.

¹³⁷ Lindsay M. Beck-Johnson, William A. Nelson, Krijin P. Paaijmans, Andrew F. Read, Matthew B. Thomas, Ottar N. Bjørnstad, “The Effect of Temperature on *Anopheles* Mosquito Population Dynamics and the Potential for Malaria Transmission”, *PLoS ONE* 8 (11) (2013).

¹³⁸ Comisión Nacional del Agua, Servicio Meteorológico Nacional, “Normales Climatológicas, Distrito Federal, estación 9006 Tacuba 7”, accessed 15/07/2014, http://smn.cna.gob.mx/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=179&tmpl=component. Tacuba 7 is located in the historic downtown.

¹³⁹ Comisión Nacional del Agua, Servicio Meteorológico Nacional, “Normales Climatológicas, Puebla, estación 21035 Puebla (DGE)”, accessed 15/07/2014, <http://smn.cna.gob.mx/climatologia/Normales5110/NORMAL21035.TXT>.

¹⁴⁰ Sarah O’Hara and Sarah Metcalfe, “Reconstructing the climate of Mexico from historical records”, *The Holocene* 5 (4) (1995): 485-490. See also Susan L. Swan, “Mexico in the Little Ice Age”, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 11, 4 (1981): 633-648.

¹⁴¹ Georgina Endfield and Sarah O’Hara, “Conflicts Over Water in ‘The Little Drought Age’ in Central Mexico”, *Environment and History* 3 (3) (1997).

¹⁴² The price of maize climbed from eleven reales per *fanega* in November 1736 to sixteen reales in May 1737, according to Enrique Florescano, *Precios del maíz y crisis agrícolas en México 1708-1810* (Mexico: Ediciones Era, 1986, originally published in 1969), 43, 194. Florescano also shows that towards the end of the 1700s there were even more acute rises in the price of maize.

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would seem that these droughts would have been detrimental to mosquito development; however, according to McNeill,

With *Anopheles* mosquitoes drought can help create population surges that intensify risks of malaria. Serious drought kills off most *Anopheles* mosquitoes but eliminates most of their predators, too. In the aftermath, once rains return *Anopheles* are much quicker to re-colonize formerly dried-up wetlands than are their enemies. In a wet year after a drought year, *Anopheles* strength can be twenty times greater than normal, which would often create malaria epidemics where none could exist otherwise.¹⁴³

Throughout the eighteenth century El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events affected climate in central New Spain drastically.¹⁴⁴ Continued warming and altered weather patterns may have contributed to growth in the population of mosquitoes, especially in places like Mexico City and Puebla, where stagnant water was available without the need for rain.

The most likely scenario is that mosquitoes of both the *Aedes aegypti* and *Anopheles* were able to thrive under such conditions. Thus I argue that at certain moments the conditions were right for a large population of *Aedes aegypti* and anophelines to develop and trigger an epidemic of a combination of malaria and yellow fever. In his analysis of Caribbean epidemics, McNeill argues that “nothing prevented *A. aegypti* and anophelines from sharing the available supply of human blood and infecting people with both yellow fever virus and malarial plasmodia.”¹⁴⁵ I argue this is what happened in the late 1730s when the population of central New Spain endured one of the most severe epidemics of the late colonial period. Either one of these diseases or both acting in unison may have caused the 1736-1739 epidemic known as *matlazahuatl*, mentioned in chapter three. Since this was probably only one of such epidemics, I present it here only as an example, with the purpose of arguing that there were diseases in central New Spain that

¹⁴³ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 60.

¹⁴⁴ Georgina Endfield, “Archival explorations of climate variability and social vulnerability in colonial Mexico”, *Climatic Change* 83 (1) (2007): 11.

¹⁴⁵ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 62.

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affected the non-African descended population more than the rest of the population. This contributed to the absorption of *chinos* into castas associated with people of African descent.

Matlazahuatl literally translates as “net-like rash,” from the Nahuatl words *matlatl* meaning “net,” and *zahuatl* meaning “rash.”¹⁴⁶ However, contemporary witnesses of the 1730s episode do not mention rashes as part of the symptoms. Several scholars have tried to determine what the disease of the epidemic was without reaching consensus.¹⁴⁷ Miguel Ángel Cuenya argues that the 1736-1739 outbreak was a plague epidemic.¹⁴⁸ According to América Molina del Villar,

Los historiadores, médicos y epidemiólogos han sostenido una prolongada discusión en torno a la definición del matlazahuatl. En la colonia, se consideraba que se trataba del famoso tabardete, tabardillo o fiebre tifoidea. [...] Finalmente, se consideró que el matlazahuatl era diferente al tabardillo y se asemejaba más al tifo europeo.¹⁴⁹

Elsa Malvido rejects that it was typhoid fever, pointing instead to “una marcada ictericia,” a case of epidemic hepatitis, characterized by jaundice caused by liver and kidney damage.¹⁵⁰ She also supports this argument by stating that most of those affected were men over the age of 18, and notes that the effects of the epidemic were aggravated by endemic malnutrition and exploitative labor systems.¹⁵¹ All these factors are true for malaria and yellow fever, the latter affecting adults almost exclusively. Yellow fever causes jaundice and liver damage, mostly affects adults, and it is endemic of lowland regions. Malaria also causes jaundice and, while it affects children more severely, there is a correlation between

¹⁴⁶ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 143.

¹⁴⁷ Malvido, “Factores de despoblación”; Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 147; América Molina del Villar, *La Nueva España y el Matlazahuatl, 1736-1739* (Mexico and Zamora, Mich.: CIESAS, El Colegio de Michoacán, 2001), 57-60. Cuenya and Molina del Villar list yellow fever as one of the hypotheses proposed, but incline towards other diseases.

¹⁴⁸ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles*.

¹⁴⁹ América Molina del Villar, “Las prácticas sanitarias y médicas en la ciudad de México, 1736-1739. La influencia de los tratados de peste europeos”, *Estudios del hombre* 20 (2005): 54, n. 4.

¹⁵⁰ Malvido, “Factores de despoblación”, 54, n. 5.

¹⁵¹ Malvido, “Factores de despoblación”, 55.

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this disease and the aggravating circumstances (malnutrition and overwork) that Malvido describes. The effects of the epidemic were most damaging among *indios* with many *barrios* losing a large portion of its population.¹⁵² This is consistent with McNeill’s description that:

Malaria often kills people who are already weakened by other conditions, such as malnutrition, another disease, or compromised immune system. Unlike yellow fever, it is more dangerous to children than to adults.¹⁵³

For these reasons, I argue that the 1730s *matlazahuatl* was probably a combination of an epidemic of yellow fever and malaria. The main chronicler of the epidemic, Cayetano Cabrera y Quintero, wrote that many thought the epidemic was a case of “la peste de los Puertos [...] el que dicen vómito prieto, y a juicio de algunos, era el que más se le parecía, y solo menor en traer más remisos los síntomas.” This author mentions the intermittent fevers, “Tercianas,”¹⁵⁴ that the affected suffered, a typical symptom of malaria.¹⁵⁵ “Vómito prieto” was the term employed in Spanish to refer to yellow fever in reference to one of the symptoms, vomiting of coagulated blood, “often roughly the color and consistency of coffee grounds: the black vomit.”¹⁵⁶

The symptoms as described by Cabrera y Quintero,

Todos generalmente dicen acontecerles un continuado y universal frio, que sienten en todo el cuerpo, con grave incendio en todas las entrañas: lo que explican diciendo tener un Volcan de fuego en el estomago, intestinos graciles, y todo lo restante de la cavidad natural, declarando al mismo tiempo granve estorvo, dolor,

¹⁵² Cuenya, “Peste en una ciudad novohispana”, 56. Cabrera Quintero writes that the affliction occurred “especialmente entre los *indios*”, in *Escudo de Armas*, 37.

¹⁵³ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 53.

¹⁵⁴ Cayetano de Cabrera y Quintero, *Escudo de Armas de México: Celestial protección de esta nobilísima ciudad, de la Nueva España, y de casi todo el Nuevo Mundo, María Santísima, en su portentosa imagen del mexicano Guadalupe, milagrosamente aparecida en el palacio arzobispal en el año de 1531 y jurada su principal patrona el pasado de 1737* Lib. I, chapter VII (Mexico: Viuda de D. Joseph Bernardo de Hogal, 1746), 43.

¹⁵⁵ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 52-53.

¹⁵⁶ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 33.

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anxiedad, fatiga, ardor, y compresion en la cavidad vital y region del Corazon, con vehemente dolor de cabeza, y rubor de ojos intenso.¹⁵⁷

are consistent with McNeill’s explanation of the symptoms of malaria:

The symptoms of malaria include shivering chills, high fever, sweats, bodily pains and malaise [...] Different forms of malaria bring fever and chills at different intervals [...] Malaria often brings an elevated heart rate, a mild jaundice, and an enlarged spleen or liver.¹⁵⁸

Many of the affected people, including chinos, worked in obrajes and, in fact, the epidemic is said to have started in an obraje. Miguel Ángel Cuenya asserts that the fact that the “fiebre extraña y mortal” first broke out in an obraje in Tacuba (near Mexico City) relates to the proliferation of rodents and lice that found the large deposits of wool ideal for their development.¹⁵⁹ He uses this information to support his argument that the 1736-1739 outbreak was an epidemic of the plague. Cuenya finds a correlation between obrajes and the patterns of dissemination of the disease, stating that in Puebla, “se registran las primeras defunciones debidas al matlazahuatl en la parroquia de San José, que concentraba en su jurisdicción un alto número de hilanderos y tejedores, lo cual no resulta casual.”¹⁶⁰ However, obrajes also employed water for washing and dyeing the textiles. Concentrating many workers, the likelihood of there being open containers filled with water where *A. aegypti* could breed was high. These conditions were also good for temperatures and humidity to be higher than outside the obraje, further benefiting the reproduction of the mosquitoes. Being part of the workforce of the obrajes in Mexico City, Tacuba, Coyoacán, and especially Puebla, as shown in previous chapters, the chinos were exposed to the disease from the beginning.

¹⁵⁷ Cabrera Quintero, *Escudo de Armas*, 37.

¹⁵⁸ McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 52-53.

¹⁵⁹ Miguel Ángel Cuenya, “Peste en una ciudad novohispana. El matlazahuatl de 1737 en la Puebla de los Ángeles”, *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 53 (2) (1996): 55, n. 9.

¹⁶⁰ Cuenya, “Peste en una ciudad novohispana”, 55, n. 9.

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Chinos lived in some of the areas that were most affected by the disease. In Puebla alone, the matlazahuatl killed, according to Cuenya, over 15 percent of the population of the city. 3,330 people, or just over 43 percent of all those who perished during the outbreak, lived in Analco. The second parish by number of deaths was Sagrario, with just over 23 percent of those killed.¹⁶¹ It is worth remembering, as discussed in chapter four, that most *chinos* poblanos lived in the Analco and Sagrario parishes, along the San Francisco river. Chinos with Amerindian and Asian descent that lived near the river would have been close to the breeding grounds of *Anopheles* along its banks, and more at risk of perishing than *chinos* with mixed Asian and African descent.

While the epidemic attacked people with diverse ethnic backgrounds, being a relatively small part of the population, the non-Afrodescended *chinos* were more likely to be wiped out by an epidemic, or a series of epidemics than other groups. Particularly with diseases such as malaria and yellow fever, they were genetically worse equipped than their fellow Afrodescended *chinos* to resist infection. Thus it is likely that malaria and yellow fever were partially responsible for what Slack calls “the metamorphosis of the Asian *chino* into the African *chino*,” which was complete by the mid-to-late eighteenth century, as Asian *chinos* probably died off faster in epidemics.¹⁶² In such epidemics, *chinos* with no heritage from people from places where they were endemic were more likely to perish. This process contributed to the growing proportion of *chino* with “African” physical traits.

¹⁶¹ Cuenya, *Puebla de los Ángeles en tiempos de*, 206.

¹⁶² Slack, “The *Chinos* in New Spain”, 65.

CHAPTER 6

REPRESENTATIONS OF ASIA AND ASIANS IN NEW SPANISH LITERATURE

In this chapter I analyze representations of Asia and Asians as a recurring theme in New Spanish literature derived from the Manila Galleon. The literary aspect represents the culmination and neglected legacy of the transpacific exchanges discussed throughout this thesis. These sources enrich the overall analyses developed in the previous chapters, as they provide a unifying thread for the history of the Manila Galleon that starts with the earliest sixteenth-century descriptions of Asia published in Mexico and circulated throughout the Americas and Europe, continues with the consolidation and profitability of the trade route, described in a number of poems, the presence of Asian merchants and diplomats recorded in Mexican chronicles, the treatment of *chinos* in New Spain, and concludes with the legacies of the Manila Galleon towards the turn of the nineteenth century. The texts discussed in this section bring together the many types of transpacific exchanges analyzed previously, ranging from the material and immaterial imprint in New Spanish culture, to demographic consequences of the Manila-Acapulco link, to the configuration of late-colonial representations of Asia.

I survey a series of literary works that were created in or circulated in the American territories of New Spain. Such texts were a cultural by-product of the Manila Galleon. The chief argument is that writers in New Spain were inspired by news about people and places in Asia, particularly China, when expressing their

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thoughts about their own place in the world. The titles discussed in the following sections exemplify a tradition of representations of Asia and Asians in New Spanish literature. Asia became a recurring theme in New Spanish literature to such an extent, that it became a major feature in what many critics consider the first Mexican novel: José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi's (1776-1827) *El Periquillo Sarniento*.¹ The abundant references to Asia and Asian migration in this novel represent the culmination of 250 years of continental New Spanish curiosity and concern about the Pacific and Asia. For this reason, and because the novel became an important precedent for Mexican literature created thereafter, I organize the discussion of the various literary works through an analysis of Lizardi's context and sources, in order to take a thematic, rather than a chronological approach.

The relationship between this and previous chapters is that Asian immigrants and sojourners in the viceroyalty were featured in a wide range of texts written, printed, or circulated in New Spain from the late sixteenth until the early nineteenth century. I show that Asian migration emerges persistently in this corpus, and thus some of these sources serve to further illustrate the place in society and New Spanish perceptions and representations of Asians, *indios chinos*, and *chinos*; analyzing these sources is a methodological innovation to the study of the Asian diaspora. Rather than simply isolating and describing these sources, I present them alongside a wider context to more effectively argue that the Manila Galleon had cultural repercussions that went beyond the realm of material culture. Thus, on a deeper level, the history of the literary manifestations of the transpacific trade route relates to the history of migration because it also shows specific ways macro-historical processes affected the lives and thoughts of individuals.

As shown in chapter one, extant analyses on transpacific cultural exchange between Asia and New Spain focus primarily on material culture—essentially, the impact of imported Asian luxury items in the development of New Spanish

¹ I use Carmen Ruiz Barrionuevo's edition of *El Periquillo Sarniento* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1997, originally published in 1831). The title of novel has been translated to English as *The Mangy Parrot*. A recent translation is José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, *The Mangy Parrot: the life and times of Periquillo Sarniento: written by himself for his children*, trans. David L. Frye (Indianapolis IN: Hackett Publishing, 2004).

utilitarian art—and neglect the literary dimension. This has limited the fields of academic discussion where Manila Galleon scholarship can make valuable contributions. For example, the Manila Galleon's role in the development of literature is ignored in works such as Kommers' study of the importance of literature produced by Pacific explorations and the development of travel novels.² While scholars like Hsu, Knowlton, Hagimoto, Sánchez, López Lázaro, Locklin, among others, have dealt with specific texts that represent parts of the continuum I analyze in this chapter, this is an attempt at a comprehensive history of Manila Galleon literature.

My approach is to select a canon of various literary works written between 1565 and 1816 where Asia or Asians are featured. The chief argument in this chapter is that *El Periquillo* included extensive passages set in Asia, an Asian main character, and descriptions of an ideal society based on China, to a great extent because the novel was produced in a context where dozens of authors had written about Asia for nearly two-and-a-half centuries.

The canon is comprised of works from a variety of genres including poetry, *relaciones*, chronicles, sermons, theatre plays, protonovels, and novels. The basic selection criterion is that all the texts must contain passages that derive from information and knowledge produced by Iberian interactions with Asian peoples and polities and/or transpacific trade and demographic exchanges. Some of the works are directly related to Lizardi's work, while others represent the context of New Spanish intellectual concern about Asia and the Pacific in which it was written. I admit that, as with any canon, this one is not definitive. The purpose is not to present every single text about Asia produced in New Spain, but to show a different dimension of the magnitude of Manila Galleon cultural exchanges and migration.

² J. Kommers, "The Significance of 18th-century Literature about the Pacific for the Development of Travel Literature", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 144 (4) (1988): 478-493.

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In the first section I discuss the representations of Asia and Asian migration in Lizardi's *El Periquillo Sarniento*. I briefly describe the basic characteristics of the novel and its place in the corpus of work by its author, and proceed to a discussion of how Lizardi implemented the Manila Galleon as a major plot device. The core of this section is an analysis of *Sacheofú*, an ideal society based on China, which Lizardi uses to mirror and criticize New Spanish society, a trend visible in authors from other contexts during the eighteenth century. Lastly, I discuss Limahotón, a character in this novel who is a chino from Sacheofú that migrates to Mexico City.

The second section is about the broader context of works that, while not directly related to Lizardi's novel, influenced the development of Asian themes in New Spanish literature. I briefly discuss the evolution of literature in Spanish America and analyze various examples from different genres that feature ideas about Asia. I discuss epic poetry about Mexico City with numerous references to Asia and Asian trade, and the representations of Asia and the presence of Asians in mainland New Spain in the works by Chimalpáhin, Palafox, the biographers of Catarina de San Juan, and several other authors.

Section three is about the earlier texts that directly inspired the Asian chapters of *El Periquillo*. I synthesize the history of texts such as González de Mendoza's famous *Historia de China*, and further the argument, previously developed by Knowlton and Hagimoto, that Lizardi took many elements of his narrative from sixteenth century chronicles.

Section four discusses in detail an important literary precedent of *El Periquillo*, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, a text that sometimes disputes the title of "first Latin American novel" with Lizardi's *magnum opus*. It was written by Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645-1700) from the narration of the title character, Alonso Ramírez. *Infortunios* features a circumnavigation of the globe involving the Manila Galleon and some descriptions of port cities and regions in Asia. But most importantly, *Infortunios* includes a commentary on chino slavery, closely related to Lizardi's own views about slavery expressed in an episode set in Manila. I argue that the abolition of chino slavery, discussed at-length in chapters two, four, and five,

facilitated the very existence of *Infortunios* and that this text reveals New Spanish views about chinos and their bondage.

Section five discusses texts inspired by the life of missionaries in Asia. I first outline the strong connections between New Spain and Asia fostered by members of religious orders. I then focus on the literature inspired in the missionary accomplishments of Jesuit Francis Xavier (1506-1552) and Franciscan Felipe de Jesús (1572-1597). I show the relationship between these texts and Lizardi, who received his education from the Jesuits and thus certainly knew the life of Francis Xavier, and was the author of a panegyric sermon dedicated to Felipe de Jesús. Moreover, Lizardi compares Felipe de Jesús to the protagonist of *El Periquillo Sarniento* in the novel.

In the last section I turn to the more contemporary sources of Lizardi's representations of Asia and Asians. I briefly outline the context of representations of Asia, and China in particular, in the eighteenth century. I highlight works by Benito Jerónimo Feijoo (1674-1764) whose sinophile nature, I argue, was directly influential in Lizardi's writings.

6.1 *Sacheofú*: a Chinese heterotopia in New Spain's intellectual history

In this section I examine the presence of transpacific trade, Asia, and Asians in Lizardi's novel. I briefly outline how Lizardi published and distributed his novel, and the censorship it was subjected to. I then discuss the banishment of the protagonist, Pedro Sarniento, or Perico, to Manila as a plot device readers would have been familiar with. Lastly I examine *Sacheofú*, an imaginary island Lizardi invented to criticize New Spanish society, and *Limahotón*, the most important Asian character in the novel.

The journeys of the Manila Galleon did not stop in 1813-1815 with the abolition of the trade route. A transpacific passage appeared on the pages of what some critics consider to be the first Spanish American novel: José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi's *El Periquillo Sarniento*. Lizardi (1776-1827) was born in Tepozotlán and

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became an influential journalist and writer who worked in the time of Mexico's transition from Spanish colony to independent nation. He is regarded as one of the ideologues of Mexican independence and liberalism. An accomplished journalist, Lizardi is also known as *El Pensador mexicano* (the Mexican Thinker) after the homonymous newspaper he founded and edited from 1812 to 1814.

El Periquillo Sarniento is his most famous work. A precursor to Mexican *costumbrismo*, this novel belongs in the long picaresque tradition of Hispanic narrative. It is a series of episodes written with clear pedagogical intent; a first-person cautionary narrative told by its protagonist, Pedro Sarniento, to his children to warn them of the consequences of ill behavior. Pedro is nicknamed Perico or Periquillo Sarniento, a play on words of his name, and a reference to his tattered green frock coat and yellow shirt, which resembled the plumage of a parrot with scabies. In the novel, Perico travels across central New Spain, is employed in a variety of occupations, cheats and steals to survive, all the while criticizing Spanish colonial institutions and authorities. Eventually, his crimes result in his exile to the Philippines where he remains for eight years before setting on a journey back to Mexico. Eventually he renounces his criminal past, reforms and ends his life in virtue. *El Periquillo* became a very important book since the early years of Mexican independence, as evidenced by the fact that the first Mexican president, Guadalupe Victoria, paid for the paper used in the second edition of the first of five tomes of the novel in 1825.³

Before receiving the patronage from the leader of the fledgling nation, *El Periquillo* first appeared in loose chapters. The chapters that configured the first three tomes were published by 1816.⁴ The fourth tome, which was ready for publication at the time, would not see the light for another fifteen years, because it contained some of the author's harshest critiques to the Spanish colonial establishment, most importantly, an argument against slavery.⁵ When all five tomes of the novel were

³ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 95; Jefferson Spell, "A Textual Comparison of the First Four Editions of *El Periquillo Sarniento*", *Hispanic Review* 31 (2) (1963): 134-135.

⁴ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 95.

⁵ Carmen Ruíz Barrionuevo, introduction to *El Periquillo Sarniento*, by José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi (Madrid: Cátedra, 1997), 12-13; Spell, "A Textual Comparison", 134.

finally published together in 1831⁶ (the third edition of the novel), the editors decided to include the original ruling censoring the fourth tome, in order to showcase “la arbitrariedad del gobierno español en esta América.” It reads:

He visto y reconocido el cuarto tomo del *Periquillo Sarniento*: todo lo rayado al margen en el capítulo cuarto en que habla sobre los negros, me parece sobre muy repetido, inoportuno, perjudicial en las circunstancias [the context of the Mexican war for independence], e impolítico por dirigirse contra un comercio permitido por el rey; igualmente las palabras rayadas al margen y subrayadas en el capítulo sexto [donde Perico fantasea sobre su ascenso social hasta el puesto de virrey] deberán suprimirse; por lo demás no hallo cosa que se oponga a las regalías de S.M., y V.E., si fuere servido, podrá conceder su superior licencia para que se imprima. [...] Hágase saber al autor que no ha lugar a la impresión que solicita.⁷

The fragment of the novel vindicating the humanity of “negros” and denouncing the injustice of slavery that so disgusted the censors is set in Manila, a fact that highlights the importance of Asia within the narrative.⁸

In the novel, the protagonist finds himself in the position of surrogate civil servant in an indio town near Mexico City, a position of authority he uses to extort and blackmail the townsfolk under his care. Perico’s crimes are discovered and denounced to the authorities in the capital. He is put in prison, and sentenced to serve as a conscript in Manila. Perico describes how,

No tuve con qué disculparme; me hallé confeso y convicto, y la real sala me sentenció por ocho años al servicio del rey en las milicias de Manila, cuya bandera estaba puesta en México por entonces.⁹

Contemporary readers of the novel were aware that this was a common type of punishment in mainland New Spain. Throughout the entire colonial period, the

⁶ Ruiz, introduction, 12-13.

⁷ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 721.

⁸ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 722-735.

⁹ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 685.

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Philippines were persistently in need of soldiers, and authorities across the viceroyalty did as much as they could to respond to this necessity. Chalca chronicler Chimalpáhin recorded in his *Diario* in 1596 español soldiers leaving Mexico City “para la China, para California, para Nuevo [o] Antigua México, para la Habana y para la Florida.”¹⁰ He also recorded an instance of forced recruitment and banishment to the Philippines in 1615, writing how:

Se llevaron de [la ciudad de] México a 209 forzados, españoles que estaban presos, vagabundos y algunos culpables de homicidio, más algunos negros, algunos mulatos, algunos mestizos y cinco indios naturales, los cuales eran conducidos a la China por la justicia; todos ellos iban encadenados y con las manos atadas.¹¹

Chimalpáhin narrates how seventy of the recruits escaped from prison and took shelter in the mountain ranges to the south of Mexico City. The viceroy organized a party of 50 españoles and 300 indio archers to hunt them down.¹² Four of the fugitives were spotted trying to sneak back into Mexico City. After some resistance, the authorities were able to capture and execute them. Chimalpáhin recorded how their bodies were cut to pieces, their heads and right hands set on spikes in front of the viceroy’s palace.¹³ This gruesome episode reveals that a sentence to service in Manila was such a harsh form of punishment that some of those convicted chose to resist and die rather than face their transpacific confinement.

This was the reason why remittances of men to the archipelago did not always meet the highest standards. For example, a governor of the Philippines complained in 1646, that a group of recruits were “muchachos que el mayor no pasa de doce años que no sirven de embarazo y gasto.”¹⁴ Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century, as María García de los Arcos has shown, a large portion of transpacific migration from the New Spanish mainland to the Philippines were

¹⁰ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 63.

¹¹ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 397-399.

¹² Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 399.

¹³ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 399-401.

¹⁴ AGN, Reales Cédulas Originales, vol. 3, exp. 93, f. 166. Cited in Sales Colín, *El movimiento portuario de Acapulco*, 47, n. 45.

criminals and recruits sent to the islands.¹⁵ A fraction of them were volunteers, some trying to flee from their obligations in their homeland, as in the case of Manuel de Sauza, whose fiancée denounced in 1761 for trying to leave her “con cinco hijos para irse a China.”¹⁶ The shipment of criminals and recruits to the Philippines was a lasting historical reality that inspired Lizardi and informed his readership.

The story of Perico’s exile and return to Mexico comprises book four of the novel. This segment contains the most subversive elements of Lizardi’s critique to the colonial system. As previously stated, it is in Manila where Perico witnesses a debate that convinces him of the immorality of slavery. The importance of the Manila Galleon for Mexican entrepreneurs is showcased in this portion of the novel when Perico fantasizes about climbing the social ladder to become viceroy of Mexico by investing the money he hoped to obtain from Asian products he obtained in Manila and planned to sell in Acapulco.¹⁷ This portion of the novel tightly links *Periquillo* to the Manila Galleon. Hagimoto has studied the presence of Asia and Asian trade in the novel in detail. Hagimoto points out the references in the novel to transpacific trade and argues that Asia is presented in the novel as a space where the possibility of upward social mobility materializes for its protagonist.¹⁸ In other words, Manila is a place where Perico can aspire to a better position in society. Perico plans to enrich himself trading Chinese products in Mexico through the Galleon. With the profits he expects to earn from this operation he fantasizes he will be able to become viceroy of New Spain¹⁹—a veiled critique to the practice widespread in New Spain of influence peddling for access to high office, opposite to Sacheofú’s system favoring personal merit. Asia is a blank canvass where Lizardi can draw out the basic guidelines for the ideal society he envisions for New Spain itself. Along the same lines, literary scholar Javier Sánchez Zapatero synthesizes this point stating that:

¹⁵ García de los Arcos, *Forzados y reclutas*.

¹⁶ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 6208, exp. 32 (1761).

¹⁷ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 744-760.

¹⁸ Koichi Hagimoto, “A Transpacific Voyage: The Representation of Asia in José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi’s *El Periquillo Sarniento*”, *Hispania* 95 (3) (2012): 392.

¹⁹ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 745; Hagimoto, “A Transpacific Voyage”, 394

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Aunque en la novela *Periquillo* conoce muchos ambientes novedosos, es a lo largo de su travesía naval narrada en ella cuando más se concreta ese acercamiento a una nueva sociedad y a unos hombres desconocidos hasta entonces para él.²⁰

According to Sánchez it is Lizardi's critical intent that led him to create Sacheofú.²¹ The censors extricated from the 1816 version of *Periquillo* the episodes of the novel set in Asia, where Lizardi frontally criticizes the institution of slavery and develops Sacheofú as the ideal opposite to New Spain.²² These were some of the more subversive passages in the novel, the ones that made it an anti-colonial novel in earnest. Critic Nancy Vogeley characterizes *Periquillo* as an anti-colonial novel suggesting that the positive representation of the behavior and values of the colonized society *vis-à-vis* the colonizer "help[ed] Mexicans to consider decolonization."²³ In the censored fourth tome of the novel, Lizardi ascribes a positive industriousness to Asian societies and drawing a parallel between them and European Protestant nations:

Muchas naciones han sido y son ricas sin tener una mina de oro o plata, y con su industria y trabajo saben recoger en sus senos el que se extrae de las Américas. La Inglaterra, la Holanda y la Asia son bastantes pruebas de esta verdad; así como es evidente que las mismas Américas, que han vaciado sus tesoros en la Europa, Asia y África están en un estado deplorable.²⁴

The reader would immediately contrast this idea to the Spanish colonial system based around the exploitation of precious metals, silver in particular. Underlying

²⁰ Javier Sánchez Zapatero, "Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias de *El Periquillo Sarniento*, de José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi", *Espéculo. Revista de estudios literarios* 34 (2006), accessed 11/06/2013,

<https://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero34/psarnien.html>.

²¹ Sánchez, "Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias".

²² Ruíz, introduction, 12-13.

²³ Nancy Vogeley, *Lizardi and the birth of the novel in Spanish America* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2001), 86.

²⁴ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 713.

these passages are Lizardi's aspiration for his society to evolve into a different paradigm. However, resistance to change also characterizes the Spanish colonial system depicted by Lizardi. The author of a classical study on the origins of nationalism, Benedict Anderson, asserts that what typifies *Periquillo* as an anti-colonial novel is its narration of a solitary hero through 'adamantine social landscapes', which are common in similar works.²⁵ Throughout the novel, Anderson argues, *Periquillo* presents a collection of descriptions that configure what is 'Mexican' as opposed to what is foreign.²⁶ This renders *Periquillo* a nation-building novel, which influenced subsequent ideologues of Mexican nationalism and the course of the history of ideas in Mexico.

The place of the novel in the nation-building Mexican tradition makes it all the more noteworthy that 15% of its plot is set in places in Asia, both real and fictional. Most importantly, the fourth tome features Sacheofú, an imaginary island home to a utopian society where Perico is cast away when the vessel taking him to Mexico sinks. While Sacheofú represents continuity with narratives produced during the Enlightenment expressing admiration for China, it was also a break from the imaginary that represented China in a negative light, which also originated in the eighteenth century, but was becoming ubiquitous around the time the novel was published in its full version in 1831, on the eve of the First Opium War (1839-1842). This makes Sacheofú one of the latest nineteenth-century encomiastic depictions of China written in a European language.

In the novel, Perico's ship sinks en-route back to mainland New Spain. The protagonist is washed away onto an island in the Pacific called Sacheofú. Lizardi imagines Sacheofú as a Pacific island home to a utopian society and compares it to New Spain in a way somewhat similar to English authors who wrote about Pacific islands in utopian terms, imagining "places of reflection on the character of the

²⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Nueva York and Londres: Verso, 2006, originally published in 1983), 38.

²⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 30-32; Hagimoto, "A Transpacific Voyage", 391.

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mother country.”²⁷ However, Sacheofú is different from eighteenth-century essentializations of the South Pacific inspired in Rousseau’s “noble savage,” “a fantasia on island culture [that] recurred through the twentieth century [...] with the popularity of ‘tiki-culture’ from the 1950s.”²⁸ Lizardi’s is a representation of China or, more precisely, a Chinese province or colony because he uses it to criticize a Spanish colony: his native viceroyalty of New Spain. Instead of “noble savages,” a sophisticated people lived in Sacheofú organized into a complex meritocratic society. The character Limahotón embodies these values. This character accompanies Perico on his voyage back to New Spain, where he amasses considerable wealth selling pearls and develops an interest in New Spain.²⁹

Although it is frequently described as a utopia, Sacheofú can be better defined as a heterotopia. This term was coined by Michel Foucault to refer to a place or space of otherness that constitutes a physical representation or approximation to a utopia.³⁰ Sacheofú is an island where people created idyllic social customs and institutions that Lizardi wishes to be commonplace in his native New Spain. Thus it serves as a mirror to highlight New Spain’s administrative, legislative, judicial, and cultural shortcomings; Sacheofú is a literary device that Lizardi exploits to criticize Mexican society. For example, Lizardi criticizes the New Spanish *hidalgos* or idle lesser nobility. When Perico explains what a hidalgo is the Sachelouans are utterly unable to even comprehend how such kinds of people are allowed in New Spain. In Sacheofú a person’s value is determined by his or her contributions to society, in stark contrast to Lizardi’s perception of his own society, where a noble lineage was the fundamental marker of someone’s social status. Unlike what Lizardi sees happening in Mexico, in Sacheofú, society is meritocratic, vagrancy does not exist, and, as critic Sánchez observes, “la productividad manda por encima de todo, no se

²⁷ David Mackay, “Myth, Science, and Experience in the British Construction of the Pacific,” in *Voyages and Beaches: Pacific Encounters, 1769-1840*, eds. Alex Calder, Jonathan Lamb, and Bridget Orr (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 108.

²⁸ Gulliver, “Finding the Pacific World”, 87.

²⁹ Limahotón expresses his bewilderment at how people value so highly superfluous things such as the very pearls he sells.

³⁰ Michel Foucault, “Des Espace Autres. Hétérotopies”, *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 46-49. An analysis of utopia in *El Periquillo Sarniento* is in Luis Sainz, “La utopía en *El Periquillo Sarniento*”, *Dicenda. Cuadernos de Filología Hispánica* 6 (1987): 509-523.

consienten clases improductivas ni parásitos sociales y todos los habitantes tienen un empleo.”³¹ Additionally, above everything else, state control ensures justice and order.³² Specific descriptions of Sacheofú are further discussed in the following sections in relation to the sources that inspired them.

After living for a time on the island, Perico manages to prepare his voyage back to his native Mexico. An official of Sacheofú called Limahotón decides to accompany him, under the false pretenses that Perico is a nobleman with considerable wealth back in New Spain. In book five, after an uneventful crossing to Acapulco they set on the road to Mexico City. Once settled in the viceregal capital Perico takes advantage of Limahotón’s ignorance of his true status. When the truth is revealed “el chino”—as Limahotón is called throughout most of the episodes he appears in—graciously decides to retain Perico as his personal aid. The protagonist takes advantage of his generosity once again and dilapidates the money Limahotón starts to make selling pearls he brought from his homeland. Eventually Perico’s behavior forces him to leave his masters house. After that, the protagonist wanders the streets like a beggar, and eventually joins a band of highwaymen. Most of the members of the band are eventually killed and when Perico sees one of them hung for his crimes, he reforms. After some time living a life of virtue, the protagonist reencounters and again befriends Limahotón.

Another strong indication of Lizardi’s keenness of using Asia and Asians as plot devices emerges in the last chapters of the novel. When “el chino” decides to return to his homeland he pays a visit to Perico to say goodbye. In their last meeting Limahotón reveals that he has been writing “unos cuadernos” detailing noteworthy customs and descriptions of New Spanish society. Limahotón says, “lo que escribí fueron unos apuntes críticos de los abusos que he notado en tu patria,” which he then sent to the ruler of Sacheofú.³³ Perico ponders how interesting they could be and unsuccessfully tries to acquire the original drafts. This detail is interesting, because it could be a way for Lizardi to tease his audience with a new

³¹ Sánchez Zapatero, “Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias”.

³² Hagimoto, “A Transpacific Voyage”, 397.

³³ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 914.

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book based on those fictional notes written by Limahotón. It is possible Lizardi was planning to write a spin-off text, perhaps framed with a fictional serendipitous emergence of Limahotón's annotations. At the end of the novel, Lizardi uses the same literary device for *El Periquillo* itself, writing himself into the novel as a character who takes Perico's annotations about his life to produce the novel after the protagonist's death, and while admitting "es verdad que don Pedro escribió sus cuadernos con el designio de que sólo sus hijos los leyeran; pero por fortuna éstos son los que menos necesitan su lectura," decides to publish them claiming that "en México [...] y en todo el mundo hay porción de Periquillos a quienes puede ser más útil esta leyenda por la doctrina y la moral que encierra."³⁴ It is impossible to determine why Limahotón's descriptions of New Spain were never published, but if Lizardi did not at least consider writing them, their mention in *El Periquillo* seems rather arbitrary. It is clear Lizardi was fond of the idea of presenting these sorts of devices to criticize the shortcomings of his own society.

Lizardi's sources for the peculiar imaginary world of Sacheofú and characters like Limahotón were varied. In the following sections I analyze the antecedents of Sacheofú starting with an overview of the emergence of an Asian theme in New Spanish literature.

6.2 Contextualizing *El Periquillo Sarniento*: Asia in the literature of New Spain

In this section, I examine various texts from different genres that while informing the New Spanish imaginary about Asia did not directly influence *El Periquillo*. The analysis of the literary works selected for this canon warrants a brief description of the literary context that produced them. In particular, the development of the novel in Spanish America is most relevant in relation to Lizardi. Raquel Chang-Rodríguez synthesizes academic debates surrounding the lack of development of the novel in this time and place. She argues that for a long time scholars considered the prohibition of importation of "libros de entretenimiento" into the colonies hindered its development. Later on, she continues, the reasons given were 'scant

³⁴ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 938.

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urban development, absence of a bourgeoisie, and the idea that the Spaniards were so busy living their own adventures to find time to write about others. Chang-Rodríguez argues that another factor was the consumption of literary works from Spain, a profitable enterprise for booksellers, which left little need for locally produced narratives.³⁵ Chang-Rodríguez asserts that narrative prose had a peculiar evolution. She claims that in these narratives:

lo histórico, lo anecdótico y lo autobiográfico le imparten al relato una particular tensión y una estructura *sui géneris*. Dignas de seria consideración al trazar el desarrollo de la prosa narrativa hispanoamericana.³⁶

Spanish American prose developed, she continues, into a field where:

como en cajón de sastre, encontramos cartas, relaciones, memoriales, crónicas, obras en que predomina lo histórico, junto a protonovelas, novelas y cuentos.³⁷

Chang-Rodríguez argues that this tendency to hybridity delayed the emergence of the Latin American novel, pointing out that merely one percent of all the extant works published in New Spain are literary works, while eighty-one percent are religious works.³⁸ These observations notwithstanding, during the colonial period a number of works surfaced that, as Sánchez argues, despite not being full-fledged novels echoed in Lizardi's literature.³⁹

Lizardi's admiration for China was rooted in New Spain's long relation to Asia through the Manila Galleon. During its 250-year run, together with immigrants, silks, spices, and porcelain, the vessels from Manila that dropped anchor in

³⁵ Raquel Chang-Rodríguez, *Prosa hispanoamericana virreinal* (Barcelona: Borrás Ediciones, 1978), 5.

³⁶ Chang-Rodríguez, *Prosa hispanoamericana*, 5.

³⁷ Chang-Rodríguez, *Prosa hispanoamericana*, 6.

³⁸ Chang-Rodríguez, *Prosa hispanoamericana*, 21.

³⁹ Sánchez, "Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias".

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Acapulco brought with them ideas and news from Asia that influenced the evolution of literature in central New Spain.

In this sense I find Bernardo de Balbuena's (1561-1627) famous poem *La Grandeza Mexicana* (1604) particularly interesting, because in its lines the material and immaterial aspects of the Galleon's cultural influence overlap, as the author celebrates the richness and outreach of Mexico City's commercial links. Balbuena writes an ode to the riches of Mexico City and enumerates products from every corner of the world that could be found in the city. Naturally, among these products there is Asian merchandise. Balbuena mentions specifically clove from Ternate, cinnamon from Tidore, diamonds from India, ivory from Goa, ebony from Siam, silk from China, "y la loza del sangley medroso."⁴⁰ The poet celebrates that Mexico City traded in the best products, "la nata," from the Philippines, precious objects from Macao, and "riquezas peregrinas" from Java.⁴¹ Balbuena noted in his poem Mexico City's strategic position at the crossroads of trade routes that linked Spain and China fueled with Mexican silver:

de tesoros y plata tan preñada [Nueva España],
que una flota de España, otra de China,
de sus sobras cada año va cargada⁴²

Mexican historian and scholar Agustín de Vetancurt (1620-1700) revisited the idea that New Spain—together with Peru—was a vital center of the world economy thanks to mineral wealth in 1698, when he wrote:

Porque si Roma es la cabeza del mundo, y Castilla la de sus reinos y señoríos, la Nueva España y el Perú son dos pechos donde Roma, Castilla, Italia, Nápoles, Milan [sic.], Flandes, Alemania, China, etc., y las demás provincias del mundo se sustentan de su sangre convertida en leche de oro y plata.⁴³

⁴⁰ Bernardo de Balbuena, *La Grandeza mexicana y Compendio apologético en alabanza de la poesía* (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1971, originally published in 1604), 114-115.

⁴¹ Balbuena, *La Grandeza mexicana*, 114-115.

⁴² Balbuena, *La Grandeza mexicana*, 115.

⁴³ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1, 47.

Once again, China is explicitly mentioned as part of the network linking New Spain to the rest of the world economy. A few lines ahead Vetancurt talks about Chinese silks and porcelain and Indian spices as part of the products available in Mexico City.⁴⁴ Vetancurt cites Navarrete's treatise of China⁴⁵ to discuss the beauty of Chinese pearls,⁴⁶ and to include Chinese rivers in his description of the great waterways of the world.⁴⁷ He describes fruits from Manila, India, and China,⁴⁸ and claims that "de China se trujo [a Nueva España] la semilla de unas naranjas mayores que toronjas."⁴⁹ When talking about resins found in New Spain, he mentions a resin from "India oriental" and, citing Navarrete, he discusses a resin taken from a great tree in the city of "Fuexo" which the Chinese used to make candles dressed in silver and gold which they light "en sus templos a los ídolos."⁵⁰ In this treatise there are also numerous references to the Philippines and the products exchanged between the archipelago and mainland New Spain.⁵¹ He also mentions the expeditions in the Pacific led by Hernán Cortés, Pedro de Alvarado, and Ruiz López de Villalobos.⁵²

Returning to the genre of epic poetry, it is worth commenting the work of Arias de Villalobos (1568-?), the author of a famous panegyric about Mexico City, *Canto intitulado Mercurio*, written in 1623, in which he calls the Pacific the "Mar Sangley."⁵³ In his poem Villalobos also alluded to the martyrs "Que á Luzón y a Japón, las venas llama, / Rotas con lanza, en cruz del Taiko-zama [Toyotomi

⁴⁴ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, 48. He later writes: "La canela [...] lo más común es traerla de la India Oriental de Vindanao, una de las islas Molucas, y la mejor de Ceilán", 149.

⁴⁵ Domingo Fernández de Navarrete, *Tratados Históricos, Políticos, y Morales de la Monarquía de China* (Madrid: 1676). Digital version transcribed by Mar Capmany, accessed 18/03/2014, <http://www.upf.edu/asia/projectes/che/s17/tratado1.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1, 69.

⁴⁷ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1, 95.

⁴⁸ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1, 127.

⁴⁹ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1, 130-131.

⁵⁰ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1, 153-154.

⁵¹ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 1. He mentions iron (59-60), peaches (126), lumber (142), aromatic resins (152), and birds and various plants (170, 197-198).

⁵² Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol 2, 214, 240.

⁵³ Arias de Villalobos, *El Canto intitulado Mercurio*, ed. Genaro García in *Autógrafos inéditos de Morelos y causa que se le instruyó. México en 1623 por el bachiller Arias de Villalobos* (Mexico: Librería de la Vda de Ch. Bouret, 1907), 188.

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Hideyoshi].”⁵⁴ This is a reference to the Franciscan missionaries and Japanese Christians executed in Japan in 1597.⁵⁵ In *Mercurio* there is also a reference to the practice of sending criminals to Manila as punishment.⁵⁶ The fact that both Balbuena and Villalobos alluded to Asia in poems, which exemplify “how creoles exalted their ‘patria’ as the new, civilizing core of the West,”⁵⁷ shows that the phenomena catalyzed by the Manila Galleon played a role in the configuration of the idealized image of New Spain in literature. Another epic poem that could be included in this legacy is *Historia de la Nueva México* (1610) by Pueblan Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà (1555-1620). A member of Juan de Oñate’s expedition to New Mexico, in his stanzas Villagrà suggests that the ancestors of all Amerindians came originally “de la gran China.”⁵⁸ Agustín de Vetancurt advocated the same idea and listed his evidence to support his claim:

Algunos fundamentos hay para decir que procedieron de chinos estos indios de Nueva España. El primero es la poca distancia que hay desde el reino de la China á la primera tierra firme de Nueva España, el reino de Anian y la Quivira. El segundo es la idolatría, porque adoran infinitas cosas los chinos como los indios. Lo tercero en que cuentan los meses por las lunas como los de la Nueva España. Lo cuarto, usan de cordeles y ramales con nudos en lugar de letras, como los del Perú; y usan de caracteres de pintura como los de México: al enterrarlos les ponen algunas cosas de comer y algunas riquezas, creyendo que en la otra vida les ha de

⁵⁴ Villalobos, *El Canto intitulado*, 216.

⁵⁵ I further discuss this event and the literature it inspired further later in this chapter.

⁵⁶ “A no haber tan sin tasa vagabundos / Que comen juegan, visten y damean / Tuviera esta ciudad, en los dos mundos, / Los bienes que en el otro se desean. / Con China pagan solos los segundos, / Que los primeros roban y capean; / Y a muchos sirven de hacer pandillas, / Juegos de trucos, bolas y bolillas.”, Villalobos, *El Canto intitulado*, 271.

⁵⁷ José Antonio Mazzotti, “Epic, Creoles, and Nation in Spanish America”, in *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, eds. Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer (Malden, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 494. See also Elizabeth B. Davis, “La épica novohispana y la ideología imperial”, in *Historia de la literatura mexicana: La cultura letrada en la Nueva España*, eds. Raquel Chang-Rodríguez and Beatriz Garza Cuarón (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1996), 138-144; and Margarita Peña, “Epic Poetry”, in *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature. Vol. 1 Discovery to Modernism*, eds. Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 231-259.

⁵⁸ “[...] para mi yo tengo que salieron / De la gran China, todos los que habitan, / Lo que llamamos Indias”. Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà, *Historia de la Nueva México*, eds. Miguel Encinas, Alfred Rodríguez, and Joseph P. Sánchez (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992, originally published in 1610), 17.

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aprovechar para las necesidades de ella, y esto mismo hacen en la Nueva España y el Perú. En China no heredan los hijos á los padres, sino los sobrinos de hermana; y la razon que dan es, que no tienen cérteza de que son ciertos, porque no tienen mujeres señaladas, y esto se observa en la Nueva España y en el Nuevo Reino de Granada [...] También hay en China gente de pocas barbas y que aborrecen las letras, á los indios parecidos.⁵⁹

China in the sixteenth century lured European merchants and missionaries. Manel Ollé argues that, during the first decades of Spanish presence in East Asia, China was an object of desire in terms of its potential as an arena for missionary, imperial and commercial expansion for both the Spanish and the Portuguese.⁶⁰ But in order to reach Asia, many were forced to cross the American territories of New Spain. This is why the existence of the Manila Galleon, according to Luke Clossey, transformed Mexico City into a key center of recollection, edition and publication of information about China, addressed both to American and European audiences.⁶¹ Since central New Spain was a necessary part of the itinerary of many of those seeking to reach Asia, the authors of a number of *Relaciones* about Asia first traveled through Mexico. It was in this context of constant circulation of news and information that many texts surfaced in New Spain dealing directly or indirectly to China in particular, and Asia in general, many featuring the presence of Asian immigrants in the viceroyalty.

One these authors was Antonio de Morga, a high-ranking officer in New Spain, Perú and the Philippines in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, who published his famous *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* in Mexico City in 1609.⁶² The same year, a Spanish official in Manila and nephew of the viceroy of New Spain, Rodrigo de Vivero y Aberrucia (1564-1636), was cast away on the coasts of Japan. He wrote extensively about Asia in a series of letters entitled *Relación y noticias de*

⁵⁹ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. I, 225-226.

⁶⁰ Ollé, "El imperio chino", 322. See also John Headley, "Spain's Asian Presence, 1565-1590: Structures and Aspirations", *Hispanic American Historical Review* 75 (4) (1995): 623-646.

⁶¹ Clossey, "Merchants, migrants, missionaries", 41.

⁶² De Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*.

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el Reino de Japón (1609) where he recommended a more energetic involvement of the Spanish Crown in the region.⁶³

Asia also influenced an author writing in a language other than Spanish, the Chalca chronicler San Antón Muñón Chimalpáhin (1579-1660), mentioned in chapters one and two.⁶⁴ He wrote in his *Diario*, composed in Mexico City during the first half of the seventeenth century, about the rebellion of the Chinese of Manila in 1605, writing that:

El 8 de octubre de 1605 se supo que había habido [muchos] muertos en la China, cuando hace un año, en la fiesta de San Francisco, ocurrió una batalla; y no murieron tantos españoles, pero sí murieron muchos naturales de aquellas tierras llamados sangleyes.⁶⁵

In *Diario*, Chimalpáhin also wrote about the sinking of the ship that transported the viceroy's son from Manila to Acapulco in 1610,⁶⁶ and described the members of a Japanese embassy sent to Mexico City in 1610:

El jueves 16 de diciembre de 1610, a las 6 de la tarde, llegaron y entraron a la ciudad de México 19 japoneses; los conducía un señor noble, embajador por el emperador del Japón. [...] De los japoneses que vinieron, unos eran ya cristianos, y otros todavía paganos, pues no estaban bautizados. Todos ellos venían vestidos como allá se visten: con una especie de chaleco y un ceñidor en la cintura, donde traían su katana de acero que es como una espada, y con una mantilla; las sandalias que calzaban eran de un cuero finamente curtido que se llama gamuza, y eran como guantes de los pies. No se mostraban tímidos, no eran personas apacibles o humildes, sino que tenían aspecto de águilas [fieras]. Traían la frente reluciente, porque se rasuraban hasta la mitad de la cabeza; su cabellera comenzaba en las sienes e iba rodeando hasta la nuca, traían los cabellos largos, pues se los dejaban

⁶³ Gruzinski, *La ciudad de México*, 289-297; Manuel Romero de Terreros, "Relación de Japón", *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía* 1 (1934): 67-111.

⁶⁴ Chimalpáhin wrote his *Diario* in Nahuatl. I use the Spanish translation in order to ease comprehension.

⁶⁵ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 104-105. See Serge Gruzinski, *Las cuatro partes del mundo: Historia de una mundialización* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010), 146.

⁶⁶ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 207.

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crecer hasta el hombro cortando sólo las puntas y parecían doncellas porque se cubrían la cabeza, y los cabellos no muy largos de la nuca se los recogían en una pequeña trenza. [...] No traían barbas, y sus rostros eran como de mujer, porque estaban lisos y descoloridos; así eran en su cuerpo todos los japoneses y tampoco eran muy altos, como todos pudieron apreciarlo.⁶⁷

Chimalpáhin wrote that the leader of the Japanese delegation was received with “great honors” by the viceroy and offered a place to stay for him and his men at the convent of San Agustín in Mexico City.⁶⁸ Two of the Japanese were baptized in the church of San Francisco in January 1611 in a solemn ceremony witnessed by a large crowd including representatives of every religious order in the city.⁶⁹

Three years later Chimalpáhin witnessed a similar scene: the arrival of the 1614 Keicho embassy on its way to Europe. The chronicler described it thus:

El martes 4 de marzo de 1614 nuevamente vinieron y llegaron a la ciudad de México unos principales de Japón, los cuales entraron a caballo a las 12 horas del día. Delante de ellos avanzaban a pié sus súbditos, que llevaban levantados unos palos delgados y negros; ¿serán sus lanzas?, ¿qué podrán significar?, ¿no serán acaso en Japón [insignias] que preceden a los señores? Venían ataviados como acostumbran ataviarse en su tierra, con una especie de toga atada por detrás y con la cabellerarecogida en la nuca; eran [como] 20 los que ahora llegaron a [la ciudad de] México. Por el camino habían dejado al embajador enviado por el emperador del Japón, el cual venía más despacio; él traía consigo a 100 súbditos japoneses y a un padre religioso de San Francisco que le servía como intérprete. Ésta era la segunda vez que una nao de japoneses aportaba en las costas de Acapulco; traían muchos [objetos] de hierro, escritorios y algunas vestimentas para vender acá. En la misma nao de Japón venía también el señor Sebastián Vizcaíno, español vecino de México, quien había ido a ver cómo era Japón, cuando acompañó a los otros japoneses que hace tres años vinieron con Rodrigo de Vivero, que había sido gobernador de la ciudad de Manila en la China. El dicho señor Sebastián Vizcaíno

⁶⁷ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 217-221. See also Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 108.

⁶⁸ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 221.

⁶⁹ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 223-225.

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también venía despacio, pues estaba enfermo, ya que en Acapulco lo hirieron acuchillándolo [algunos de] los japoneses, y, según se supo en México, [eso fue] porque traía a su cargo la custodia de todos los presentes y regalos que el emperador de allá había dado para saludar y obsequiar con ellos al Santo Padre que está en Roma, a nuestro señor el rey que está en España y al señor virrey que está aquí en México; todos esos regalos y dones estaban bajo su custodia, pues en sus manos los puso [el emperador] para que los trajera acá, y no se los dio en custodia al dicho embajador.⁷⁰

Chimalpáhin described how the leader of the diplomatic mission, Hasekura Tsunenaga stayed “en una casa junto a la iglesia de San Francisco” and noted “a este embajador [...] lo envió el emperador de Japón para que vaya a Roma a ver al santo padre Paulo V y a dar la obediencia a la Santa Iglesia, pues todos los japoneses desean hacerse cristianos.”⁷¹ To Chimalpáhin, the conversion of the Japanese was the most relevant aspect of the embassy. In this entry the chronicler draws parallelisms between Christians and civilization, and non-Christians and barbarism, writing “quienes han andado perdidos [viven] como gente ruda entre varales, zacatales, llanos y montes” and noting that “ya hay [en Japón] muchos cristianos.”⁷² The chronicler described how twenty members of Hasekura’s retinue were baptized in the church of San Francisco, “y fueron sus padrinos los padres ancianos de los frailes franciscanos,” and how the archbishop baptized another twenty-two Japanese two weeks later.⁷³ The archbishop confirmed the new Christians in the cathedral.⁷⁴ Chimalpáhin, however, was also aware of the commercial aims of the embassy writing that the emperor of Japan, “le está proponiendo al dicho rey que reside en España que no se hagan la guerra sino que siempre se estimen, a fin de que los japoneses puedan venir a México a vender y comerciar.”⁷⁵ He noted that when Hasekura’s embassy left for Europe a group of Japanese were left behind in Mexico City “para que aquí [se quedaran] a mercadear

⁷⁰ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 365. See León-Portilla, “La embajada de los japoneses en México”.

⁷¹ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 367.

⁷² Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 367.

⁷³ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 369, 371.

⁷⁴ Chiamlpáhin, *Diario*, 371.

⁷⁵ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 367-369.

como comerciantes.”⁷⁶ According to Chimalpáhin, Hasekura, “por indicaciones del virrey tomó aquí en Mexico a un español [...] para que fuera su secretario, porque conocía la lengua de los japoneses ya que siendo solado había vivido entre ellos.”⁷⁷ This entry recording the ambassador’s ability to recruit a man capable of speaking Japanese further demonstrates the interconnectedness of Mexico City with Asia.

The last connection between this author and the Manila Galleon occurred in 1615. Chimalpáhin recorded the threat posed by a group of pirates marauding in the vicinity of Acapulco. The chronicler describes the sighting of “piratas ingleses, malvados herejes” along the coast, the drafting of a militia sent to protect Acapulco, and the prayers in Mexico City for divine intervention against them.⁷⁸

Two other authors previously discussed in chapter two mention Asian immigrants in Mexico City. Thomas Gage (c. 1597-1656) wrote about Asian goldsmiths working there in the twelfth chapter of his *New Survey of the West Indies*.⁷⁹ In chapter seven of *Viaje a Nueva España*,⁸⁰ Gemelli Careri (1651-1725) described a brawl between involving a “cofradia de indios chinos.” The indios chinos were fighting another cofradia over precedence to enter the city’s main square during a procession in Maudy Thursday.⁸¹

Juan de Palafox (1600-1659), bishop of Puebla, interim archbishop of Mexico and viceroy of New Spain, and royal *visitador*, wrote about China. As shown by Clossey, during the seventeenth century, New Spain conferred authority to authors writing about China, due to a perceived proximity between these two territories.⁸² According to Clossey, in Palafox’s case, the bishop argued that the supposedly short distance between his Puebla diocese and China conferred him the right to be

⁷⁶ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 377. Chimalpáhin mentions them again in 389, and 397.

⁷⁷ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 377.

⁷⁸ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 411.

⁷⁹ Gage, *New Survey of the West Indies*.

⁸⁰ Part of Careri’s, *Giro del mondo del dottor D. Gio. Francesco Gemelli Careri* 6 vols. (Naples: Stamperia Di Giuseppe Roselli, 1699-1700).

⁸¹ Careri, *Viaje a la Nueva España*, 73.

⁸² Clossey, “Merchants, migrants, missionaries”.

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named bishop of China.⁸³ Palafox, a Dominican, became entangled in conflict with the Jesuits. One point of contention was difference of opinion on the issue of the Chinese Rites Controversy; a theological dispute between sympathizers and detractors of allowing Chinese Catholic converts to continue venerating their ancestors. While the Jesuits favored this measure, arguing it would serve missionary success in China, Palafox was adamant in his opposition.⁸⁴ Palafox also wrote a history of the Manchu invasion of China that toppled the Ming and established the Qing dynasty in 1644.⁸⁵ Anna Busquets argues that Palafox based his account on information gathered in Mexico and Chinese informants residing in Puebla.⁸⁶ In the first chapter of this work, Palafox draws similarities between the hardships suffered by the Ming and the Spanish Monarchy, alluding to rebellions in Ming China prior to the invasion, and moaning the separation of Portugal and the Catalan rebellion in the Spanish domains:

Estando el Imperio de la China en su mayor grandeza [...] comenzó a sentir el Imperio algunos vaivenes en el año de mil seis cientos y quarenta: Año fatal à muchos Imperios, y famoso con varias conspiraciones y revueltas de Reynos, que se fraguaron è executaron en ese año.⁸⁷

Also linked to the city of Puebla and to the history of Asian migration in New Spain, the biographies of Catarina de San Juan are also part of the history of the representations of Asia in New Spanish literature, as mentioned in chapter three. The first is a sermon written by Jesuit Francisco de Aguilera for her funeral in 1688, and published again in 1692, which covers her life and some of her visions. This was the only text Aguilera dedicated to a contemporary of his.⁸⁸ The second is an extensive biography written by Jesuit Alonso Ramos published in three large volumes in 1689, 1690 and 1692,⁸⁹ respectively, making it the longest biography

⁸³ Clossey, "Merchants, migrants, missionaries", 43.

⁸⁴ Cummings, "Palafox, China and the Chinese".

⁸⁵ Palafox, *Historia de la conquista de la China*.

⁸⁶ Busquets, "La entrada de los manchús", 456.

⁸⁷ Palafox, *Historia de la conquista de la China*.

⁸⁸ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 88.

⁸⁹ Ramos, *Primera, segunda y tercera parte*; Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 26; Tibón, "Las dos chinas", 11.

ever published in New Spain⁹⁰ and, according to Miguel Ángel Cuenya and Carlos Contreras, it was Ramos' most important work.⁹¹ The third is another biography by José Castillo Grajeda published in 1692, and again in 1767.⁹² The latter two authors were Catarina's confessors. Complementing these sources, Olimpia García Aguilar located a document⁹³ containing the autobiography of Castillo Grajeda, in which he provides a few more details about her life and character⁹⁴. According to García, all of her biographers were especially fascinated with Catarina de San Juan⁹⁵. Castillo Grajeda's admiration of her was such that he respected her views on his own conduct, and even sought her for advice.⁹⁶

As shown in chapter three Catarina de San Juan's biographies include representations of Asia, and describe the place of Asian immigrants in New Spanish society. Many lines suggest chinos were stereotyped as greedy and cheating, befitting their lowly social status in the view of their detractors.

Towards the end of her life she experienced bilocations, visions of out-of-body journeys, that took her, according to Bailey, on 'long-distance voyages to the nations of the Americas and Asia'⁹⁷, in which she 'viewed the nations of the world as if she were walking on the pages of a Renaissance atlas, reflecting the increasing global awareness and aspirations of her society'⁹⁸. In the 1680s she traveled to Japan, India, Central Asia, Arabia, and China in her visions,

Corrió [...] con su entender, y conocimiento infusso, en estos dias, muchas Ciudades, Provincias, y Reynos del Oriente, distinguiendo las tierras pertenecientes á la China, Tartaria, y de los Reinos de el Japón; los del Mogor [the

⁹⁰ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 9; García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 60; Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 39.

⁹¹ Cuenya and Contreras, *Puebla de los Ángeles*, 240.

⁹² Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 26; García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 57.

⁹³ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1515, exp. 3, ff. 1-186v (1792).

⁹⁴ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 52.

⁹⁵ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 89.

⁹⁶ García, "Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo", 70-71.

⁹⁷ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 68.

⁹⁸ Bailey, "A Mughal Princess", 40.

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Mughals], de la Arabia, é India; señalando, y midiendo la longitud, y distancia de unas, y otras Monarquías.⁹⁹

She travelled to the presence of the emperor of China whom she “sprinkled [in] his face with the blood of Christ and made the sign of the Cross on his forehead.”¹⁰⁰ She witnessed theological debates between Jesuits and pagan lords in Japan.¹⁰¹ This scene reveals the Jesuit’s aspirations to convert Asian societies from the top down. Ramos took the opportunity of his retelling of her visions of Asia to emphasize the missionary exploits of the Jesuits in Asia.¹⁰² Offshore trade of New Spain also occupied her thoughts as she envisioned the safe arrival or, conversely, the perils endured by ships and cargoes arriving in Acapulco and Veracruz.¹⁰³ She had visions of indigenous uprisings in New Mexico, arrival and departure of important officials in New Spain, and battles won and lost by the Spanish Monarchy.¹⁰⁴

No woman in the history of New Spain received as much attention from biographers as did Catarina de San Juan.¹⁰⁵ Especially blessed religious or lay individuals were not uncommon in New Spain. Since the middle of the sixteenth century, numerous men and women from the lower social strata had, according to Antonio Rubial García, “una activa participación en la dirección espiritual y en el fomento de variadas prácticas religiosas de clérigos y laicos.”¹⁰⁶ This researcher identified forty-four women, many of them tried by the Inquisition, who were “beatas autónomas,” blessed women who were not part of the religious establishment, living in New Spain in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.¹⁰⁷ Rubial García suggests there must have been many more such women,

⁹⁹ Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 68.

¹⁰⁰ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91.

¹⁰¹ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91.

¹⁰² Ramos, *Primera, segunda y tercera parte*, 159, f.173; Bailey, “A Mughal Princess”, 68.

¹⁰³ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91.

¹⁰⁴ Maza, *Catarina de San Juan*, 91-92.

¹⁰⁵ García, “Catarina de San Juan y su biógrafo”, 52. See also chapter one “Orientalism and Mexican Nationalism: Catarina de San Juan as the China Poblana’s Asian Model”, in Locklin, “Orientalism and the Nation”, 42-82.

¹⁰⁶ Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 18.

¹⁰⁷ Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 31.

who went unrecorded.¹⁰⁸ As for the men, it is worth highlighting the case of one hermit because, like Catarina de San Juan, he represents a connection between Puebla and Asia. Diego de Santos Ligerero was a hermit active in the Puebla region in the middle of the seventeenth century. Santos Ligerero set sail to the Philippines to accomplish his dream of finding martyrdom in Japan. When he failed in that endeavor, he returned to Puebla with an image of the Virgin that 'made him famous.'¹⁰⁹ A contemporary panegyric prayer was based on him.¹¹⁰

Earthly events that occurred in the Pacific also captured the imagination of New Spanish authors, and were the subject or were mentioned in texts printed in Mexico. Carlos de Sigüenza y Gongora and Alonso Ramírez's *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* (1690) is perhaps the best example of this and will be discussed in detail below. A Spanish naval victory in the Pacific inspired Juan de Goycochea to pronounce a sermon to celebrate the event at the Mexico City cathedral. It was published in 1710 as *Naval triunfo de la Argos China conseguido por su Jasson el General D. Fernando de Ángulo, de tres fragatas de guerra inglesas en el Mar Pacífico*.¹¹¹ As discussed in chapter five, José Antonio de Villaseñor y Sánchez (1703-1759) recorded the presence of the descendants of Filipino immigrants in Acapulco and Coyuca in 1746 in this famous *Theatro Americano*, a survey of the geography of New Spain.¹¹²

After the expulsion of the Jesuits from the territories under the control of the Spanish Crown in 1767, Francisco Javier Alegre (1729-1788) wrote *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en Nueva España*. Alegre considered it relevant to include a lengthy description of the Philippines and a brief mention about Taiwan in this

¹⁰⁸ Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 38.

¹⁰⁹ Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 27.

¹¹⁰ Antonio González Lasso, *Oración panegyrica que en la traslación de las cenizas del venerable varón Diego de los Santos Ligerero, heremita en los desiertos de la ciudad de Tlaxcala...oró el licenciado...* in Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 27.

¹¹¹ Juan de Goycochea, *Naval triunfo de la Argos China conseguido por su Jasson el General D. Fernando de Ángulo, de tres fragatas de guerra inglesas en el Mar Pacífico* (Mexico: De Solano, 1994, originally published in 1710), 136.

¹¹² Villaseñor y Sánchez, *Theatro Americano*, 186. See also Espinosa Pitman, *José Antonio de Villaseñor y Sánchez*, 76.

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history published posthumously in Mexico City in 1841. He narrated the history of the archipelago from 1565 to the capture of Manila by the English in 1762.¹¹³

Finally, it is worth noting how dictionaries and grammars of Asian languages circulated in New Spain. Franciscan Melchor Oyanguren de Santa Inés (1688-1747) wrote a grammar of the Japanese language entitled *Arte de la lengua japona, dividida en quatro libros, según el Arte de Nebrixa*, and a Tagalog grammar, *Tagalysmo elucidado, y reducido (en lo posible) a la Latinidad de Nebrija*, both printed in Mexico City in 1738 and 1742, respectively.¹¹⁴ Oyanguren had served as missionary in Cochinchina and learned Japanese in Manila before his bad health forced him to settle in mainland New Spain after 1736. There he became president of the convent of San Agustín de las Cuevas—a place associated with chino migration, as discussed in chapter two—in 1744, and died in the convent three years later.¹¹⁵ His Japanese grammar is particularly noteworthy, since it was published nearly a hundred years after Christian missionaries had been expelled from Japan. It can be hypothesized that its readers hoped to re-enter Japan, used it to proselytize among the Japanese of the Philippines, or were compelled by a genuine philological interest in the Japanese language. One such reader could have been Insurgent leader José María Morelos y Pavón, who owned a Tagalog and a Japanese dictionary, according to an inventory of his personal belongings.¹¹⁶

The works discussed in this section illustrate a persistent concern about Asia in their authors. The existence of this context facilitated the emergence of texts such as *El Periquillo*. I now turn to other texts that have long been demonstrated to directly inspire Lizardi when creating *Sacheofú*.

¹¹³ Francisco Javier Alegre, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en Nueva España* (Mexico: Carlos María de Bustamante, 1841).

¹¹⁴ Melchor Oyanguren de Santa Inés, *Arte de la lengua japona*, ed. Otto Zwartjes (Madrid and Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana and Vervuert, 2009, originally published in 1738); Otto Zwartjes, introduction to Oyanguren, *Arte de la lengua japona*, 22; see also Calvo, “Japoneses en Guadalajara”, 546.

¹¹⁵ Zwartjes, introduction to Oyanguren, *Arte de la lengua japona*, 22.

¹¹⁶ Carlos Herrejón Peredo, *Morelos: vida preinsurgente y lecturas* (Zamora, Mich.: El Colegio de Michoacán, 1984).

6.3 From Juan González de Mendoza to Lizardi

Juan González de Mendoza's *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del Gran Reyno de la China* circulated throughout Europe widely and was, together with Domingo Fernández de Navarrete's description, a fundamental text in the history of European perceptions about and representations of China.¹¹⁷ While he never succeeded in setting foot in China, González de Mendoza prepared his book on China in Mexico. According to Manel Ollé this book, first published in Rome in 1585, would be reedited forty times in all the main European languages, and hugely impacted the European notion of China as a vastly rich country.¹¹⁸ González de Mendoza was also essential to Lizardi. Edgard Knowlton demonstrated, showing that González de Mendoza's *Historia del Gran Reino de la China* was Lizardi's primary source of inspiration for Sacheofú.¹¹⁹ As Sanchez argues, even though nearly 250 years separated *El Pensador* from sixteenth-century chronicles, and especially Gonzalez de Mendoza's, "son evocadas en varios pasajes de la obra."¹²⁰

These chronicles also included texts produced after a Spanish embassy to Fujian in 1575, a corpus previously analyzed in detail by Manel Ollé.¹²¹ The diplomatic expedition originated in the aftermath of pirate Lin Feng's raid on Manila. Lin Feng, rendered in the Spanish sources documenting the event as Limahon,¹²² had been raiding along the coasts of Fujian, and was thus persecuted by local Chinese authorities. The defenders of Manila barely managed to keep the pirates at bay and, subsequently, put him under siege. As a reward from their victory over Lin Feng, Fujianese authorities allowed an embassy from Manila, which the Spaniards hoped would be able to successfully negotiate the concession of a commercial enclave for Spain, similar to Portuguese Macao. Spanish aspirations for the enclave would

¹¹⁷ Richmond Ellis, "The Middle Kingdom through Spanish Eyes: Depictions of China in the Writings of Juan González de Mendoza and Domingo Fernández de Navarrete", *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 83(6) (2006): 469-483.

¹¹⁸ Ollé, "El imperio chino", 320-321.

¹¹⁹ Edgar Knowlton, "China and the Philippines in *El Periquillo Sarniento*", *Hispanic Review* 31 (4) (1963): 336-347.

¹²⁰ Sánchez, "Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias".

¹²¹ Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 53-63.

¹²² Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 53.

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ultimately failed when Lin Feng managed to escape his besiegers. The leader of the embassy, Augustinian Martín de Rada, and Miguel de Loarca, a soldier among his companions, wrote *relaciones* of their journey to Fujian.¹²³ Another member of the embassy was Jerónimo Marín, a native of central New Spain of European decent, whose *relación* of the expedition has not been located. Marín is important in the history of European perceptions about China because he served as informant to Juan González de Mendoza for the latter's book on China, which ultimately became the most influential title on the subject in Europe until the middle of the seventeenth century, when accounts by Jesuit missionaries took the lead.

While the events surrounding the embassy to Fujian were underway, in 1574, the Augustinians in the Philippines sent Diego de Herrera to Spain to convince king Phillip II to send an embassy to the Chinese emperor to foster commercial exchanges and aid the spread of Catholicism in China. Herrera, who was to lead the embassy to the Ming court, died in a shipwreck. Juan González de Mendoza was appointed in his stead. He managed to get Phillip II to send him to China with a letter and some presents for the emperor in 1580.¹²⁴ González de Mendoza had to traverse Mexico en-route to China. The king instructed him to contact Jerónimo Marín, who had recently returned to New Spain. González de Mendoza was to incorporate Marín into the embassy to take advantage of his first-hand knowledge of China.¹²⁵ It seems the two did meet in Mexico, however they were unable to proceed with their mission to the Ming court. While waiting for clearance to sail to Asia, the intrigue of royal officials in Manila persuaded the king to abort the project. Phillip II then instructed the viceroy of New Spain to auction the items sent as presents to the Chinese emperor in Mexico City.¹²⁶

¹²³ Manel Ollé, *La invención de China. Percepciones y estrategias filipinas respecto a China durante el siglo XVI* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 48-50, 71, 104.

¹²⁴ Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 85; Carmen Hsu, "Writing on behalf of a Christian empire: gifts, dissimulation, and politics in the letters of Philip II of Spain to Wanli of China", *Hispanic Review* 78 (3) (2010): 323-344.

¹²⁵ AGI, Filipinas, 339, L. 1, F. 195v-197v.

¹²⁶ AGN, Reales Cédulas Duplicadas, vol. D2, exp. 89.

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The basis for González de Mendoza's *Historia de China* were Rada and Loarca's *relaciones*, and he credited Marín as one of the main sources in the prologue.¹²⁷ This remarkable work is one of the earliest sources of Chinese migration to the Americas. In book three, chapter seven, Mendoza asserts that eighty-five Chinese merchants 'driven by greed' traveled to Mexico taking with them "curious wares."¹²⁸

As Knowlton demonstrated, when writing *Periquillo* Lizardi was inspired in the events surrounding the 1575 embassy to Fujian. Lizardi named his protagonist, Pedro Sarmiento, after one of the members of the embassy.¹²⁹ The real Pedro Sarmiento was encomendero in Bucaray and alguacil mayor in Cebu.¹³⁰ Another name in the novel inspired in people involved in the Fujian embassy is Limahotón. In the novel, Limahotón is a relative of the ruler of Sacheofú who befriends Perico and returns with him to live out his days in central New Spain. Knowlton proposes that Lizardi named this character after the pirate Lin Feng's name in Spanish sources: Limahón.¹³¹

Knowlton further demonstrates the relationship between the sixteenth-century chronicle and the nineteenth-century novel by showing similarities in the terms employed to describe positions in government in González de Medoza's *China*, and Lizardi's *Sacheofú*, such as *chaen* (visitador), *loitia* (caballero) and *tután* (virrey). Knowlton argues Lizardi took these terms directly from *Historia de China*.¹³² He also asserts that Lizardi's locating of *Sacheofú* on an island may have resulted from Mendoza's description of Shantou in Guangdong province, where he alludes to an island "llena de gran recreación."¹³³

González de Mendoza's image of China lent itself well to Lizardi's purposes. Both authors coincide in praising the Chinese legal system, which they consider to be

¹²⁷ Ollé, *La invención de China*, 48; Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 86.

¹²⁸ Mendoza, *Historia del Gran Reino de la China*.

¹²⁹ Knowlton, "China and the Philippines", 344; Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 57.

¹³⁰ Ollé, *La empresa de China*, 57-58.

¹³¹ Knowlton, "China and the Philippines", 343.

¹³² Knowlton, "China and the Philippines", 340.

¹³³ Knowlton, "China and the Philippines", 342.

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the crucial element that explained Chinese prosperity. Carmen Hsu argues that the Chinese legal system is in González de Mendoza's mind, "the most decisive factor contributing to [Chinese] socio-political greatness."¹³⁴ Lizardi aspires to the implementation of this model of direct and effective justice in New Spain and constructs his descriptions of the judicial system of Sacheofú based on González de Mendoza's description.¹³⁵ *El Periquillo* highlights social control mechanisms,¹³⁶ and Perico witnesses the expedite nature of justice and the ruthlessness of punishments criminals suffer.¹³⁷ Dolores Folch argues that González de Mendoza expresses a very positive opinion of the Ming legal system. According to Folch, what fascinated the sixteenth-century author were the elements of this system that were most dissimilar from legal practices in the territories of the Spanish monarchy, such as: public exhibition of torture, witness interrogation, fines, and the death penalty. Folch asserts that González de Mendoza highlighted the control the Ming state had over the officials in charge of procedures through a punishment and reward system.¹³⁸ Knowlton posits that Lizardi echoed this admiration when he described how sentenced criminals in Sacheofú were flogged "cruelísimamente en las pantorrillas."¹³⁹ Lizardi specialist Beatriz de Alba-Koch argues that the Pensador showed in these passages his sympathy for mutilation of criminals as means of social control. Alba-Koch asserts that this was an interpretation of the ideas on penal justice of authors such as Beccaria and Lardizábal.¹⁴⁰ In this sense, Lizardi followed along the lines of other Enlightenment authors' understanding of Chinese justice—Montesquieu, for example, was another enthusiast of the Chinese penal system.¹⁴¹

¹³⁴ Carmen Hsu, "La imagen humanística del gran reino chino de Juan González de Mendoza", *The Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 87 (2) (2010): 187-202.

¹³⁵ Knowlton, "China and the Philippines", 345-346.

¹³⁶ Beatriz de Alba-Koch, "'Enlightened Absolutism' and Utopian Thought: Fernández de Lizardi and Reform in New Spain", *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* 24 (2) (2000): 298.

¹³⁷ Hagimoto, "A Transpacific Voyage", 296.

¹³⁸ Dolores Folch, "Crime and Prejudice: Ming criminal justice as seen in XVIth Century Spanish sources" (paper presented at the 20th Annual World History Association Conference, Beijing, China, July 7-10, 2011).

¹³⁹ Knowlton, "China and the Philippines", 346.

¹⁴⁰ Alba-Koch, "'Enlightened Absolutism'", 300.

¹⁴¹ Alicia Relinque Eleta, "¿Perros o demonios? China en la *Historia Chinesca* de Forner", *Studi Ispanici* 33 (2008): 91-92.

The ideas in the texts discussed above were available to Lizardi when he composed *El Periquillo*. In Germany in the mid-to-late 1600s, printing of translations of several travel accounts to China, including González de Mendoza's *Historia*, triggered the publication of "several novels and dramas [...] that show Baroque Germany's fascination with an idealized, Christianized, China."¹⁴² Novels set in China or other parts of Asia may have emerged before in New Spain had it not been for the previously discussed restrictions on publishing as a whole that inhibited the development of the novel in the viceroyalty. It was the supposedly belated development in Spanish America of literature as a whole that delayed the appearance of the genre.¹⁴³ However, mentions and descriptions of Asia and Asians emerged in other genres, primarily in texts about the exploits of missionaries, and in a peculiar book called *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, discussed in section 6.5.

6.4 The personification of a Christian Asia: Francis Xavier and Felipe de Jesus

An analysis of the presence of Asia in New Spanish literature would be incomplete without inclusion of religious texts. This type of documents represents eighty-one percent of the works included in the *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos (1563-1766)* edited by Guadalupe Rodríguez.¹⁴⁴ Within this group, sermons and hagiographies represent forty-nine percent of the works published in New Spain accounted for in Rodríguez's catalogue.¹⁴⁵ The labor of two missionaries stands out over the rest among these: Jesuit Francis Xavier and Franciscan Felipe de Jesús. These two missionaries are the focus of this section, but I briefly outline the wider

¹⁴² Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 199.

¹⁴³ I found Roberto González Echevarría's differentiation between tradition and literary history useful to formulate this insight. Roberto González Echevarría, "A brief history of the history of Spanish American Literature", in *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature. Vol. 1 Discovery to Modernism*, eds. Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 7-32.

¹⁴⁴ Guadalupe Rodríguez Domínguez, ed., *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos (1563-1766) Vol. 12* (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana. Biblioteca Digital de Humanidades, 2012).

¹⁴⁵ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 22.

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context of religious connections between New Spain and Asia before dealing with the texts inspired in these figures.

Missionary activities were a substantial part of the information networks that linked New Spain with Asia. As Luke Clossey argues, “news of Chinese imperial decrees circulated in Mexico,” while Jesuit missionaries in Mexico “kept up a regular correspondence” with missionaries in China, and, in fact, at least in one instance, “news could travel from Taiwan to mendicants in Manila more rapidly via Mexico,” which, “shows how circuitous communications could be.”¹⁴⁶ This phenomenon translated into the appearance of numerous references to Asia and Asians across many works of New Spanish literature. As Sanabrais argues:

Individuals preparing for a governmental career in Iberia or the Spanish American colonies read the Jesuit tracts to familiarize themselves with the politics of the expanding empire. Numerous books and pamphlets appeared throughout Iberia and Spanish America that chronicled a number of key events in Asia, including the martyrdoms of Christians in Japan, the Japanese embassies of the seventeenth century to Europe and New Spain, the canonization of Francis Xavier in 1622, and the beatification of Mexico’s protomartyr San Felipe de Jesús in 1627.¹⁴⁷

Luke Clossey explores the role of Jesuits in propagating news about China in New Spain and provides two texts as examples. The first is *Historia de los triunfos de nuestra Santa Fe* where, Clossey argues, the author “defended the Jesuits against charges of a ministry limited to the rich and powerful, of which China stood as the

¹⁴⁶ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 194-196.

¹⁴⁷ Sanabrais, “The Biombo or Folding Screen in Colonial Mexico”, 70. A few pieces of archival evidence of constant flow of information about Asia in New Spain are: “Órdenes del visitador para que se revisen los asuntos que el Santo Oficio tiene en Acapulco, así como en el imperio chino”, AGN, Real Fisco de la Inquisición, vol. 36, exp. 11 (1654); “El cabildo eclesiástico de México opina sobre pleitos en China”, AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero Regular y Secular, caja 5470, exp. 56 (1687); “Algunos avances de China”, AGN, Inquisición, caja 1559B, exp. 247 (1692); “Noticias de China, tales como: parrafo de carta del padre Juan Lauvati, notificandole que el patriarca ha puesto otra misión; noticias del Padre Pedro Van Hame, del real colegio de Pequín, corte de la gran China”, AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero Regular y Secular, caja 5101, exp. 8 (1706); “Correspondencia desde Guatemala y Cantón”, AGN, Jesuitas, vol. IV-3, exp. 1-55 (1707).

foremost example,” while the second is a “collection of Jesuit letters from China [...] published in Mexico in 1650.”¹⁴⁸

New Spain was a monetary resource collection center for various religious enterprises across the globe. While Franciscans collected alms for their convents in the Holy Land,¹⁴⁹ the Jesuits sought financing for their missions in California and China.¹⁵⁰ This was both a reason for and a consequence of Mexico City becoming a hub in the Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan, and Augustinian global financial networks that linked Europe, the Americas, and Asia.¹⁵¹ In 1724, Augustinian Juan de Araujo, for instance, strove to raise “10.562 pesos [...] para sustento de los misioneros de Cantón.”¹⁵² In 1738 a priest called Manuel Pinto wrote to New Spain regarding “ayuda monetaria para los padres portugueses en la corte de China, para los condes cristianos y para el Colegio y Seminario de San José de Macao.”¹⁵³ Another “obra pía en China” collected 3.000 pesos in 1773.¹⁵⁴

Another instance is interesting because it discusses an *obra pía* founded in 1771 in Mexico City destined to the “rescate de niños chinos.” Its charter reads as follows:

Don José de Lagorria vecino y almacenero en esta ciudad [de México] [...] dijo que por cuanto fervoroso del deseo que tiene de la salvación de las Almas destinó de su propio caudal tres mil pesos de principal con el fin de que los ciento y cinquenta pesos de sus anuales reditos se remitan anualmente a la Provincia del Smo Nombre de Jesús de las Islas Philipinas de Religiosos Calzados de Nuestro Padre San Agustín para que los M R Pes Provinciales hagan misma remesa siempre y

¹⁴⁸ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 204. Clossey cites Andrés Pérez de Ribas, *Historia de los triumphos de nuestra Santa Fe entre gentes de las más bárbaras y fieras del nuevo orbe: conseguidos por los soldados de la milicia de la Compañía de Jesús en las misiones de la Nueva España* (Madrid: Alonso de Paredes, 1645), 408-409, 412; and “Summa del estado del imperio de la China, y christiandad del, por las noticias que dan los padres de la compañía de iesus, que residen en aquel reyno hasta el Año de 1649,” Archivo della Santa Congragazione per l’Evangelizzazione dei Populi, Rome, SOCG 193, fol. 119-130v.

¹⁴⁹ Karen Melvin, “Sites of Redemption: Jerusalem in Colonial Mexico” (paper presented at the World History Association 23rd Annual Conference, San José, Costa Rica, July 16-18, 2014).

¹⁵⁰ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 164-166.

¹⁵¹ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 185-187.

¹⁵² AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero regular y secular, caja 6479, exp. 65 (1724).

¹⁵³ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Clero Regular y Secular, caja 5012, exp. 6 (1738).

¹⁵⁴ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, Real Hacienda, caja 5423, exp. 2 (1773).

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quando se proporcione ocasion a los Pes misioneros de la dicha Provincia que residieren en el Imperio de la gran China, ocupados en el Ministerio Apostólico con el fin de la conversion de aquellos infieles para que la expresada renta, se combierta en la redención y rescate de niños y niñas, bien sean Christianos vendidos a infieles, o hijos de infieles para que reciban el Stmo Bautismo, que se libertan sus almas de la perdición eternal, sin que por el motive de esta limosna, pueda dicha provincia en ningún tiempo minorar los estipendios que ha costumbrado remitir anualmente a cada uno de sus misioneros de la gran China.¹⁵⁵

Aside from its financial functions, Mexico City was also a hub for human resources destined to Asia, as missionaries bound for that continent often had to pass through the viceregal capital. Luke Clossey showed how,

Many missionaries now closely associated with the New World had in fact intended to use the Americas to reach China. Inspired by dreams of converts, by hope of martyrdoms, and by each other, Domingo de Betanzos, Martín de Valencia, Juan de Zumárraga, and even Bartolomé de las Casas were caught up in plans for a transpacific mission. An English publication of *The Strange and marvelous Newes...of China* (1577) reported, 'There hath been made within this citie of Mexico, generall prayers and supplications, beseeching the Almightye God to lighten this strange people with the knowledge of the holy fayth and woorde.' The Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún spoke for many of his colleagues when he declared the primary significance of the missionary work in New Spain to be a stepping stone to China, where Christianity could take stronger roots.¹⁵⁶

Alonso Sánchez (1547-1593), for example, became director of the San Jerónimo seminar in Puebla before penning three lengthy descriptions about China that, according to Manel Ollé, he based on his travels as ambassador to Macao (1582-1584).¹⁵⁷ Chimalpáhin recorded other instances of the constant flow of missionaries in his *Diario*, reporting in 1577 the arrival of Franciscan missionaries

¹⁵⁵ APAF (Archivo de la Provincia Agustiniana Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas, Valladolid.), Mexico, Leg. 297, 3, "Obra pía de rescate de los niños de China".

¹⁵⁶ Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 158. The in-citation is quoted in R. McLachlan, "A Sixteenth-Century Account of China", *Papers of Far Eastern History* 12 (1975): 78-79, 82.

¹⁵⁷ Ollé, *La invención de China*, 51.

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who “estuvieron sólo de paso con rumbo a la China,” the presence of twelve Spanish Augustinians in 1605 who “estuvieron en México, sólo de paso, pues partieron a la China para [ir a] evangelizar allá,” the departure from Mexico in 1610 of the bishop of Manila, “llevando consigo doce religiosos de San Agustín para que doctrinaran en la China,” and the departure in 1614 of two Franciscans “que iban al Japón para doctrinar allá.”¹⁵⁸ The Chalca chronicler also reported the arrival in 1610 of news of the death of a Mexican priest who worked in Asia:

Don fray Pedro de Agurto, obispo de Cebú, que era religioso de San Agustín; él había nacido en México, era criollo de aquí, se le considera como el primer criollo [consagrado] obispo, y encabezó a los criollos nacidos aquí que [comenzaron] a encumbrarse y gobernar.¹⁵⁹

This entries reveal Chimalpáhin’s awareness and admiration for the exploits of such men.

To attend to the necessities of the missionaries and to prepare them before reaching their final destination all the major religious orders founded hospices and other similar institutions in and around Mexico City. The Augustinians founded the Hospicio del Señor Santo Tomás de Villanueva in San Cosme.¹⁶⁰ Jesuit missionaries, on their part, stayed at the San Francisco de Borja hospice in Coyoacán before carrying on their journey to the Philippines.¹⁶¹ Finally, the Dominican missionaries of Manila owned the hospital of San Jacinto in the town of San Ángel, then a town south-west outside Mexico City, that has since been engulfed by the growing metropolis.¹⁶² According to Seijas, San Jacinto had a large number of chino slaves, which were treated better than chinos elsewhere.¹⁶³ Seijas argues that these chino

¹⁵⁸ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 25, 105, 207, 389.

¹⁵⁹ Chimalpáhin, *Diario*, 207. Chimalpáhin noted in the same entry the shipwreck of the vessel carrying Rodrigo de Vivero from Manila to Acapulco. Vivero is the aforementioned author of texts about Japan mentioned in the previous section, which he wrote as a result of his sojourn in Japan where he was cast away after the accident recorded by Chimalpáhin.

¹⁶⁰ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 125.

¹⁶¹ AGN, *Jesuitas*, (1626-1777), vol. 4, 64, exp. 1-99, fs. 1-150.

¹⁶² Gemelli Careri, *Viaje a la Nueva España*, 68.

¹⁶³ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 125.

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slaves “may have been employed as cultural intermediaries [...] [providing] invaluable knowledge of the places and customs that the Dominican friars would soon encounter [in Asia].”¹⁶⁴ Two chinos were buried at San Jacinto in 1696, Antonio de Valladolid, “un chino viejo de más de cien años,” and Sebastián del Rosario, “de las islas Filipinas y decía ser casado en China.”¹⁶⁵

To all these men Francisc Xavier and Felipe de Jesús embodied the virtues of missionaries in Asia. It is likely many of the texts written about the two missionaries were meant to inspire the new recruits who were about to embark on their own mission to “China.” Francisc Xavier and Felipe de Jesús came to symbolize Asia itself, because this was the setting of their achievements. Both figures rose to great popularity as evidenced by the number of *fiestas* and sermons dedicated to them. Their lives and deeds were constantly remembered and reenacted in New Spain. For example, when Francis Xavier was canonized in 1622, civic authorities in the cities of Mexico and Puebla organized celebrations including “toda la ostentación de coloquios y certámenes poéticos.”¹⁶⁶

Francis Xavier was the most popular saint among New Spanish publishers, from the data available in Rodríguez’s catalogue. In reference to drama, scholar Ignacio Elizalde asserts, somewhat hyperbolically, that:

La vida de Xavier, esencialmente dramática y profundamente humana, constituyó un tema fecundo y apropiado para el dramaturgo y comediógrafo. Su intensidad emocional, su aventura a lo divino, la psicología de su conversión, el clima exótico y legendario del Oriente, su apostólica impaciencia, su ardiente y volcánico amor, su carácter emprendedor que tejió el mapa de las naciones en una red de viajes, la simpatía de su carácter, hacen de Xavier una figura extraordinariamente apta para la escena.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 126.

¹⁶⁵ “Libro de entierros de la parroquia de San Jacinto en San Ángel”, cited in Virginia Armella de Aspe, “Notas sobre San Ángel”, 50.

¹⁶⁶ Ignacio Elizalde, *San Francisco Xavier en la literatura española* (Madrid: CSIC, 1967), 124.

¹⁶⁷ Elizalde, *San Francisco Xavier*, 107.

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Elizalde notes that a play entitled *La entrada de S. Xavier en el Japón para plantar la fé: coloquio muy par aver por su levantada poesía, aparato y biçarría* was performed in Puebla in the seventeenth century.¹⁶⁸ According to Elizalde, the stages prepared for representations of his life were adorned with colonnades and precious Chinese porcelain.¹⁶⁹ Porcelain may have been associated to the course of Xavier's career in Asia, even though he died before he was able to reach China. These porcelain adornments served to further associate Xavier with Asia. For contemporaries, it became difficult to think of the saint without evoking an image of the far-off lands where "Apóstol de la India" labored.

Several documents printed in Mexico celebrate Francis Xavier. Diego Luis de San Vitores published a compendium about Francis Xavier in 1661.¹⁷⁰ Martín de Rentería wrote a sermon dedicated to the saint published in 1682.¹⁷¹ A sonnet written by Xavier himself was published in Puebla in 1683.¹⁷² In 1691, Juan Martínez de la Parra published a panegyric dedicated "a las virtudes y milagros del Apóstol de India."¹⁷³ Two sermons were published in the Jesuit's honor in 1694: one by Pedro Manso, another by Juan Narváez pronounced at the parish of Santa Veracruz in Mexico City.¹⁷⁴

This parish was linked to the devotion of Francis Xavier. A devotional society of this saint was founded in Santa Veracruz, according to its constituciones published in 1657.¹⁷⁵ Pope Benedictus XIII issued indulgences to the congregation of Francis Xavier "en la parroquia de Santa Veracruz" in 1726, which were published in Mexico City in 1808.¹⁷⁶ The parish is also related to Asia, as Déborah Oropeza has shown, in that its records registered baptisms, marriages and deaths of forty-one

¹⁶⁸ Elizalde, *San Francisco Xavier*, 125.

¹⁶⁹ Elizalde, *San Francisco Xavier*, 125.

¹⁷⁰ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 136.

¹⁷¹ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 136.

¹⁷² Elizalde, *San Francisco Xavier*, 89.

¹⁷³ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 227.

¹⁷⁴ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 211.

¹⁷⁵ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 114.

¹⁷⁶ Benedictus XIII, *Sumario de las indulgencias concedidas a los congregantes de la Congregación del Glorioso Apóstol de la India S. Francisco Xavier, fundada canónicamente en la Parroquia de la Santa Veracruz de México* (Mexico: Oficina de Arizpe, 1808).

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Asian immigrants.¹⁷⁷ More research is needed to determine if this was a mere juxtaposition, or if there was a causal relationship between Asian immigrants and cult of Francis Xavier in Santa Veracruz.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the famous Jesuit cosmographer, historian, poet, and co-author of *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, wrote *Epopéya sacropanegírica al apostol grande de las Indias S. Francisco Javier*, published in 1700.¹⁷⁸ This text serves as another link between this figure and New Spanish literature.

Felipe de Jesús was second only to Francis Xavier. This missionary, born in Mexico City in 1572, was one of the twenty-six so-called martyrs of Japan. This was a group of missionaries of European descent and Japanese Christians executed in Nagasaki in 1597. The martyrdom had notorious repercussions in New Spain that, according to Ota, “manifested itself through more than 200 publications” including “sermons, poems, lavaros, relaciones, and histories” that appeared both in Europe and the colonies throughout the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁹ Felipe de Jesús was declared a *beato* in 1627. The same year, Jesuits in Michacán were granted “facultad para el festejo de los márties mexicanos muertos en Japón.”¹⁸⁰ In 1629, the year after the news reached Mexico City, the city officials held official celebrations to commemorate the event.¹⁸¹ He was made a saint in 1863, and eventually designated the city’s patron saint.¹⁸² Felipe’s sacrifice was so laudable in the minds of his contemporaries that an Inquisition official did not forget to mention their Felipe when providing information of the *limpieza de sangre* of his parents. The official presumably implied that their son’s martyrdom was proof of the ethnic purity of their parent’s heritage.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Oropeza, “Los ‘indios chinos’ en la Nueva España”, 141, 257-288.

¹⁷⁸ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 295.

¹⁷⁹ Ota, “Un mural novohispano”, 693-694.

¹⁸⁰ AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja 6565, exp. 13 (1627).

¹⁸¹ Ota, “Un mural novohispano”, 686-687.

¹⁸² Ota, “Un mural novohispano”, 686-687.

¹⁸³ AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1507, exp. 5, ff. 1-47 (1594).

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Felipe's fame transcended the borders of New Spain. The earliest version of the story of the Japan martyrs appeared across the Atlantic. Marcelo de Ribadeneyra published it in *Historia de las Islas del Archipiélago Philipino y reinos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Conchinchina, Maluca, Siam, Cambodia y Japón* in Barcelona in 1601.¹⁸⁴ This book was perhaps the source consulted by Miquel Parets i Alaver, a Barcelonian chronicler famous for his chronicle of the Catalan Revolt or *Guerra dels Segadors* (1640-1659), when he drew the image of Felipe de Jesús shown in picture 6.1.

Picture 6.1 Martyrdom of Felipe de Jesús



Drawing by Miquel Parets (c. 1626-1640) in *De molts successos que han succeït dins Barcelona i molts altres llocs de Catalunya dignes de memòria*, vol. 224, f. 12v, Biblioteca de la Universitat de Barcelona. Digital reproduction, accessed 04/07/2014, http://ca.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miquel_Parets_i_Alaver#mediaviewer/File:Frare_crucificat.jpg

Back in New Spain, after Felipe de Jesús was made a *beato* in 1627, many authors wrote texts to celebrate him. Diego de Ribera wrote a relacion to record the dedication of a temple to Felipe de Jesús in 1673.¹⁸⁵ Juan de Ávila wrote a sermon

¹⁸⁴ Ota, "Un mural novohispano", 686.

¹⁸⁵ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 160.

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about him in 1682.¹⁸⁶ The following year Balthazar de Medina authored *Vida, martirio y beatificación del invicto Proto-Mártir del Japón San Felipe de Jesús, Patrón de México su Patria*.¹⁸⁷ Agustín de Vetancurt remarked on the fact he had been elected patrón saint of Mexico City.¹⁸⁸ José de Torres Pezellin wrote another sermón about Felipe de Jesús in 1707, and Domingo Ferrufino penned a hagiography entitled *Vida del glorioso Proto-Martyr del Japón San Phelipe de Jesús*.¹⁸⁹ According to scholar Donahue-Wallace, Mariano Osorio wrote a theater play based on the life of Felipe de Jesús at the beginning of the nineteenth century, while an engraver called Montes de Oca illustrated the pages of a book entitled *Breve resumen de la vida y martirio del ínclito mexicano y proto-martir del Japón, el Beato Felipe de Jesús*, published in 1804.¹⁹⁰ That Lizardi himself admired Felipe de Jesús can be extrapolated from the fact that he published a panegyric entitled *Canto al glorioso protomártir San Felipe de Jesús*, and that he mentioned the martyr in his pamphlets and in his newspaper in 1822.¹⁹¹ Felipe de Jesús is also featured in chapter eleven of the first tome of *El Periquillo*. After deciding to become a priest, Perico narrates how:

Luego que llegué a [casa], me entré a ver a mi madre, y le conté cuanto me había pasado, manifestándole la patente de admitido en el convento de San Diego. De que mi madre la vio, no sé cómo no se volvió loca de gusto, creyendo que yo era un joven muy bueno y que cuando menos sería yo otro san Felipe de Jesús.¹⁹²

Aside from this direct reference, elements about the life of Felipe de Jesús bear resemblance to events in the plot of *El Periquillo Sarniento*. Their Asian sojourn was a definitive experience in the life of both the fictional character and the Franciscan missionary. According to his hagiographies, Felipe was a reckless youth.

¹⁸⁶ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 160.

¹⁸⁷ Rodríguez, *Catálogo de impresos novohispanos*, 172.

¹⁸⁸ Vetancurt, *Teatro Mexicano*, Vol. 2, 303.

¹⁸⁹ Domingo de Ferrufino, *Vida de el glorioso proto-martyr de el Japon, san Phelipe de Jesus: sermon panegyrico, que en glorias de dicho santo predicò el p. fr. Domingo de Ferrvfino el dia 5. de febrero de 1733* (Mexico: J.B. de Hoyal, 1733).

¹⁹⁰ Kelly Donahue-Wallace, "El grabado en la Real Academia de San Carlos de Nueva España, 1783-1810", *Tiempos de América* 11 (2004): 49-61.

¹⁹¹ Lilian Álvarez de Testa, *Ilustración, educación e independencia: las ideas de José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi* (Mexico: UNAM, 1994), 96.

¹⁹² Lizardi, *El Periquillo*, 249.

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In 1590, his father sent him to Manila to work with an associate of his in an effort to rectify his son's behavior. While at first Felipe resisted and fell back to his bad habits, eventually he joined the Franciscans with the intention of becoming a priest. At the end of his training he boarded a ship back to Mexico, since there was no bishop available in Manila to ordain him. His ship was hit by a storm, and he was thrown ashore in Japan.¹⁹³ Seeing this as a God-sent opportunity, he decided to contribute to the Christian evangelizing effort in that country. This decision coincided with Hideyoshi's anti-Christian policy. He was seized along with another twenty-five missionaries and Japanese Christians in Kyoto. They were mutilated and paraded across the country to Nagasaki, where they were finally crucified in 1597.¹⁹⁴

It would be taking the idea a step too far to simply argue that Lizardi based the Asian episodes of his novel on the life of Felipe de Jesús. However, the parallelism between the accounts of the life of this saint and Lizardi's protagonist is too strong to be ignored. Both men had disorderly youths in central New Spain, which began correcting after spending time in Asia, and both were stranded on an island on their journey from Manila to Acapulco. Lizardi certainly knew Felipe de Jesús' life story, as evidenced by his panegyric about the martyr and other mentions of the saint scattered throughout his publications. Moreover, it can be safely argued that the readers of *El Periquillo Sarniento* were able to notice the resemblance between Perico and Felipe. Contemporary readers were able to perceive Felipe de Jesús' widely known experiences echo in the novel. Also worth noting is the coincidence between the number of people who accompanied Felipe de Jesús in martyrdom, and the number of people who returned to Mexico with Alonso Ramírez in *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, a text discussed in the following section.

The cultural impact of the martyrs of Japan is also indirectly related to the history of perceptions of Asian migration in colonial Mexico. At some point between 1598

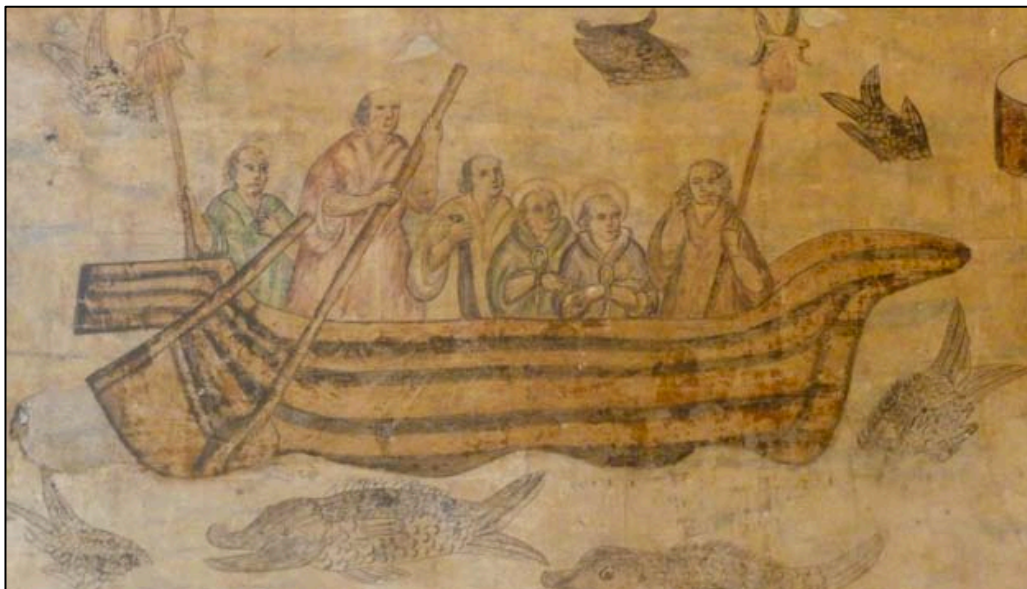
¹⁹³ Ota, "Un mural novohispano", 682-683.

¹⁹⁴ Ota, "Un mural novohispano", 683-685.

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and 1628,¹⁹⁵ artists decorated with murals the walls of the church that is currently the cathedral of the city of Cuernavaca, located seventy-five kilometers away from the vice regal capital on the road between Acapulco and Mexico City. As shown in picture 6.2, the scenes depicted in the murals represent the journey of the Japan martyrs from their imprisonment to their execution. García suggests that Japanese Christians residing in Cuernavaca painted these images.¹⁹⁶ Ota rejects this theory asserting that there is no resemblance between the Japan of the time and the place depicted in the murals, suggesting instead that the artists were local Indigenous witnesses of the two Japanese embassies to New Spain. Ota also asserts, rather unfoundedly, that the clothes of the characters in the scene resembled the attire of the Manila Parian sangleyes.¹⁹⁷

Picture 6.2 Japanese soldiers take Franciscan missionaries and Japanese Christian converts to Nagasaki for their execution



Detail of the murals at the cathedral of Cuernavaca, seventeenth century. Photo by Mariona Lloret.

6.5 Alonso Ramírez: a real-life *Periquillo*?

¹⁹⁵ These are the dates of reception in New Spain of news about the martyrdom and beatification of Felipe de Jesús, respectively. Ota, “Un mural novohispano”, 693.

¹⁹⁶ Islas, *Los murales de la catedral*, 70.

¹⁹⁷ Ota, “Un mural novohispano”, 692.

*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*¹⁹⁸ is an important precedent to *El Periquillo Sarniento*. It is the story as retold to writer Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora by Alonso Ramírez, a sailor from Puerto Rico, about the latter's experiences at the hands of English pirates after being kidnapped off the coasts of Luzon. The central feature of the story is the torture and forced labor the pirates inflicted upon Ramírez and his companions since their capture until their release near the Brazilian coast, and their subsequent journey to Yucatan. In Yucatan, Ramírez and his companions were seized by local authorities and faced charges of piracy. When they heard their story, the Yucatan authorities, unsure on how to proceed, sent Ramírez to the viceroy. Not only did the viceroy believe Ramírez and lift the accusations against him, but he also commissioned Carlos de Sigüenza y Gongora, one of the most important authors in New Spain at the time, to interview Ramírez and write an account of his ordeal. It was published in 1690, very shortly after their arrival in Yucatan.

Javier Sanchez Zapatero asserts that *Infortunios* is one of the New Spanish works of literature most similar to *Periquillo*, arguing that it is 'unavoidable' not to be reminded of Ramírez when reading about Perico's adventures in the Pacific.¹⁹⁹ There is similarity both in the events narrated in the two, as well as their critical tone for, while *Periquillo* is an overt critic of the Spanish colonial system, scholar Leonor Taiano argues that some episodes in *Infortunios* are a metaphor of colonial decline.²⁰⁰

For years critics considered *Infortunios* a work of fiction by Sigüenza y Gongora due to lack of evidence of Ramírez's existence.²⁰¹ Being a work of fiction implied this was the first Latin American novel. In the preliminary study of his translation of *Infortunios*, Fabio López-Lázaro synthesizes this debate stating that:

¹⁹⁸ Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora and Alonso Ramírez, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* (Mexico: Editorial Planeta Mexicana, 2002, originally published in 1690).

¹⁹⁹ Sánchez, "Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias".

²⁰⁰ Leonor Marietta Taiano, "*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez: consideraciones sobre el texto y su contexto*", *Bibliografía americana: Revista interdisciplinaria de estudios coloniales* 7 (2011): 187.

²⁰¹ Taiano, "*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*", 181.

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Some scholars have not agreed with this assessment, positing that many of the events and people described in the book must be historic. Ramírez real-life existence, though unproven, has been maintained by literary scholars like Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Cayetano Coll y Toste, Concha Meléndez, Josefina Rivera de Álvarez, and Manuel Alvarez Nazario. Others, like Willebaldo Bazarte Cerdán and David Lagmanovich, have believed that the lack of historical evidence tilts the balance in favor of Sigüenza's creative imagination.²⁰²

The argument for the purely fictional nature of the text lost some support after the results of a computerized comparative analysis between *Infortunios* and other works by Sigüenza were published and when evidence of the historical Alonso Ramírez surfaced after critic José Buscaglia located the record of the marriage between Alonso Ramírez and a woman called Francisca Xaviera.²⁰³ *Infortunios* is the result of a collaborative effort. Sigüenza y Góngora used his erudition to embellish Ramírez's narration. Taiano argues that Sigüenza y Góngora may have introduced elements such as its Counter-Reform tone, associated with the amorality of the Protestant pirates.²⁰⁴ Taiano also asserts that:

El relato de Ramírez podría ser considerado una autobiografía popular, de origen oral, nacida como resultado de las confesiones expuestas por un individuo cuyo testimonio ha sido transcrito. Pero, quizás mejor, a causa de los desplazamientos geográficos, podría ser asimilada a las autobiografías de viajeros y aventureros. La configuración narrativista de *Infortunios* de Alonso Ramírez se caracteriza básicamente por el objetivo final, que es el de conseguir la protección del Virrey

²⁰² Fabio López Lázaro, "Introductory Study" to *The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez*, by Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez, 4.

²⁰³ Taiano, "*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*", 185-186. For the results of the computerized comparison between the language of *Infortunios* and other works by Sigüenza y Góngora, see Estelle Irizarry, "One Writer, Two Authors: Resolving the Polemic of Latin America's First Published Novel", *Literary and Linguistic Computing: Journal of the Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 6 (3) (1991): 175-179. See also Ralph Bauer, "Toward a Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Location, Creolization", in *A Companion to the Literatures of Colonial America*, eds. Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer (Malden MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 52.

²⁰⁴ Taiano, "*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*", 195.

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probablemente ante las sospechas de piratería y un posible proceso en su contra.²⁰⁵

Thus Taiano argues convincingly that Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez should be considered co-authors of *Infortunios*.

Infortunios is one of the texts published in New Spain that is most closely related to the Manila Galleon and, most interestingly, because it provides clues about Asian immigrant standing within the viceroyalty. The authors provide extensive descriptions of various European enclaves in Asia and talk about commerce through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. They describe Manila, for example as a prosperous and bustling entrepot. The Manileños in *Infortunios* enjoyed their access to a myriad of products stating that ‘para el sustento y vestuario cuanto se quiere a moderado precio, debido a la solicitud con que por enriquecer a los sangleyes lo comercian en su Parián, que es el lugar donde fuera de las murallas, con permiso de los españoles, se avecindaron.’²⁰⁶

After Alonso becomes a sailor in his story, he is able to visit other ports in the region:

Estuve en Madrastapatan, antiguamente Calamina o Meliapor, donde murió el apóstol, Santo Tomé, ciudad grande, cuando la poseían los portugueses, hoy un montón de ruinas, a violencias de los estragos que en ella hicieron los franceses y holandeses por poseerla. [...] Estuve en Malaca, llave de toda la India y de sus comercios por el lugar que tiene en el estrecho de Singapur, y a cuyo gobernador pagan anclaje cuantos lo navegan. [...] Estuve en Batavia ciudad celeberrima, que poseen los [holandeses] en la Java mayor y a donde reside el gobernador y capitán general de los Estados de Holanda. Sus murallas, baluartes y fortalezas son admirables. El concurso que allí se ve de navíos de malayos, macasares, sianes, bugifes, chinos, armenios, franceses, ingleses, dinamarcos, portugueses y castellanos, no tiene número. Hállanse en este emporio cuantos artefactos hay en la Europa, y los que en retorno de ellos le envía la Asia. Fabrícanse allí para quien

²⁰⁵ Taiano, “*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*”, 188.

²⁰⁶ Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, 26.

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quisiere comprarlas, excelentes armas. [...] Estuve también en Macan [Macao], donde aunque fortalecida por los portugueses que la poseen, no dejan de estar expuestos a las supercherías de los tártaros (que dominan en la gran China), los que la habitan.²⁰⁷

Taiano argues that the way Ramírez describes these locales is proof of the truthfulness of his account.²⁰⁸

Since there were Asians in Ramírez's group when they arrived in Yucatan, *Infortunios* is directly linked to the history of Asian migration to the Americas. Five of the seven companions who made it to the peninsula came from Asia:

Los nombres de los que conseguieron conmigo la libertad y habían quedado de los veinticinco (porque de ellos en la isla despoblada de Poliubi dejaron ocho, cinco se huyeron en Singapur, dos murieron de los azotes en Madagascar, y otros tres tuvieron la misma suerte en diferentes parajes), son Juan de Casas, español, natural de la Puebla de los Ángeles en Nueva España, Juan Pinto y Marcos de la Cruz, indios pangasinán aquel, y este pampango, Francisco de la Cruz y Antonio González, sangleyes; Juan Díaz, malabar, y Pedro, negro de Mozambique, esclavo mío.²⁰⁹

Without the agency of his Asian companions Ramírez and his party would never have arrived to the coasts of New Spain. Ramírez told Sigüenza y Góngora how, while sailing across the Caribbean, seeing how they were running low on supplies, he proposed the group to surrender themselves to the French at one of their colonies nearby:

Antes de apartarme de allí les propuse a mis compañeros el que me parecía imposible tolerar más, porque ya para los continuos trabajos en que nos veíamos nos faltaban fuerzas, con circunstancia de que los bastimentos eran muy pocos, y que pues los franceses eran católicos, surgiésemos a merced suya, en aquella isla,

²⁰⁷ Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, 26-27.

²⁰⁸ Taiano, "*Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*", 193.

²⁰⁹ Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, 48.

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persuadidos que haciéndoles relación de nuestros infortunios les obligaría la piedad cristiana a patrocinarnos.²¹⁰

The Asians strongly opposed this solution:

Opusieron a este dictamen mío con grande esfuerzo, siendo el motivo el que a ellos por su color, y por no ser españoles los haría esclavos y que les sería menos sensible el que yo con mis manos los echase al mar, que ponerse en las de extranjeros para experimentar sus rigores.²¹¹

Ultimately, Ramírez yielded and continued the journey to New Spain. This passage is very revealing. First of all, it situates the Spanish above the French, who despite being fellow Catholics, would still enslave Asians, a practice banned in the Spanish domains in 1673, after royal acceptance of a proposal by the Audiencia de Guadalajara which sought to recognize their condition as vassals and foster their evangelization.²¹² Thus *Infortunios* owes its very existence to the Asians in Ramírez's company. Had they not convinced him not to stop in the French Caribbean, the party would never have arrived to New Spain and, the viceroy would not have commissioned Sigüenza y Góngora to write the account.

This passage also contains the most relevant link between *Infortunios* and *El Periquillo*: both texts deal directly with slavery and ethnicity.²¹³ While Lizardi denounces slavery of people of African descent, Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez more covertly denounce slavery of Asians. Although *El Periquillo* written 126 years after *Infortunios* is much more radical in its critique, both texts make the argument that a person's phenotype should not constitute the basis for enslavement. It is

²¹⁰ Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, 58.

²¹¹ Sigüenza y Góngora and Ramírez, *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez*, 58.

²¹² Oropeza, "La esclavitud asiática", 46.

²¹³ I thank the anonymous reviewer of my working paper "La génesis de Sacheofú" for the insight that spurred this comparison. Rubén Carrillo, "La génesis de Sacheofú. Asia en las letras novohispanas de González de Mendoza a Fernández de Lizardi (1585-1831)", *IN3 Doctoral Working Paper Series. Information and Knowledge Society Doctoral Programme* (2014), <http://journals.uoc.edu/index.php/in3-working-paper-series/article/view/n14-carrillo/n14-carrillo-es>. The working paper is an early version of the research on which this chapter is based on.

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possible that Sigüenza y Góngora intended to showcase the benevolence of the Spanish Crown which had recently (in 1673) prohibited the slavery of *chinos* and *indios chinos* “debido a su condición de indios vasallos, así como por el interés de la corona por su evangelización.”²¹⁴

However, the reason why *El Periquillo* went far beyond *Infortunios* in its rejection of slavery is that, unlike the authors of *Infortunios*, Lizardi can be considered as a New Spanish harbinger of the cultural phenomenon known as the Enlightenment. I further discussed the influences of this movement in Lizardi’s portrayal of *Sacheofú*.

6.6 The Enlightenment as a source of representations of China

Having situated *El Periquillo Sarniento* in a wider context of New Spanish author’s preoccupation about China, and discussed the works of González de Mendoza, of Sigüenza y Góngora and Alonso Ramírez, and of the many authors that wrote about Asian missionaries Francis Xavier and Felipe de Jesús as antecedents to Lizardi’s novel, I now turn to the more immediate context of sinophile sentiments of the Enlightenment. This was Lizardi’s world, and one of his main sources of motivation for dedicating so many pages of his work to Asia.

China also received attention from authors of the Spanish Enlightenment. Their work is relevant to Lizardi in that the Mexican author can be considered an heir, if not a member of this tradition. According to Mariela Insúa, Lizardi is the quintessential man of the Enlightenment in Mexico, concerned as he was with informing, educating, entertaining, and criticizing his readers.²¹⁵ *Sacheofú* results directly from this heritage. According to Hagimoto, *Sacheofú* “symbolizes a seemingly utopian place viewed from the Western perspective of Enlightenment.”²¹⁶ China was a frequent point of reference for many

²¹⁴ Oropeza, “La esclavitud asiática”, 46.

²¹⁵ Mariela Insúa, “La falsa erudición en la ilustración española y novohispana: Lizardi”, *Estudios filológicos* 48 (2011): 61-79.

²¹⁶ Hagimoto, “A Transpacific Voyage”, 395.

Enlightenment authors' idea of an ideal society. Relinque synthesizes this phenomenon stating that:

En el siglo XVIII, la Ilustración recibió [la herencia de los tratados misioneros] y muchos de sus filósofos aceptaron el modelo chino llegado de la pluma de los misioneros, jesuitas fundamentalmente, que habían transmitido la idea de una China grandemente civilizada, donde el talento era la llave de acceso al poder y donde sólo gobernaban la Virtud y la Razón. China se puso de moda según se refleja en toda la literatura de la época.²¹⁷

Many scholars have studied the representations of China in Enlightenment literature. Preceded by Leibniz, Voltaire and Montesquieu expressed deep sinophile feelings in many of their writings.²¹⁸ Leibniz's *Novissima Sínica* (1697) stands out as a laudatory text about China that suggests the Europeans had much to learn from Chinese social and political organization.²¹⁹ With the invention of Satchefú, Lizardi, joined a tradition of "eighteenth century critics" who, according to John Darwin, "held up Safavid Iran and Ch'ing China as a mirror to expose European bigotry, militarism and misgovernment."²²⁰ However, it is worth noting that eighteenth century representations of China were not uniformly encomiastic. Montesquieu and Diderot (1713-1784) were more critical about China than sinophiles Voltaire (1694-1778) and Quesnay (1694-1774).²²¹ Other authors

²¹⁷ Relinque, "¿Perros o demonios?", 89.

²¹⁸ María Ángeles Caamaño, "Heterotopías: Francia y China", *Salina. Revista de Lletres* 19 (2005): 105-114; James Martin Hunn, "China in the political thought of the French Enlightenment: Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau" (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1977); Derk Bodde, *Chinese Ideas in the West* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1972); Basil Guy, *The French Image of China Before and After Voltaire. Studies in Voltaire and the Enlightenment Century*. Vol. 21 (Genoa: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1963); Arnold H. Rowbotham, "The Impact of Confucianism on Seventeenth-Century Europe", *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 4 (3) (1945): 224-242; Arnold H. Rowbotham, "Voltaire, Sinophile", *PMLA* 47 (4) (1932): 1050-1065; Donald F. Lach, "Leibniz and China", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6 (4) (1945): 436-455.

²¹⁹ Donald F. Lach, "China in Western Thought and Culture", in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, ed. Philip P. Weiner (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 361.

²²⁰ Darwin, *After Tamerlane*, 117-118.

²²¹ Ho-fung Hung, "Orientalist knowledge and social theories; China and the European conceptions of East-West differences from 1600 to 1900", *Sociological Theory* 21 (3) (2003): 254-280; Colin Mackerras, *Sinophiles and Sinophobes: Western Views of China*

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suspicious of Jesuit laudatory images were Antoine Arnaud, Eusebe Renaudot, George Berkeley, Nicolas Malebranche, and George Anson.²²² As in Lizardi's case, European debates about China were all about European issues and concerns.²²³

In her article on the critique to false erudition in Lizardi's work, Mariela Insúa lists the works of Spanish Enlightenment authors such as Feijoo, Cadalso, Forner, and Marte as some of the sources in the writings of the Pensador.²²⁴ Lizardi criticizes false erudition in the Asian passages of *Periquillo*. According to Insúa:

En la obra narrativa de Fernández de Lizardi [...] aparecen abundantes referencias al tema de la falsa erudición. Por ejemplo, en *El Periquillo Sarniento*, cuando el protagonista se encuentra en la exótica isla de Sauchefú, uno de los diálogos con Limahotón —el hermano del tután que le explica la organización de esta sociedad ideal— versa acerca de los pedantes que presumen de sabios 'disparando latinajos de cuando en cuando'. Periquillo le comenta al 'chino' que en su tierra los eruditos salpican de latines su conversación para que los tengan por instruidos. A Limahotón le llama la atención esta costumbre y dice que en su isla nunca se tendrá por sabio aquel cuyo discurso resulte incomprensible, 'pues la gracia del sabio está en darse a entender a cuantos lo escuchan'.²²⁵

Thus in these lines two concerns of the Enlightenment coincide: admiration for perceived organization of Chinese society and politics on the one hand, and critique of false erudition on the other. Works by Benito Jerónimo Feijoo (1674-1764) and Juan Pablo Forner (1756-1783) may be considered antecedents of Sauchefú. Like Lizardi, Forner criticized his own society by comparing it to China.

(Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Rowbotham, "Voltaire, sinophile"; Thomas H. C. Lee, *China and Europe: Images and Influences in Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1991); Guy, *The French Image*; David Emil Mungello, *The Great Encounter of China and the West: 1500-1800* (Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999).

²²² David Martin Jones, *The Image of China in Western Social and Political Thought* (Basingstoke UK: Palgrave, 2001), 30-31.

²²³ Joan-Pau Rubiés, "Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu", *Journal of Early Modern History: Contacts, Comparisons, Contrasts* 9 (1-2) (2005): 109-180.

²²⁴ Insúa, "La falsa erudición".

²²⁵ Insúa, "La falsa erudición".

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In *Los gramáticos: Historia chinesca*, written in 1782, Forner transformed Spain into China and France into Japan.²²⁶ According to Relinque, Forner attacked the privileges and abuses of power of the *Acien Régime* elite, by confronting it to the Chinese state, which he perceived as organized, rich and powerful, and most importantly, apparently based on universal Reason and Virtue.²²⁷ Relinque asserts that Forner and other European authors in the eighteenth century painted an image of China that was not the real China, “sino la Europa que los ilustrados quieren para sí.”²²⁸ This is the same objective Lizardi pursues making Sacheofú a representation of an ideal New Spain. This may be the reason why Sacheofú is a province or a viceroyalty of China, and not China itself. Just as Forner admires Chinese utilitarianism in *Los gramáticos*,²²⁹ Perico notes how the denizens of Sacheofú value above everything else the work of a person in terms of the utilitarian benefit it produces to society. Thus, Sacheofuans struggle to comprehend Perico’s explanation of what is a hidalgo.

Benito Jerónimo Feijoo was arguably the most influential Spanish Enlightenment author in the works of Lizardi. Lizardi’s admiration for Feijoo owed much to the former’s interest in education. According to Sánchez, Feijoo stands out among Lizardi’s pedagogical models, noting that Lizardi came to be known as “el Feijoo Mexicano.”²³⁰ However, what is most relevant to my analysis is the fact that Feijoo also praises China in his writings. Feijoo looks to China in search for ideal models of social interaction and more effective forms of government. For Feijoo, the most important source about China is *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l’Empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise* by Jesuit missionary Du Halde which by Feijoo’s time, according to Relinque, had surpassed in popularity and authority González de Mendoza’s work,

²²⁶ Relinque, “¿Perros o demonios?”, 89.

²²⁷ Relinque, “¿Perros o demonios?”, 93.

²²⁸ Relinque, “¿Perros o demonios?”, 95.

²²⁹ Relinque, “¿Perros o demonios?”, 100.

²³⁰ Sánchez, “Heterogeneidad y fuentes literarias”.

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and was “the most important and comprehensive single product of Jesuit scholarship on China,” according to Mackerras.²³¹

Feijoo mentions China in the fifteenth discourse of the second tome of his *Teatro Crítico Universal* (Feijoo, 1726-1740), entitled *Mapa intelectual y cotejo de Naciones*. Here Feijoo synthesizes the reasons for the admiration he felt towards China:

Los Chinos tienen dos ojos, los Europeos no más que uno, y todo el resto del mundo es enteramente ciego [...] Su gobierno civil, y político excede al de todas las demás Naciones. Sus precauciones para evitar guerras, tanto civiles, como forasteras, son admirables. En ninguna otra gente tienen tanta estimación los sabios, pues únicamente a ellos confían el gobierno. Esto solo basta para acreditarlos por los más racionales de todos los hombres. La excelencia de su inventiva se conoce en que las tres famosas invenciones de la Imprenta, la Pólvora, y la Aguja Náutica, son mucho más antiguas en la China, que en Europa; y aún hay razonables sospechas de que de allá se nos comunicaron. Sobresalen con grandes ventajas en

²³¹ Relinque, “¿Perros o demonios?”, 91; Mackerras, *Sinophiles and Sinophobes*, 29. Some studies about the influence of Jesuit representations of China are Adam Bohnet, “Matteo Ricci and Nicolas Trigault’s Descriptions of the Literati of China”, *Quaderni d’Italianistica* 21 (2) (2000): 77-92; Sean Golden, “From the Society of Jesus to the East India Company: A Case Study in the Social History of Translation”, *Beyond the Western Tradition. Translation Perspectives XI* (Binghamton NY: State University of New York at Binghamton, 2000): 199-215; Jones, *The Image of China*, 2001; Hung, “Orientalist knowledge and social theories”; Jonathan Spence, “Journey To The East: The Jesuit Mission To China, 1579-1724”, *New York Review of Books* 54 (11) (2007): 22-24; Ashley Eva Millar, “The Jesuits as Knowledge Brokers Between Europe and China (1582-1773): Shaping European views of the Middle Kingdom”, *Economic History Working Paper Series* 105 (2007); Martin Repp, “Die Begegnung zwischen Europa und Ostasien anhand der Auseinandersetzungen um die christliche Gottesvorstellung”, *NZStH* 45 (2003): 71-100; Hunn, “China in the political thought”; Edwin VanKley, “News from China: Seventeenth-Century European Notices of the Manchu Conquest”, *The Journal of Modern History* 45 (4) (1973): 561-582; Guy, *The French Image*; Rowbotham, “The Impact of Confucianism”; Rowbotham, “Voltaire, Sinophile”; Lach, “Leibniz and China”; Lach, “China in Western Thought”. A Jesuit figure of paramount importance was Matteo Ricci (1552-1610). For information about Leibniz copious correspondence with Jesuit missionaries in China see Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization*, 209.

cualquiera Arte a que se aplican; y por más que se han esforzado los Europeos, no han podido igualarlos, ni aún imitarlos en algunas.²³²

In *Reflexiones sobre la Historia*, the eighth discourse of the fourth tome of the same collection, Feijoo once again celebrates China stating that ‘el Reino de la China excede al de Asiria en la duración, en la prudencia de su gobierno, en número de habitantes, y en la extensión de límites.’²³³ In *Resurrección de las Artes y Apología de los Antiguos*, the twelveth discourse in the same tome, he reiterates Chinese primacy in science and technology, citing their pioneering of such things as the description of the circulatory system, and the four great Chinese inventions, the compass, the printing press, gunpowder, and porcelain.²³⁴

Some parts of Feijoo’s writings more closely resemble Lizardi’s Sacheofú. In *La ambición en el Solio*, discourse four, third tome, the Spanish author criticizes the admiration for warring rulers, arguing for the superior Chinese model which, according to him, favors administrative over military prowess. Feijoo queries:

¿Qué es un conquistador sino un azote? [...] una peste animada de su Reino, y de los extraños, un astro maligno, que sólo influye muertes, robos, desolaciones, incendios [...] un hombre enemigo de todos los hombres.²³⁵

In Feijoo’s view of the Chinese model:

En esto, como en otras muchas cosas, admiro el ventajoso juicio de los Chinos. [...] en los Anales de aquella gente no son celebrados los Príncipes

²³² Benito Jerónimo Feijoo, “Mapa universal y cotejo de las naciones”, in Vol. 2, Discurso 15, *Teatro crítico universal. Discursos varios en todo género de materias, para desengaño de errores comunes* (Madrid: D. Joaquín Ibarra, Impresor de Cámara de S. M., 1779, originally published in 1728), accessed 02/2013, <http://www.filosofia.org/bjf/bjft215.htm>.

²³³ Feijoo, “Reflexiones sobre la Historia”, in Vol. 4, Discurso 8, *Teatro crítico universal* (originally published in 1730), accessed 02/2013, <http://www.filosofia.org/bjf/bjft408.htm>.

²³⁴ Feijoo, “Resurrección de las Artes y Apología de los Antiguos”, in Vol. 4, Discurso 12, *Teatro crítico universal* (originally published in 1730), accessed 02/2013, <http://www.filosofia.org/bjf/bjft412.htm>.

²³⁵ Feijoo, “La ambición del Solio”, in Vol. 3, Discurso 12, *Teatro crítico universal* (originally published in 1729), accessed 02/2013, <http://www.filosofia.org/bjf/bjft312.htm>.

6. Representations of Asia and Asians in New Spanish literature

guerreros, sino los pacíficos: ni logran los vítores de la posteridad aquellos que se añadieron con las armas dominios nuevos, sino aquellos que gobernaron con justicia, y moderación los heredados. Esto es elegir bien.²³⁶

I see resemblances between these passages and the ideas proposed in *El Periquillo*. The Chinese of Sacheofú reject, and even mock, Perico's explanation of the social standing of a *hidalgo*. The values of this lesser nobility, especially rejection to manual labor, are in stark contrast to Sacheofuan cultural praise for expertise in one's profession. Society in Sacheofú demands all its inhabitants to contribute to society through their expertise, and rejects honoring a person as a result of a noble chivalrous heritage.

In this respect, I think Lizardi built upon Feijoo's views on Chinese medicine, to develop his novel's utopian setting. Feijoo talks about this topic in letter eleven of his *Cartas eruditas y curiosas* (1742-1760), entitled *Sobre la ciencia médica de los chinos*. He writes:

Siendo tan sabios los Médicos de la China en la práctica de su arte, no son menos sabios los Chinos en la práctica que observan con sus Médicos. Si el Médico después de examinados el pulso, y la lengua, no acierta en la enfermedad, o con alguna circunstancia suya (lo que pocas veces sucede), es despedido al punto como ignorante, y se llama otro. Si acierta (como es lo común), se le fía la curación. [...] Acabada la cura, se le paga legítimamente, así el trabajo de la asistencia, como el coste de los medicamentos. Pero si el enfermo no convalece, uno, y otro pierde el Médico, de modo, que el enfermo paga la curación cuando sana; y el Médico su impericia cuando no le cura. ¡Oh si entre nosotros hubiese la misma ley! Ya Quevedo se quejó de la falta de ella, sin saber que se practicase en la China. Y aunque lo hizo como entre burlas, pienso que lo sentía muy de veras.²³⁷

²³⁶ Feijoo, "La ambición del Solio".

²³⁷ Benito Jerónimo Feijoo, "Sobre la ciencia médica de los chinos", in Vol. 5, Carta 11, *Cartas eruditas y curiosas en que, por la mayor parte, se continúa el designio del Teatro Crítico Universal, impugnando, o reduciendo a dudosas, varias opiniones comunes* (Madrid:

As discussed by Jefferson Rea Spell, Lizardi deals with medicine in Sacheofú in a very similar passage. The ruler of Sacheofú tells Perico:

En [Sacheofú] no se llama médico ni ejercita este oficio sino el que conoce bien a fondo la estructura del cuerpo humano, las causas porque padece y el modo con que deben obrar los remedios que ordenan; y a más de esto, no se parten como dices que se parten en tu tierra. Aquí el que cura es médico, cirujano, barbero, boticario y asistente. Fiado el enfermo a su cuidado, él lo ha de curar de la enfermedad de que se queja sea externa o interna; ha de ordenar los remedios, los ha de hacer, los ha de ministrar y ha de practicar cuantas diligencias considera oportunas a su alivio. Si el paciente sana, le paga, y si no, lo echan noramala.²³⁸

Thus Lizardi incorporated the sinophile tendencies of his day to the configuration of Sacheofú. I consider that among the many voices praising China, Lizardi was most influenced by Feijoo's appraisal for Chinese meritocracy. This last excerpt reveals how Lizardi mirrored Feijoo's commentaries on Chinese medicine in *El Periquillo*.

Imprenta Real de la Gaceta, 1777, originally published in 1760), accessed 02/2013, <http://www.filosofia.org/bjf/bjfc511.htm>.

²³⁸ Lizardi, *El Periquillo Sarniento*, 759.

CONCLUSION

In 1816 the last Manila Galleon Asian immigrant crossed the Pacific. He was Limahotón, the fictional character that Lizardi invented in *El Periquillo Sarniento*. Limahotón accumulated wealth in Mexico City by selling pearls from his Asian homeland and secured a place for himself in a foreign land. Regardless of whether Lizardi took inspiration from real Asian immigrants, the presence of this character in the first Mexican novel was a fitting culmination to the first 250 years of unmediated interaction between Asia and the Americas. Whether Lizardi was aware that thousands of Asian immigrants had settled in mainland New Spain between 1565 and 1815 is unclear, but Limahotón's experience mirrors that of his real-life peers. There is a stark contrast between the representation of characters, such as Catarina de San Juan and Limahotón, and the stereotypical description of chinos as lowly and untrustworthy people. The fictional chinos show that the idea of Asia as a place charged with a certain utopic aura remained powerful in the minds of New Spanish writers. However, these authors did not express a similar view about the majority of the hundreds of Asian neighbors they had. The ignored New Spain Asians, who settled along the Pacific coast, in the hamlets and villages along the road inland from Acapulco to the central highlands, and in relatively large concentrations in the largest cities in that region, Mexico City and Puebla, reveal the complex interplay between global processes and the lives of individuals. Their contributions emerge in the following recapitulation of the main ideas of this thesis.

One of the contributions of this thesis is the location and discussion of a wide variety sources about the first Asian migration to the Americas, namely parochial, notarial, and administrative documents from the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) and the Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal (AHDF) in Mexico City, the Archivo General Municipal de Puebla (AGMP) in Puebla, the Archivo General de Indias (AGI) in Seville, and the Archivo de la Provincia Agustiniiana del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas (APAF) in Valladolid. The corpus of primary sources employed throughout this thesis proved pertinent and useful to determine some of the occupational, marital, social, and legal status of the chinos. While some records for Mexico City and Acapulco overlaps with databases presented by previous scholars, the thesis catalogues and analyzes hundreds of new documents including chino baptismal records for Mexico City, an extensive database of parochial and secular records about chinos from Puebla—although, admittedly, susceptible of improvement through addition of new records from notarial archives—, and a wide variety of documents from the eighteenth century. The descriptive tables I provide for these sources in chapters two, four, and five, respectively, can serve as the basis for future studies. The last chapter discusses twenty-four literary sources, many of them previously published, and explores the correlation among these texts. This canon, which can certainly be improved and expanded, showcases a new aspect of the cultural implication of the Manila Galleon, and a corpus of sources featuring Asian immigrants, largely unacknowledged by previous scholars. These sources sometimes indicate other information such as exact provenance and familial ties. However, their nature limits the array of questions they can answer, and, to a certain extent, their relative scarcity makes it difficult to elaborate definitive statements that could be extrapolated to the Asian population of New Spain as a whole.

This thesis expands upon previous studies of Manila Galleon migration in New Spain by Tatiana Seijas, Déborah Oropeza, and Edward Slack. While insightful and well crafted, these studies are somewhat limited in their geographic scope, as they are based chiefly on sources about the Pacific coast and Mexico City. This was the reason why it was necessary to elaborate a crucial missing case study of the city of Puebla. This thesis also expands the chronology of the migratory phenomenon, by

discussing new materials from the eighteenth century. I also propose a new epidemiological hypothesis to explain the gradual disappearance of the Asian population throughout the eighteenth century. Lastly, I evaluate the correlated phenomenon of the emergence of representations of Asia and Asians in New Spanish literature and compile a canon of works representative of the literary dimension of the cultural influence of the Manila Galleon. This thesis confirms that Asians arrived in a sizeable number and influenced various aspects of life in colonial Mexico, ranging from the patterns of organization of labor in major cities, to the evolution of laws and institutions, to material, immaterial culture including, most notably, literature.

The main conclusions of this thesis can be enumerated as follows:

First, the increasing interconnectedness brought about by the emergence of the first truly global economic system triggered the first recorded wave of Asian migration to the Americas through the transpacific trade route known as the Manila Galleon. As the Spanish empire entered a “silver symbiosis”¹ with China, unmediated interaction across the Pacific intensified. As detailed in chapter one, scholars such as Flynn and Giráldez, Clossey, Gruzinski, and Yuste, consider this development an important driver of the early stages of globalization. The thesis shows that an important consequence of this process was the arrival of thousands of Asians to continental New Spain, between 1565 and 1815. This early migration challenges traditional chronologies for Asian Diaspora in the Americas that start in the nineteenth century and ignore the initial period.

Thus the thesis contributes to the argument that both in quantitative and qualitative terms this early diaspora cannot be ignored when reconstructing the history of early globalization. The study of this migration shows the demographic dimension of the Manila Galleon in its Manila-to-Acapulco vector, contributing to the extensive literature of this trade route,

¹ I borrow the term from William Schell, “Silver Symbiosis: ReOrienting Mexican Economic History,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81 (2001): 89-133.

primarily focused in two areas of research: the economic repercussions of this trade, on the one hand, and the incorporation of Asian motifs in Mexican colonial art, on the other.

Furthermore, the global microhistorical approach employed in this thesis highlights how global historical processes affected the lives of specific members of the first transpacific Asian migration, and how they themselves were harbingers of these far-reaching changes in their new home. The chinos were heralds of global transformations, and the earliest unmediated interactions between Asia and the Americas. By focusing on people, the intent is to populate the model of increasing global interconnectedness in the early modern period to better comprehend the context of the origin of modern globalization. By incorporating their experience into the grand narrative of a nascent global economy, I have tried to repopulate the macro historical model and present a fuller picture of the early modern globalizing world.

Second, between 10.000 and 20.000 immigrants from various places in South, Southeast, and East Asia, collectively known as chinos, settled throughout the American territories of the viceroyalty of New Spain, concentrating along the Pacific coast and the major urban centers of the highlands. Chinos were numerous enough to shape institutions and spark tension and collaboration with other groups. They ushered noticeable transformation in occupational, marriage, and political patterns and institutions in mainland New Spain. For this reason the study of these immigrants added to the complexity of the social, legal, and political organization, as well as the culture of New Spain, and the thesis underscores the idea that Asians contributed to the configuration of Colonial Mexico. While the majority of chinos were slaves, forced to work in plantations, as servants in rich households, and workers in textile mills, the rest were engaged in a wide variety of occupations from merchants, to vendors, to muleteers, to barbers, to artisans affecting every aspect of the economy. Their labor in the Acapulco-Colima region transformed the local

economy. They dove for pearls, worked in coconut plantations, and fermented tuba, thus providing sources of income and driving trade and cultural exchange. Chino muleteers and traders linked the region and established commercial networks. Asians also formed militias that assisted in protecting Acapulco against English, Dutch, and French pirates.

This shift in focus away from the contributions from members of the European and African Diasporas challenges traditional views that chinos were almost inconsequential to the history of New Spain. Marco Polo Hernández articulates this perspective implying that there are no cultural traces that can corroborate the presence of Asia in New Spain when he asks: “How about the cultural endowments that such a sizeable population of Sangley/Chinese would have brought along? Where is it?”² This thesis provides a detailed answer to this question. It shows that the cultural contributions of Asians in New Spain were numerous and their consequences visible to this day, and disproves Hernández’s argument that “although Tagalog, Malay, Javanese, Papuans, Timorous, Mozambiqueans, etc., entered Mexico, at the end of the day they were ‘scarce,’ [because] otherwise, the cultures of the regions would show a Chinese influence of a sort.”³ Throughout this thesis I have argued that Asians arrived in substantial numbers, and that Asia, China in particular, and Asian immigrants did influence New Spanish economy, culture, institutions, and society.

Third, chinos successfully navigated a complex social and legal context, managing to form support networks and ritual kinship ties. While chinos assimilated and amicably interacted with other groups, there were instances of tension and conflict, as exemplified by the expulsion of chino artisans and officials from indio communities, and the barber controversy of 1635 in Mexico City. The chino experience shows the limits and malleability of colonial forms of social control, and reveals the agency of

² Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 136.

³ Hernández, “The Mexican Colonial Term ‘Chino’”, 137.

minorities in the shaping of imperial institutions. The inception of the *alcalde de chinos* office in the Colima region showcases the preoccupation of colonial authorities with separating the various ethnicities that inhabited Hispanic America, while the incident of the chino *gobernador* in Huitzucó exemplifies frictions between chinos and Amerindians. Both examples debunk assumptions that Asian immigrants were too few to have an impact in New Spanish society.

As argued previously by Oropeza, Seijas, and Slack, chinos occupied an ambiguous position within the legal system, a fact that in some cases allowed them to attain special prerogatives, and other times triggered conflicts with people of other ethnic categories. I argued in favor of their view that this small minority challenged some of the forms of social and political control instituted by the Spanish in their American colonial territories because chinos were never considered fully equal to indios, negros, or mestizos. This ambiguous position in the racially determined socio-political stratification system allowed them to navigate and influence the institutional context. They were able to use this ambiguity to their advantage as some Asians moved through this complex legal system on some instances by demanding acknowledgement of their Asian ancestry to assert a privilege, such as wearing a sword, while other times hiding their heritage to avoid being characterized as slave.

Since many chinos shared a common occupation (barbers, vendors, and goldsmiths, for instance), they formed networks based on their occupation that provided support to newcomers. Upon this foundation, chinos also formed and participated in religious confraternities and developed credit networks. Benefiting from this context, some chinos, such as Antonio de la Cruz in Puebla—a figure briefly mentioned in other authors, whose case I expand by adding new information about the marriages of his children, belongings, and social status from parochial and notarial records—and Juan de Páez in Guadalajara, achieved relatively high social positions with their business acumen, accumulating substantial fortunes by buying and selling

goods through their respective extensive commercial networks. The most famous of all chinos, Catarina de San Juan, took a path toward social notoriety different than that of these merchants, evolving from a slave servant girl into a religious figure of substantial influence in Puebla.

Contrary to Seijas' argument, in terms of their cohesion as a group, I argue that chinos formed lasting bonds of ritual kinship among themselves, as suggested by the patterns of selection of godparents in baptisms of chino children. While the idea of them forming a distinctive "chino identity" is debatable, there were bonds that suggest a certain "chino commonality." Moreover, there is some indication that chinos lived in close proximity of each other, particularly in Mexico City, where chinos appear in the sources related to various places in the South West area, with the barrio of San Juan concentrating a substantial number of Asian immigrants.

Fourth, the transpacific connections of Puebla drew Asian immigrants to this city, where, as in Mexico City, they took on a wide range of occupations and contributed to the local economy. The chinos of Puebla made up a small but visible group that emerged as a consequence of the strong connections the city had with Asia through commerce. As stated above, this thesis presents the first comprehensive study of this minority in the second largest urban center in New Spain. The database of chinos in Puebla presented here serves as a relevant alternative case study. I was able to use Oropeza's, Seijas', and Slack's Mexico City model to elaborate an equivalent analysis of the Asian population of Puebla.

Puebla's rapid growth and fast development and consolidation into a diversified economy transformed it into a vital economic and cultural hub of New Spain. The city became an important agricultural and artisanal center and, as such, it quickly became a focus of internal and interoceanic trade. The accumulation of wealth in the hands of religious orders and wealthy merchants, together with its strategic commercial position, linked Puebla to Acapulco and Manila. As a result, the city came to play an integral

role in the development of the infrastructure of the Manila Galleon, providing *bizcocho* for its crews and a market for its goods. Thus Asian influence permeated the city. Like Mexico City, Puebla supplied levies for protection of Spanish interests in Asia and, crucially, the works of missionaries in Asia were celebrated in Puebla, and the city council dealt directly with Asian immigrants in the city. These issues appeared in the sessions of the municipal council, which was also concerned about celebrating the accomplishments and martyrdom of Mexican missionaries in Asia.

The survey of sources presented in chapter four shows that *chinos* were not involved in the *talavera* ceramics industry of Puebla, as opposed to what has previously been argued by Slack. Rather, Asians engaged in occupations in the city's economy that demanded most labor, in particular the *obrajes*. This is important because it undermines arguments about Asian exceptionalism. Their "Asianess" did not determine the place of Asians in the Pueblan economy. It was the labor demand of the city's industries that shaped the way these people participated in the economy of Puebla. Despite the strong influence of Chinese porcelain in the ceramics industry of the city, there are no records of Asians potters or slaves working in the kilns of Puebla. Conversely, Asians, *indios chinos*, and *chinos* participated in the *obraje* woolens industry, which played an essential role in the local economy. The height of Asian migration to Puebla seems to coincide with the period of maximum expansion of the Pueblan textile mills.

During the eighteenth century, the presence of the Asian Diaspora in Puebla diluted, as the city itself became less attractive to migration and lost a substantial part of its population after a series of epidemics, the emergence of competing manufacturing centers such as Querétaro, and a general shift of New Spain's economy towards the budding silver mining industry to the North, which left Puebla outside the most dynamic sector of the economy. The descent of *chino* population, however, was not exclusive to Puebla.

Fifth, throughout the eighteenth century the presence and notoriety of Asians diminished in New Spain as migration decreased, *mestizaje* intensified, and epidemics impacted the demographic composition of the viceroyalty. This process illustrates the changing nature of race and ethnicity in the late colonial period, as it shifted toward the evolution of a “Mexican identity” in the nineteenth century.

Between 1673 and 1815, Asian migration decreased as geopolitical changes in Europe, Asia, and the Americas altered the trade routes that had brought the first migratory wave in the preceding two centuries. The disruption of Portuguese trade networks in South and Southeast Asia meant that there were less chino slaves available for the mainland New Spanish market. The 1673 ban on chino slavery was certainly important, even if its enforcement was achieved only gradually. The ban was an incentive to owners, intent on keeping their slaves, to conceal the Asian heritage of their property. At the same time, the ongoing process of interracial mixing of *mestizaje* continued to blur the line between people of African descent, and people from Asia. It is also worth exploring further the possibility of the influence in this process of asymmetrical resistance to diseases, such as malaria and yellow fever. By the early 1800s, the presence of Asians in New Spain was less visible, and the word was used increasingly to refer to people of mixed African and Amerindian heritage.

Sixth, Asia was an important feature in a wide range of New Spanish texts throughout the colonial period. Exploring this process reveals that New Spain’s connection to Asia yielded cultural artifacts beyond furniture and paintings that ultimately influenced the worldview of the denizens of the viceroyalty. Encomiastic representations of Asians were present in New Spanish literature, but these were not informed by and had no impact on stereotypical views about chinos living in New Spain. Considering these literary artifacts is a step beyond from the extant studies of Asian influence on New Spanish artisanal aesthetics by Curiel, and Armella de Aspe, among others.

There were persistent allusions to Asia and Asians in the literature of New Spain. Asia became a recurring theme in texts written and circulated in the viceroyalty throughout the entire period the Manila Galleon existed. The majority of the titles included in the canon presented in chapter six owe their very existence to the Manila Galleon, and the two-and-a-half centuries of cultural interactions between Asia and New Spain that the trade route precipitated. China, Japan, India, and other regions were featured in the epic poems composed to celebrate the reach of the commercial network that linked the viceroyalty with the rest of the world. *Relaciones* about China, Japan, and the Philippines, were written, published, and circulated in New Spain from the late 1500s through the 1700s. The exploits of missionaries in Asia were celebrated in print in places like Mexico City and Puebla. The connection between Christian virtue and Asia were embodied in the representations of people such as Francis Xavier, Felipe de Jesús, and Catarina de San Juan.

The complexity of the mythology surrounding this latter figure shrouds the real historical person; however, the texts written about her reveal important aspects of the representations of chinos in New Spain. The biographies intended to fuel the failed attempt to make her the first saint of Puebla are among the best examples of the presence of Asians in New Spanish literature. Catarina's biographies represent Pueblan aspirations to becoming a center of universal Christianity by converting the denizens of China, Japan, and India. These books are essential sources of the first Asian migration to the Americas because they showcase the derogatory white elite view of chinos, with Asians stereotyped as greedy, mischievous, and untrustworthy individuals. These books, therefore, contribute to Mexican culture to an extent greater than that of the fabled connections between Catarina's dress and the typically Mexican china poblana costume.

Lastly, Asia and Asians were featured in the proto-novel *Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* and the earliest Mexican novel *El Periquillo Sarniento*, which

represents the culmination of this process, the ultimate consequence of Asia's influx into New Spain's literary tradition via the Manila-Acapulco trade route. Without 250 years of transpacific interaction facilitated by the Manila Galleon, none of the works discussed in this chapter would have been written. This fact clearly shows that the Manila Galleon had cultural repercussions that went far beyond the realm of material culture. This trade route directly influenced the development of New Spanish literature, and was prominently featured in what many consider to be the first Latin American novel. *El Periquillo* and the migratory flow of Asians to the Americas are two sides of the same coin: the undeniable importance of the Manila Galleon in the history of New Spain, and the history of the representations and presence of Asia in the Americas and beyond.

There are three major issues that remain unanswered. First, the precise number of Asian immigrants can never be stated with absolute certainty. The records are incomplete and smuggling has to be taken into account. The current method of extrapolation seems the only viable approximation. Second, the sources do not allow for a full reconstruction of the families and the familial ties of all *chinos* identified. I can only infer many of the networks, patterns of support, and ritual kinship across families, because there are no documents that can comprehensively reconstruct them. Third, since people who were not *chinos* produced most of the documents available, the reconstruction of the worldview, aspirations, religious practices, and values of this community is necessarily flawed. The lenses of outsiders will always distort the view of the *chinos* one can get through these materials.

There are many routes future research on this important topic can follow. One possibility is to conduct genealogical analyses of the known *chino* families to show how the awareness of Asian heritage evolved through family histories. This can be done by searching through the records for names of known *chino* individuals and families, rather than screening for the term "chino." Such an approach would allow for a clearer picture of the "when" and "why" of the process of dilution of the Asian diaspora toward the end of the colonial period. This work would also enable

research about the immediate period after independence, when priests were forbidden from annotating ethnicity in baptismal, marriage, and burial records. Study of the remainder of the Asian diaspora during the first half of the nineteenth century would show whether the “old” chino community interacted with newcomers from Asia when direct migration resumed, primarily from China, in the second half of the century.

The case studies presented in the thesis can be expanded further. Mexico City baptismal records can be explored in more detail in order to determine the evolution of chino ritual kinship networks. The database for Puebla presented in this thesis can be expanded by incorporating sources from notarial records. Another project is to further expand the scope of regional analyses to provide a broader context for the colonial Hispanic American Asians. Future databases for cities such as Valladolid (modern-day Morelia in Michoacán), Zacatecas, Querétaro, Guadalajara, and Guanajuato would yield new information about how specific regional conditions influenced and were influenced by Asian migration. An interesting case study would be Guatemala, where chinos would have been forced to navigate a more complex socio-ethnic context inhabited by people of Maya, Nahuatl, Zapotec, Mixtec, European, and African heritage. Following the model of Mexico City and Puebla, an exploration of parochial, notarial, and administrative sources could potentially serve to reconstruct the inroads chinos made in that region. Further south, an analysis of the Asian community in the viceroyalty of Peru is a logical future project. As discussed in chapter two, Asians were present in Lima from the early stages of the Manila Galleon trade according to a census. The first decades of transpacific trade, when Peruvian participation was allowed, represented a window of opportunity for a sizeable migratory movement from Asia to Peru. Once again, future exploration of parochial, notarial, and administrative archives can provide details about this group. Chinos most likely settled in relatively high numbers, and they were probably drawn further inland toward the mining center of Potosí. A Peruvian database of colonial Asian migration would allow comparative analysis with New Spain and establish differences and similarities between the two viceroyalties. A deeper exploration of

the presence of Asian immigrants in California and Louisiana can enrich the field of Asian Diaspora studies in the United States.

A different project would be to analyze how the representations of Asia in Mexican literature changed after independence. The *chinos* of New Spain left behind a heritage traceable in the literary works produced in New Spain, appearing in texts that, in some cases, were milestones in the development of the distinctiveness of people of European descent born in the Americas and eventually Mexican identity. As this thesis shows, *El Periquillo Sarniento* was the ultimate manifestation of 250 years of transpacific economic, demographic, and cultural interaction. It would be interesting to see the treatment of this heritage in subsequent works after Lizardi's death, and determine whether and how this tradition interacted with the advent of Mexican *costumbrismo*, nationalistic novels, and Romanticism.

Such explorations would reinforce the central contention of this thesis: Manila Galleon Asian migration contributed significantly to the history of Hispanic America. The transpacific trade route had repercussions that went beyond completing the first truly global economic system. It shaped the culture and demographic composition of the Americas in a profound way, challenging norms and altering colonial institutions. This minority challenges traditional chronologies for Asian Diaspora Studies in the Americas. Its study shows how a small group of individuals drove and transformed early modern globalization.

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