



The China of the Jesuits: Travels and Experiences of Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes

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Received: 23 September 2012; Accepted: 25 October 2012; Published online: 8 January 2013

ABSTRACT: During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries many reports and travel narratives helped to create a more positive image of China around the world. The remarkable efforts of the Society of Jesus were essential to this new view, thanks to a unique policy of evangelization and the personal and ethnographic contributions of some of its members. However, through a comparative analysis of narratives from Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes (both Jesuits), we can see how the texts are not just standard doctrinal narratives but also contain personal experiences, selections, interpretations and creative evaluations capable of transforming the reality.

KEYWORDS: Jesuits; China; Evangelizing Policy; Experience; Interpretation

Citation / Cómo citar este artículo: Moncó, Beatriz (2012) "The China of the Jesuits: Travels and Experiences of Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes". *Culture & History Digital Journal* 1(2): m101. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3989/chdj.2012.m101>

RESUMEN: *La China de los jesuitas: viajes y experiencias de Diego de Pantoja y Adriano de las Cortes.*- Durante los siglos XVI y XVII muchos informes y relatos de viajes contribuyeron a crear una imagen positiva de China. En este empeño destacó la Compañía de Jesús gracias a una singular política de evangelización y a las aportaciones personales y etnográficas de algunos de sus miembros. Sin embargo, mediante un análisis comparativo de las narrativas de Diego de Pantoja y Adriano de las Cortes, ambos jesuitas, se muestra cómo los textos no sólo son doctrina y norma sino también experiencia personal, selección, interpretación y creatividad valorativa capaces de transformar la realidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Jesuitas; China; Política de evangelización; Experiencia; Interpretación

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INTRODUCTION

The history of the Society of Jesus' first missions is a story of great journeys. Trips that accounted for not only the abandonment of family and land, but also manners and cultural values that had to adapt to other people and mores. It is during this time in the mid-sixteenth century when some names such as Martin de Rada, Alonso de Alvarado, Miguel de Benavides and

Francisco Javier took on more importance. Therefore, and though the path was not something unique to the Society, I postulate that the principal Jesuits practicing that mode of evangelization and who worked in Asia created a hallmark used as a reference for future generations.

This way of approaching another culture through an open, flexible and pluralistic method of evangelization, which would allow the unification of different

aspects of symbolic and religious imagination, was birthed in China by Matteo Ricci's hand with Alessandro Valignano's support. It is obvious, however, that the missionary experience in India and Japan was going to be important because Valignano was eventually appointed Visitor of Missions in the Indies—a position of power within the Society which would allow it to export a particular brand of mission prior to his position as the Provincial in 1583.

Meanwhile, Matteo Ricci was the visible head of evangelization in China and the engine of the policy of adaptation to the "Other" that was going to make history. Ricci was born in Macerata (Italy) on the 6th of October 1552, and after an intense training in different technical and humanistic colleges of the Society he traveled to Asia, arriving in China on the 7th of August 1582. There he wrote a new page in history on the missionary experience of the Society of Jesus. We have to keep in mind that when Ricci landed at Macau's port, the situation of the Jesuits was very complicated. Michele Ruggieri (the former classmate of Ricci in Coimbra) was trying for two and a half years to adapt to a place that was hostile because of the language barrier, the Portuguese interests, and lack of help from the Chinese authorities. Out of curiosity the viceroy of Kuang-tung wrote to the Jesuits from Shiu-hing and offered documents allowing them to settle in the city and build two houses in exchange for seeing a clock that Ricci had brought from Goa. However, upon the cessation of the viceroy he sent the Jesuits back to Macau and to a situation wherein they would be shunned as foreigners. Despite this, Ricci befriended the son of a mandarin who held an important position in Nanking. Thanks to him, Ricci was able to enter the world of the Chinese *literati*. This was a turning point for Ricci, who began to dress in red and blue silk, grew out his hair and beard and joined one of the most respected circles of Chinese society: the knowledge one. That's where the so-called Li-Madou (Ricci's Chinese name) discussed astrology and theology, mathematics and philosophy, astronomy and cartography while he synchronized Confucianism and Christianity, wrote his first works and tried to get permission to go to Beijing by all means at his disposal (Ricci and Trigault, 1978). Precisely at this moment, when Ricci was respected and admired, a young Spaniard arrived to China to be his assistant: Diego de Pantoja.

DIEGO DE PANTOJA'S JOURNEY TO CHINA

Diego de Pantoja was born in Valdemoro (Madrid) where he was baptized on April 24th, 1571. He was the son of Diego Sánchez and Mariana Pantoja, members of long-established Christian families well known in the area. Between their families they counted a doctor of theology (who would become a professor at Universidad de Alcalá), several members

of different religious orders (Father Bautista de Alderete in the same Society) and official members of the Inquisition. His childhood was spent with high-ranking religious officials and in a place with a certain social and economic life under the protection of the Duke de Lerma. On the 6th of April 1589 Diego de Pantoja entered Alcalá College of the Society of Jesus. A year later he was in the *Casa de Probación*¹ of Villarejo de Fuentes, in the province of Cuenca. In 1593 he resided at Plasencia College where he continued his theology, rhetoric, grammar, logic, philosophy, science, architecture, Greek, Latin and art studies. Thanks to his intelligence and diligence, training and virtue (ideal teaching that the Society would give way to in the *Ratio Studiorum*) he was transferred to the Toledo College where he met Father Gil de la Mata, Superior of the province of Japan, who related the status of missions for those eastern areas to the students.

This recruitment policy through lectures and readings from travel journals was common in the Society. The missionaries stories, both in person and through letters, were a common *topos* that allowed them to see and know themselves as part of an important work that transcended space and time² and also created a drive to go to remote places and share the Light of the Gospel. This was the case of young Pantoja who, helped by Father Luis de Guzman, his spiritual guide, insisted on going to the authorities of the Order to gain permission to march eastward. Despite the opposition of his family, he went to Lisbon to go to Japan and begin his missionary work.

Little is known of his stay in Portugal and his voyage. On the 10th of April 1596 he went to Goa, where he arrived after a six month long journey on October 25th. Six months later, on the 23rd of April 1597, accompanied by the Fathers Valignano, Longobardi and Dias, he sailed forth to Macau, where he arrived on July 20th. In this city Pantoja continued his studies until the summer of 1598, when his trip to Japan was drawing closer. However, as he related later, due to the war situation in those lands he was advised to stay in Macau until October 1599 when he began to prepare his entry into China under the excuse of fair trade in Guangzhou. On November 1st, he and Lazzaro Cattaneo dressed up in Chinese clothes, hid in a boat and headed north through Nanxiong, Ganzhou, Ji'an and Nanchang to navigate along the river Changjiang (Yangtze) and reach Nanjing through Anqing and Wuhu.

In March of 1600, after spending five months traveling, Diego de Pantoja met Matteo Ricci. Just two months later, on the 20th of May 1600, both Fathers began a long and bumpy journey to Beijing with the Chinese brothers Sebastián Fernández (Zhon Mingren) and Enmanuele Pereira (You Wenhui). They reached their destination on the 24th of January 1601.

Months later, on the 9th of March 1602, following the custom of the Society members, Diego de Pantoja

wrote to Father Luis de Guzmán a long letter wherein he gave details of his journey and stay in China. Here we are going to call it the *Carta*, but it was added under the title *Carta del Padre Diego de Pantoja, Religioso de la Compañía de Jesús, para el Padre Luis de Guzmán, Provincial de la Provincia de Toledo to a text entitled Relación de la Entrada de Algunos Padres de la Compañía de Jesús en la China y Particulares Sucesos que tuvieron y de cosas muy notables que vieron en el mismo Reino*. This *Carta* will serve us as the ethnographic material used to know and appreciate Father Pantoja's journey.³

The *Carta* consists of 133 sheets of paper both front and back, a total of 256 pages and five lines where dates and names are indicated. It is written in cultivated Castilian but occasionally it includes some Portuguese words or phrases because, as he says, his language has mixed origins (*mixturados*). It makes sense if we think of him as a stranger in a strange land, surrounded by Italians and Portuguese in his own priestly community, and in a tense situation in which they related certain nationalisms (Kai, 1997) with each one's rank with respect to Ricci's evangelizing policy. Indeed, while we speak of these early missionaries in China as a group of men with one mind, not all of them obeyed the same standards that the religious terms inside Christian orthodoxy dictated (Moncó, 1997; Gernet, 1973, 1982 and 1996), nor even the somewhat loose translation that Ricci made about some of those standards. This helps us see that Pantoja's situation was not easy: isolation through language, inability to communicate in his native tongue with his peers and difficulty in sharing a cultural *ethos*.

As I said, the *Carta* is a complete report of what Pantoja's experiences had been up until its writing. Structurally it is divided into two parts: the first one dedicated to evangelization and his process until he arrived in Beijing and the second focused on Chinese culture. This text fulfills the requirements for such reports: exoticism, diversity and uniqueness, something exportable to Europe with the possibility of arousing the curiosity of those who could use other information and other products. We cannot forget that it was the curiosity about the "Other", the demonstration of its particularity and the longing for what was considered different and valuable that promoted the travel and commerce of the time. And here the East was an amazing and endless source of wonders: spices, silks, porcelain, lacquer, silver, mercury, nitrate, musk, sulfur and even shawls and fans. It is not odd that Pantoja's *Carta* was issued upon its arrival to Spain in Valladolid (1604), Seville (1605) and Palencia (1606), and was translated into several languages: French in 1607, published in Arras, Rennes and Lyon; German (Munich) in 1608, and Latin in the same year. The English version was translated in 1625, when the adventure of another Jesuit character of this text began: Adriano de las Cortes.

Therefore, in the first part of the *Carta* Pantoja relates some background of the Society's mission in China, his own trips to Nanking, and the events that happened to the group of Jesuits while they tried to get to Beijing. This last trip, which I consider the main one, was prepared carefully long ahead of time. As a result of this Lazzaro Cattaneo returned to Macau in order to raise enough money and gifts for his new adventure. After seeing Diego de Pantoja's background and experience Pantoja was chosen to be Ricci's assistant and started his preparations through readings that allowed him to be closer to the knowledge and culture of China.

As previously stated, after traveling three hundred leagues he arrived to Nanking in March of 1600. The group of Jesuits prepared the journey to the capital of the Empire with almost no time to rest because they had to go through rivers that were close to freezing. Their departure began in the Grand Canal Road, on the 20th of May 1600,⁴ heading north aboard a pontoon that had a "giantbronze clock" that marked the hours with Chinese characters and in which the needle was a "sun bird" (Lacouture, 1993: 380). The ability to sail on a river for so long during such a long journey was something that surprised Pantoja, and that's why he recognized that the Yangtze is "the largest [river] that I saw in my life, which in some places is more than three leagues wide, and very deep, which the Chinese (due to its enormity) call small sea" (64/142),⁵ and he even said how they found another river that was "also big" (referring to the Huanghe or Yellow river) from which you could barely drink because "it seemed more like mud than water". This allowed him to perceive how life in China was linked to what might be called water culture. That's the reason Pantoja was so amazed by cormorant fishing, the abundance of fish species, all the different types of boats and, over all, the abundance of them: "it is one of the greatest glories of this kingdom, because in every city there are two, one made of boats, and the other of houses" (65v-66/143).⁶

Therefore, on their way to the Forbidden City the Jesuits traveled two hundred and thirty leagues in forty days, reaching Linqing (in Shandong Province). After that they continued to T'ien-Tsin where they had serious problems with a powerful eunuch named Ma-Tang. Pantoja devoted several pages to comment on how despicable that group of imperial servers was, and the greed that this particular eunuch evidenced. Ma-Tang wanted to take away the gifts that the Jesuits had for the Emperor and place himself as the intermediary to gain all of the honor and gratitude. The Jesuits went to live on a boat where the eunuch visited them several times to achieve his purpose. However, Ma-Tang couldn't persuade them to give up their gifts, so he allowed the Jesuits to continue to Beijing fifteen days after that.

During the trip the Jesuits were well treated in every town they passed through. After eight days they

sent a letter to the Emperor requesting him to allow them entry into the capital; they were just three days away from Beijing. The days passed and no reply from the Emperor was forthcoming, which in Pantoja's words "usually is a signal of their not liking what you propose" (21v/114).⁷ Another two weeks passed waiting, and at the end the eunuch returned in all his glory. Pantoja wrote in detail of the quality of the eunuch's boat (rooms, shutters, silk drapes, large corridors) which on the outside had "a liquor as a varnish, which flows from certain trees, which is made with mixtures of all colors. In Japan and here there is a great abundance of this varnish, that Portuguese people called *charan*. It is really lustrous, bright and durable, and things that are coated with it shine like mirrors" (22-22v/115).⁸ The delay of the Emperor's answer disturbed the eunuch, and he decided to give the travellers the services of a servant who was actually intended to be surveillance.

Three more months passed while they were waiting. Eventually they received news that the Emperor had ordered the eunuch to review the gifts the Jesuits had brought. Ma-Tang did so immediately and sent the inventory to the Imperial Palace. Again, the gifts to the Wanli Emperor deserve our attention because they are the core of the Jesuit mission.

Indeed, as previously mentioned, certain foreign products delighted the *literati* (Pantoja called them *letrados*) and even the Emperor. Some things had just a little value (Ricci called them *cossette*), and some were even produced by Ricci with the help of an Indian from Goa: prisms, sundials, and small clocks. But others were special pieces that were specifically requested by the Society keeping in mind that the Chinese would be bound by the rules of reciprocity. Ma-Tang knew that the Jesuit's boat hid gifts that would truly be considered treasures in China. That's the reason the eunuch shouted at the priests asking for the gifts, opened their boxes of clothing, and snatched a few items that were real losses for Pantoja: a cross, a reliquary, some relics, and the mass chalice. However, in intercultural contact not every strange thing has equal value, and not everything has in itself the understanding of symbolism but interpretation. So when Ma-Tang saw a really valuable crucifix in which Christ was bloody and full of wounds, "very beautiful and peaceful for our [the Jesuits] eyes and hearts", Ma-Tang made "gestures without saying anything, until he turned his head scared and asked what that thing was" (28/119).⁹ After the Jesuits explained themselves, the eunuch understood and rudely commented that "we [the Jesuits] were very despicable and inhumane men, because we brought a human figure, mistreated, nailed to a cross and full of blood" (28v/119).¹⁰ It doesn't seem strange that Ma-Tang thought that it was just "a spell to kill the king" (29/119). This event, a product of a cultural shock and different symbolic interpretations, was extended through the *literati*. It created such discomfort that

some even advised the Jesuits to adapt to Chinese rules and manners. Another part of the *literati* class withdrew their friendship and favors. Obviously contact with different cultures was not easy.

So, threatened by the eunuch, continuously watched, with padlocks on the doors, unable to buy anything and without the consolation of the daily mass, two and a half months passed until Ma-tang came to visit the Jesuits again. To their surprise, the Emperor had heard about their trip and was also curious about some of the gifts he had known that the Jesuits brought for him; including "bells that tolled by themselves" (32/121)¹¹ and some images. The eunuch had no choice but to let them go accompanied by servants and a mandarin, returning a huge portion of the gifts he had removed from the Fathers first.

After four days of travel the Jesuits arrived at Beijing's gates, where they received a house to live outside the city walls. Meanwhile they sent some of their gifts to the Wanli Emperor. According to Diego de Pantoja, the Jesuits were soon informed that the Emperor had carefully observed the gifts, and he was very surprised by the images and, above all, by the clocks. This fact, which seems simple, would enter into a scientific and technical exchange process record that was to become actually one of the bases of cultural understanding between Jesuits and Chinese hierarchies (Moncó, 1997 and 2007), and allowed the Society to stay in those places through time and even to include some members into various sections of the Chinese government.¹²

Shortly after, the Jesuits received the order to show how the clock worked, and for the first time they entered into the Imperial Palace, on horseback, publicly and in the middle of a great crowd. In the Palace the Fathers manipulated the mechanisms of the clocks to show their skill with them, and they were told that the emperor had appointed four eunuchs "of his best mathematicians" (34/123) to learn its operation. During the time spent teaching the clock's operations the Jesuits would be "at their house inside the palace" (Id.). It is from this moment when curiosity about the strange and the mediation of knowledge became an important method of cultural understanding. Thus, Wanli "often sent us eunuchs to ask some questions about our land" (34v/123)¹³ such as the king, their clothes and hats and way of burial. Ricci and Pantoja exploited this curiosity, showing the Emperor paintings of the Spanish king and the Pope, plans of El Escorial, and explaining how royal burials were made, taking advantage of the importance of burial rituals in Chinese culture. The information flowed easily and the Emperor was curious to know the traditions of these strangers. As a rule, the Emperor didn't show himself except to very close people, and that's the reason he ordered a portrait of the Jesuits, a portrait, writes Pantoja, where Ricci and himself appear "with a span beard and dressed in honored *letrado[s]*" (37/124)¹⁴ which reached the

feet. This transformation was part of the adaptation policy and evangelization spoken above, and its objective was very clear to Pantoja: “with this mask the Emperor requires us to walk the charity and treatment of this pagan, until our Lord wishes for something else” (Id.)

Pantoja’s journey had arrived to a good point and while objectives did not go smoothly, they were not met with serious problems. For years the group of Jesuits settled and performed conversions that opened to them the doors to part of the Chinese intellectualism. Those were enormously sweet moments for the Fathers that I have explained elsewhere (Moncó, 2011). Ricci was respected as a mathematician and an astrologer and Pantoja as a cartographer and a musician. That situation allowed him to make a Spanish-Chinese dictionary of harpsichord notes and even rectify the geographical situation of China and Beijing by performing calculations on the latitudes of the major cities between Guanzhou and Beijing (Dunne, 1962: 116). However, I cannot itemize the successes of Ricci or Pantoja, nor even comment Pantoja’s value as an ethnographer (Moncó, 2011: 59–69) since it would exceed the purpose of this text. But I think it is necessary to say that the privileged situation that Pantoja enjoyed gave him a kindly view towards everything that surrounded him. His perception was the analytical perception of someone that had everything at his fingertips: lands, cultivation ways, fauna, flora, fruits, goods, letters, etiquette invitations and clothing, people and his appearance, funeral rituals, mandarin system, the eunuchs, the imperial family and the importance of hierarchies in Chinese culture. Pantoja didn’t like everything, obviously, but he described and interpreted the other culture with a care and flexibility worthy of the best anthropologists.

This paper also avoids delving into the tensions between the missionaries of the Society of Jesus after Ricci’s death in 1610 but those conflicts, while they did not affect Pantoja’s production of intellectual works,¹⁵ certainly affected his evangelization. Similarly, though I cannot explain it properly here, Longobardi’s new policy benefited those who did not want the Society’s presence in China (Gernet, 1982). In 1615 Shen Que was appointed Deputy Minister of Rites. He was very critical of Christian ideas, and a year later he wrote a memorandum for the Emperor stating the problems that the Jesuits might have in China and the confusion that their doctrine could generate. The case against the Society had only just begun (Kai, 1997:125–141; Dunne 1962) but that was the beginning of the end for Pantoja. After several setbacks (Moncó, 2011: 80–83) he made his last trip to southern China leaving Beijing on the 18th of March 1617. In May Pantoja arrived to Nanking and in that summer was already in Guangzhou, where he was detained several months. In 1618, Pantoja was very ill and he died in the city of Macau. He was 47 years old.

ADRIANO DE LAS CORTES’ JOURNEY TO CHINA

Adriano de las Cortes, son of Juan Martin de las Cortes y Oblitas and María de Balbarroya (Galé Casajús, 2005), was born in 1578¹⁶ in Tauste (Zaragoza) within a noble and wealthy family of which some members were ecclesiastical. He entered the Society of Jesus in the month of May of 1596, and in 1602 he was studying at the College of Barcelona learning art and theology. In 1604 he departed through New Spain to the Philippines where he arrived on June 22nd, 1605. Three years later Father de las Cortes moved to the Visayas Islands where he practiced his missionary work (especially in Tinagon, north of the island of Samar). Some years later he would become the director of the Jesuit residence there.

The name of Adriano de las Cortes would not have been related to China without a specific event: the order from his superiors to mediate in an important issue, probably economic, with Macau’s authorities. Complying with his orders, on the 25th of January 1625 Adriano de las Cortes left Manila bound for Macau aboard the galley *Nuestra Señora de Guia*. On the boat were traveling Portuguese merchants, Japanese, Spanish, servants and slaves. The galley was also carrying a large amount of silver bullion. Three weeks later, on February 16th, the boat sank on the coast of China due to a large storm. The place where they were wrecked was called “Chauceo” by Father Adriano de las Cortes, i.e. “Chauchiufo” kingdom. Arrested by the Chinese, the Jesuit was captive for one year and four months. Once released from China on February 21th, 1626, Adriano de las Cortes returned to Macau to go to Manila, where he arrived on May 20th. After his arrival he dedicated himself to writing about his travel experience to China and hired an artist who painted some of the aspects that Adriano remembered. Three years later, on the 6th of May 1629, he died in Manila leaving a text of a great historical and ethnographic value.

The account of his journey is a manuscript consisting of 174 pages with front and back, and two very different parts. The first one was entitled *Primera parte de la Relación que escribe el P. Adriano de las Cortes de la Compañía de Jesús del viaje, naufragio y cautiverio que con otras personas padeció en Chauceo, Reino de la Gran China. con lo demás que vio en lo que de ella anduvo*, and the second part was titled *Segunda parte de la relación, en la cual se ponen en pinturas y en plantas las cosas más notables que se han dicho en la primera parte, citándose a los capítulos de ella y añadiendo algunos nuevos puntos y declaraciones sobre cada una de las pinturas*.¹⁷

The travelogue devotes some chapters to his captivity experience and the rescue process and others to describe aspects of Chinese culture. This is really important, and perhaps it could even give us an idea of

why Father de las Cortes and his text are not usually well known by experts of Chinese history. It is true that Adriano de las Cortes was not a missionary in China, but we must keep in mind that sometimes he gives a non ordinary overview of Chinese people and even of the Society's policies and image precisely at a time when relations between the Jesuits and the Chinese government were not at their strongest. It was better to be diplomatic and refine reality. As I stated previously, the Jesuits had been expelled from China, tensions about the feasibility of Chinese customs divided the initial missionary group, and Trigault's party was gradually settling in Chinese Society through its expertise in science and technique. It truly did not seem very convenient to create new problems.

De las Cortes' cannot be said to be a highly structured text despite the divisions I mentioned before. The notes about cultural aspects of China are mixed with personal events, so jumping from one subject to another occasionally interrupts the writing. That is a fact that Adriano de las Cortes perceived and did not hesitate to apologize for before resuming his narrative. This makes reading the text difficult sometimes, but also gives the story a vitality lacking in other texts that are more organized and doctrinal. Overall, Father Adriano devoted more pages to describe striking aspects of Chinese culture than to describe his own adventure. In this sense we could said that he is more an ethnographer than a captive.

As mentioned previously, the trip was eventful from the beginning. Father Adriano and his travel partners left Manila and went along the coast to Bojeador Cape (northwest of Luzon), a journey that took them twenty-two days including four stops. Weather conditions forced them to go back to the Abra de Vigan River in Ilocos province, where they almost lost some passengers due to bad weather. They went back to the Cape mentioned above "from which to the mainland of Great China, which falls to the north and has in front of it a straight line, there will be a hundred leagues" (2/99),¹⁸ having to go towards the west to reach Macau, as the Jesuit said. The navigation continued for two days "with a peaceful sea and favorable wind" that would not last long because they were already at 22 degrees latitude with fog and cold. They continued navigating this way until the early hours of February 16th, two hours before dawn, when the galley was wrecked off the coast of China. The moments that followed the accident were terrifying: the shipwreck, cold, darkness, ignorance of where they were and the language they were hearing, violence, screams and deaths of the drowned. After that, in chapter two, the Father narrated in detail the first contact with Chinese people. A brutal and bloody contact in which three hundred Chinese people speared, beat with stones and even beheaded some of the aliens. Amongst all of the screams the Chinese stripped the Jesuits searching their clothes and hair for

valuable objects. The Chinese slapped, pushed and hit them, and despite the shipwreck and being unable to escape the Chinese they tied their hands, put nooses around their necks and began to walk away from the beach followed by the faltering steps of the prisoners and the laughs and jeers of those around them. This "without doing anything to cause offense first", wrote the Jesuit. Tied like a dog Father Adriano was loaned to a Chinese man who he called "my master" at the time.

Running and between all the violence Adriano de las Cortes arrived in Chingaiso (probably Jinghaisuo), where he was taken to his guardian's home and given some food and clothes. It is in these circumstances that the Father started to experience the cultural shock that would run throughout all of his text. An example of this is the strangeness that came when, very thirsty, he asked for water using body signals and the Chinese brought him hot water with *cha*, an herb unbeknownst to him. Actually the Jesuit did not seem to much like the tea, the rice that was offered to him or the "salty little fish" that they served him for lunch. During all this time Father Adriano feared for his life, especially seeing what was happening with some of his companions. He spent the night with a deep fear, trusting in God. The next day was his first audience and, surprisingly, Adriano de las Cortes began to observe important cultural aspects in the Chinese court etiquette and ritual: the dresses, the characteristics of hats, inkwells and inks, writing brushes and furniture adorning the courtroom.

In the following days, intercultural and interpersonal contact was increased due to the curiosity of the strange. The Father was surprised by the interest that his presence aroused among the people of Chingaiso, who made several trips back and forth to see the prisoner -the more reckless even touched his face and his hands. Adriano de las Cortes was not used to this behavior, and it helped him perceive how differences in people's body creates distance, otherness and curiosity. The Father even discussed, with some humor, how black people who accompanied them in the boat caused real furor to Chinese people who "were admiring of their not becoming whiter despite their washing themselves" (15/120).¹⁹ It is true, however, that the curiosity was mutual and Father Adriano kept wondering about those aspects of Chinese culture that were most peculiar to him. For example, when he was moved from one place to another he could see each localities' constructions, rivers, boats and people. Countless people, writes the Father, products of polygamous marriages and the concubine system and, over all, the Chinese men's desire to have children. He writes that the poorest classes "load themselves with children" and so, "to not raise them, they throw them into the rivers without any fear when they just give birth them, even when the children are healthy and good, particularly if they are female".

There was so much infanticide, especially feminine, that he saw “some rivers with drowned creatures” (24 and 24v/137 and 138).²⁰ Different cultures, different values and different sensitivities. An exercise in cultural relativity for Father Adriano de las Cortes.

His going to the city that he called Toyo, which is probably Denghai (Girard, 2001:26), fascinated him with its moat filled with water and boats and gave him a chance to look closely at the etiquette that supported the Mandarin system (figure 1). The entourage that accompanied them (the Father and his master), the Denghai ceremonies, flags, music, sun hats and colors impressed him so much that he devoted not only several pages but many beautiful illustrations in the second part of the text to his experiences (figure 2). From there they traveled to Chauchiufo, some prisoners by land and others, like him, in two boats (*champanes*) over a day and a half. He liked the city and what he saw, especially the large bridges over the river, stones, streets, buildings, shops, pastries, fruits, meat and a variety of goods. All of that was exotic to him and built a spectacular picture. It is true, however, that this knowledge of Chinese culture did not substantially change the uncomfortable and dangerous situation in which he was placed because it was clear that he was immersed in a field of commercial and political forces that were above him. The Chinese accused the prisoners of being thieves and pirates, of hiding the silver and even of being Dutch and therefore their enemies. The Spanish people defended

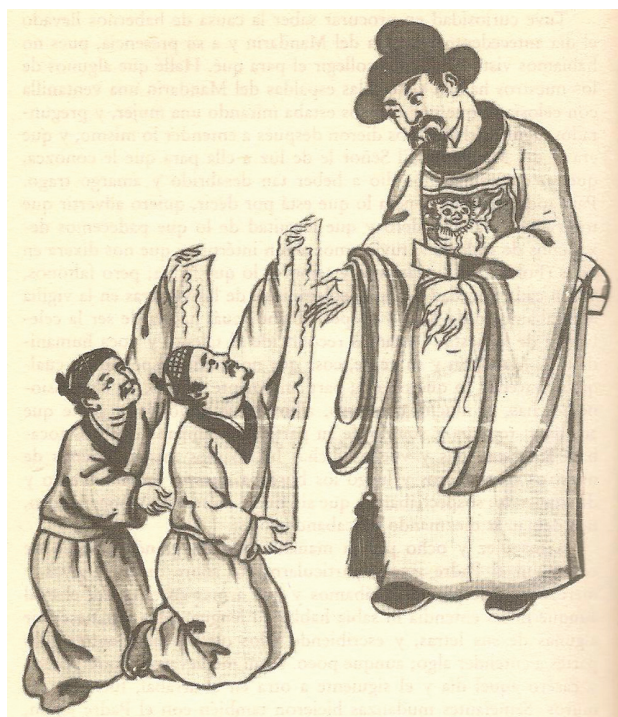


FIGURE 1. Mandarin in hearing. Moncó, Beatriz (editor) (1991) *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes S.I.* Alianza Editorial, Madrid, p. 118 (fol. 152v).



FIGURE 2. Mandarin and his entourage. Moncó, Beatriz (editor) (1991) *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes S.I.* Alianza Editorial, Madrid, p. 145 (fol. 161).

themselves badly due to not knowing the language well and being at the mercy of the interpreters who, more than once, did not translate what the captives said but what they thought the Chinese authorities wanted to hear. The judgement of the captives continued by different Mandarins. They asked about what had happened since the wreck, about how to proceed with the Chingaiso Mandarins (whom they accused of stealing the prisoners) and about the details of their detention. That highlighted the different ways of seeing the problem between board members and the judge, who may even give them alms to help their livelihood.

In the first days of March the statements continued with the interpretation problems that I mentioned before. The prisoners tried to explain their situation through writing with the hopes that their words could be translated, something that they never achieved. However, the Mandarins gave them some clothes and new alms before distributing them between various towns waiting for Guangzhou's Mandarin's resolution. Finally a windfall for the prisoners: they found a Chinese person who could speak Portuguese because he had lived for a while in Macau. This allowed some fluency in communication on both sides and the start of freedom negotiations. However, the real fortune was a letter that one of the Jesuit's companions was able to send to Macau and, as Father Adriano

exhaustively says, “it is what kept us all alive till today”.

Chauchiufu is where Adriano de las Cortes had the occasion to deal with the *bonzos* (Buddhist monks). Presumably, the Father had prior information about them because Ricci and his companions had trouble with that group as they related in the *Annuas*.²¹ De las Cortes carefully described the monks’ appearance, their clothes, socks, shoes, hats, their rituals and prayers, almsgiving and penances and even their *pagodes*. But obviously, he warned, everything was marked with a signs of the differences between Buddhism and what happens in “our Christianity”: in Buddhism there are basic errors and superstitions, and some of the customs (the plea for charity, for example) imply attitudes that, in his opinion, verged on ridiculous.

After that Father de las Cortes and thirteen more captives left for Panchiuso, where they would be detained for three months. They walked the journey on foot through several cities of which we can highlight the village of Amptao. Girard (2001:26) marks those cities are Banjiashe and Hantangxun, both located east of Chauzhoufu. The Jesuit there witnessed an event that caused him real shock. By coincidence a Chinese man damaged a door and a Mandarin ordered him to flog him with a cane. This punishment, common in Chinese culture, deeply disturbed Father Adriano but allowed him to describe the punishment method in great detail both in the text and in the drawings (figure 3): how they held the prisoner, the executioner’s clothing and behavior, characteristics of a whipping cane, how they had to hit the captive, the executioner’s bribes and, going into this topic, the tortures, punishments and prisons in China. Altogether, these are terrible pages that are unusual in other texts.

Moreover, following a common theme, Father Adriano describes some aspects of the Chinese military. The most curious thing is that though he is a “soldier of Christ”, his comments seem more those of a military man than a religious one. Chinese soldiers astonished Father de las Cortes and he found them humorous. He did not like the soldiers’ training, ironically saying “for entertainment and laughs we used to go to see them” (65/209). Adriano de las Cortes did not like what he considered an evil trade and was deeply disturbed that soldiers were disciplined with a cane. However, it seems a contradiction that in the illustrated pages he displays an impressive aesthetic of war: soldiers with different headdresses and attractive uniforms, shields, katanas, cutlasses, pikes, muskets, bows and arrows, banners, brass and percussion instruments, maces, spears, and halberds fill a good number of pages and seem to show how much interest the Jesuit had in military dress and weaponry. On the other hand, and this aspect is common in the texts of the Jesuits, Father de las Cortes had an extraordinary admiration for the world



FIGURE 3. Spanking with cane. Moncó, Beatriz (editor) (1991) *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes S.I.* Alianza Editorial, Madrid, p. 176 (fol. 169).

of education and knowledge. Manifesting that education’s value is part of the Chinese *ethos* to the point that it “is strange that the boys, even if they are sad and very rustic and low [...] learn to read and write their letters, as it is rare among the adult people of any quality that they can not read and write. It is surprising the inclination and fondness that they have for this thing” (67/216).²² The Father deeply admired Chinese schools, their quantity and organization, and even the educational system. Calligraphy was an aspect that shows how the curiosity for what is different can be a two-way street: Chinese letters amazed the Jesuit but, as he explains, the Chinese “they die for seeing us writing”. Father Pantoja made an almost identical comment about the same subject. Panchiuso was a very extreme and hard experience for Adriano de las Cortes and his fellow captives. No wonder that he describes in detail what he calls the “misery” of both the Chinese people and the Jesuits (cold, little food, bedbugs and fleas). This situation prompted him to write about the differences between European and Chinese meals and the use of chopsticks, which were really surprising to him. The comparison and contrast are commonplace in these pages. In fact, Father Adriano focuses on three animals that garnered his

attention and brought him back to Pantoja's text: tigers, to the description of which he devotes Chapter XIII and some splendid drawings; musk deer, whose nature and characteristics had been discussed already in Europe and to which he dedicates Chapter XXVII and several paintings (figure 4); and cormorants (which he calls "sea ravens") whose fishing mode attracted attention from any foreigner, including Pantoja. From these descriptions of unique animals Father Adriano passed to meat, fish, fruits, vegetables and other products such as oil, vinegar, olives and cereals, and to writing of wealth and the flow of Chinese people, especially what we might call the economic system and cultural values involved. So, Father Adriano devoted six chapters to livestock production, fisheries and agriculture, mining and the steel industry. Thanks to those chapters we know the high productivity of the Chinese in pigs, chickens, ducks, geese, doves and partridges, although their gourmet style caused them to eat less meat and opt

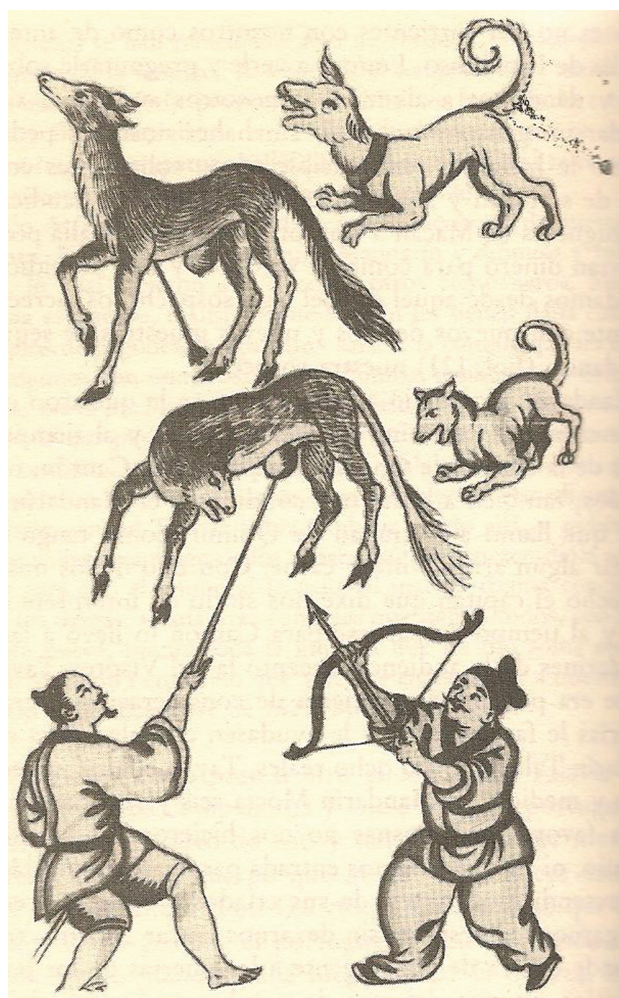


FIGURE 4. Musk hunting. Moncó, Beatriz (editor) (1991) *Viaje de la China del Padre Adriano de las Cortes S.I.* Alianza Editorial, Madrid, p. 294 (fol. 157v).

more for fish. Hence the Chinese interest in breeding fish and what we might call fish-farm culture.

Moreover, the merchandising (he called it *mercadurias*) interested him greatly. It is an aspect that Father Adriano knew very well thanks to his stay in Philippines, an important stopping point in China's exports. He also tells how Chinese goods traveled to Japan and India, especially by way of Portuguese traders through Guangzhou and also by the Chinese trade in Chincheo's zone and Amoy's port. Gold, pearls, rubies, musk, silks, rhubarb and other medicinal products such as the "stick of China"²³ (which de las Cortes says he even tried) were traded by these routes. What also gained his attention, the same as in Pantoja's case, was the porcelain, and he wrote that it is the "best and finest" in the world. Handmade manufacturing of wood and metal were also skills he admired.

Father Adriano de las Cortes, as I previously mentioned, was not in a good personal situation. Maybe that's why focused his attention on aspects that are not common in this type of travel narrative. Chinese people, he said, are greedy and that is how they displayed themselves during his trial and in economic relationships that they had with Macau's merchants. However, this trait of the Chinese character had a good side: they exploited everything, and in this sense Adriano de las Cortes commented on processes we designate today as recycling and even customization. Nothing in China was not reused, nothing was wasted: Chinese people kept their pig's hair and even their own to make brushes, the bones of their animals to fertilize fields, old clothes to shred and twist for weaving rugs and blankets. Father Adriano also said that one of the most desirable jobs was to sweep the shops to get the silver dust that could accumulate in crevices. Adriano missed very little. In fact, he also described in detail what he called "natural features and inclinations of Chinese people" (97/262), calling much his attention their hairless bodies and beardless faces, and the custom of body shaving "leaving not a single hair". However, from an ethical and moral perspective Chinese people did not stand out in a positive way for him, "they do not have heart", "without any kind of shame", "given to carnalities", he even says, "contrary to the very nature, as brute animals" and "larceny, as beasts and rapine birds" (97v/263). However, he recognizes that they are "skillful to easily learn every mechanical job" "very subtle" and "smart" and that there is not a dishonorable job for them "if they have higher gains" (98/263),²⁴ a comment that knowing what occurred in Spain at that time can only be positive.

The process of his trial, on the one hand, and his liberation, on the other, was proceeding with the statements of one another, the interference between different mandarins, the more or less reliable news of Macau and an uphill fight for the return of the silver. Meanwhile the Society of Jesus also performed

negotiations that failed.²⁵ Father Adriano's situation, in late 1625, did not look hopeful. Finally, in Christmas they received permission to go to Guangzhou, a twelve or fifteen days journey that in their poor condition took them twenty-three with some stops. Father Adriano explained the direction of his travel writing how the first ten days was "all the way through the kingdom of Chauchiufu, from south to north". Once they left it behind they entered Fuchiufu "always turning westward" and traveling another thirteen days through "the kingdom of Guangzhou" (123/297).²⁶

On the 6th of February 1626 they arrived to Guangzhou city. He admired its beauty and described it with a functional and spatial bias. De las Cortes described the maritime zone, the slums of the lower classes, the "new city" (exponent of the growth and heterogeneity) and the "old city" inhabited by the upper classes and the mandarins. Along with this, he delineated the structure and decoration of buildings and houses, courtyards, arches, walls, turrets and he even explained the noise and color. There, they had an interview with the *Anchaçu*, a provincial commissioner that checked that the silver had gone into the hands of different mandarins. Finally, when they were free they left for Macau, where they arrived on February 21st. There the Fathers of the Society welcomed Father Adriano with hospitality and provided him with care and proper attire. At last the Jesuit, having fulfilled his mission in Macau, parted for Luzon (Philippines) on April 30th. He arrived, dodging a large storm in which many travelers drowned, on May 20th. There, as I said, Father Adriano de las Cortes began to write a report with no equal about China until his death three years later.

THE IMAGE OF CHINA OF PANTOJA AND DE LAS CORTES

All peoples have been forced to define the Other starting with themselves, their own cultural context, their values and ideology, and definitively, their own construction of the human. In this sense, travels to unknown lands and the stories that are based on them are, on the one hand, an excellent source to appreciate the basic sense behind this construction that we are speaking of. On the other hand, the engine that generates a certain discourse about the Other reverts to the society to which it belongs and created it, allowing it to design a singular and expressive image of what is different. Thereby travel narratives are a pluralistic approach to the unknown, but at the same time, a creation of modes and expression and significance in the ways of human diversity.

Certainly we find fundamental problems for anthropological and historical study such as the internal coherence of the sources, the contradictory objective data and even the degree of confidence in them, among many others. But what I want to emphasize here, rather

than the correctness of the descriptions of these travelers, is the possibility of creativity that these texts have: setting a reality, transforming it into an image and giving it meaning, probability and even verisimilitude. However, it is clear that the mere comparison of sources tell us about distortions of this image, about breaks on the particular strokes that design it, about necessary qualifications that may position us between the desired and the real image. This is because the traveler's gaze is sometimes neither practical information nor cultural reflection, but an uneven and discursive process of diverse character, born from different perspectives and variables. Thus we can speak of mythical, political, geographical, moral, ethical, romantic, exotic, ethnographical and even visual discourses.²⁷ But we also have to see that these words of the texts are written from differing circumstances, personalities, roles and statuses and with goals, values, and personal backgrounds which are also varied.

Otherwise, at every moment in the history of a country the imported image of the Other may or may not be integrated into the construction of what is human and valuable. In some cases the new data might overlap the old information in a cumulative process. This is the case for China (Cartier, 1998): for example, this new information will transform the image itself and an important part of the critical thinking at the time, and this was precisely what happened in Europe after contact with the East. A thinking that was limited by the real perception of a fragmented and partial alterity (finally, no one had information regarding the entire Chinese culture) that is often meant as a complete whole, complete and seamless. One problem, moreover, which is also a part of the anthropological epistemology and methodology as a whole. Therefore it is not surprising that prior to the 16th century the imagery of China still had a lot of the mythical and topical character that had developed during the Medieval Age, having as the main source the travels of Marco Polo. Nor it is unexpected the fact of talking about the mythical figures such as Prester John (12th century) or considering that the origin of Christianity in China came from the preaching of Saint Thomas and his followers, which could certainly explain the great development seen in China.

Either way it is clear that little by little, especially through the writings of Portuguese and Spanish people, an image of China that represents the distance of Otherness but also the proximity of the exotic and desirable is taking shape. Meanwhile, on the basis of these descriptions there is a common schema that will conform to a usual design of objectives and glances. That is, the instructions given to the Crown men, the different questionnaires that served as a guide for further work, and even the texts developed by navigators, explorers, merchants or priests until the sixteenth century created a descriptive model that generated commonplaces in the observation of China,

and that also influenced the ways of seeing, selecting, explaining and analyzing those unknown lands.

I stated before the importance of certain variables in those glances. Now what follows is that, aside from those looks, it is important to consider the historical or ethnographic text as a language, a discourse in which it is necessary to know who talks and to whom, the intention and the way it does and what is its ultimate goal. Otherwise stated, it is essential to know not only the biography and ideology of he who generates the discourse, but also his priorities and selection criteria and valuation, the intellectual framework from which he does so, the interests he has and even the different situations that can configure what we might call ethnographic sensitivities. It will also be necessary to know the discourse recipient and the distance between both goals. In this sense we should clearly distinguish that not all these writings have an ethnographic objective, but many are aimed to achieve economic and logistical support or to legitimize certain measure policies. The case of Alonso Sánchez (López Pego, 2011) and José Acosta (Del Pino Díaz, 1985) can serve as an example.

Although the construction of this common image that characterizes many of the Spanish and Portuguese texts was produced during the sixteenth century, the Jesuits represented the emergence of a new paradigm in the perception of China. A new framework for analysis and interpretation which partly broke with the geographical and cultural fragmentation and bias, mentioned before, and led to a really radical qualitative transformation. The Jesuits, for the most part, lived long periods of time in different parts of China, adopted their customs, accepted many of their values, learned their language and opened a path of unprecedented intercultural understanding (Moncó, 1997 and 1998). Something very different, as I already mentioned, is the ultimate success of this process.

However, we have to consider that “being there” is typical of classical anthropology and not entirely different from what Ollé (1998: 556) calls the “idealizing *topoi*” of China and what we find in both texts, Pantoja’s and De las Cortes’. In this sense, the references to the hierarchical and pyramidal structure of Chinese society, the wealth of their land, the urban greatness and rationality of their cities, the absence of mendicity, big wars, plagues, the extent of their territory and population size are common points that our travelers’ commentaries admired. To this we must add what I personally call “exoticizing *topoi*”, which precisely emphasizes the most visible otherness: special dresses and hats, meals and eating etiquette, rituals of various kinds, different sexual behaviors or writing and letter systems. But unlike others and against what Ollé points out as “impartiality and absence of corruption in the state administration and justice”, our Jesuits show that rule and reality are very different and both have data about them: Pantoja with the eunuchs and De las Cortes with

the mandarins. In my opinion, this shows that indeed the Jesuit way of observing, watching, and analyzing reports is substantially different because their experience and contact with the Other allow for it.

Moreover, as I said, what I call the personal equation of each traveler cannot be more different. It has been characterized by the writers’ situation and personality which in turn modifies the prioritization, selection, evaluation and reflection of concrete data and set to a specific intellectual framework and a specific purpose. What is usual and can be seen as objectified is, as Adriano de las Cortes said, “eye to eye”, but these variables that we mention are like lenses that discriminate, clarify, blur, increase, decrease or distort the images. So there is intentionality and creativity in their eyes. There is life, experience and distinction. There are feelings and emotions. There are people.

Diego de Pantoja was in China voluntarily, as a missionary, trying to fulfill a religious purpose for which he was prepared and lived for years. Even with some inconveniences created by the eunuchs, as we have seen, he was a loved and respected man by Chinese intellectuality, he was treated with the consideration given to his technical knowledge, he was a guest flattered by the mandarins, the service and, somewhat, by the Emperor himself. He was in Beijing, the capital of the Empire, and he moved without any more hindrance than the protocol and palace etiquette. By contrast, Adriano de las Cortes arrived in China by chance, in harsh conditions that also prevented him from reaching his goal. Mistreated, wounded, terrified and with an endemic hunger he went from court to court, unable to speak and explain himself, not understanding, not knowing what was going to happen with his life. Two positions, two glances, two very different contexts that also draw a very different China.

Nevertheless, both Jesuits came from a missionary tradition with long experience in bridging cultural gaps, in recounting to their religious peers other senses of the human, in giving an account of what is happening in other places and explaining it carefully to allow a key interpretation that can understood and analyzed. And so they write their travel stories: with precision, rigor, with a sense of proportion and intent of verisimilitude that sometimes surprises the readers²⁸ but that somehow is a trademark of the Society and of an education concerned in lessons of those subjects that would help in writing. Not in vain the same Ignacio de Loyola warned “what is written is much more to look at than what is spoken, because writing remains and always gives testimony” (Burrieza Sánchez, 2004: 40). Testimonials like the ones by Diego de Pantoja and Adriano de las Cortes that today, four centuries later, are still a first-hand ethnographic source.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you very much to Julia B. Campbell and Javier Nieto for their help with the English translation, and really for their kindness, their patience and their affection.

NOTES

- Place where the future Jesuits studied and “proved” that they were acceptable members, as the founder of the Order, Ignatius of Loyola, specified in *Las Constituciones*. They made the novitiate (first grade of probation), a second degree before delivering the votes of the biennium and be admitted in the school grade, and a third probation headed to the achievement of the profession that terminates their spiritual preparation. It can be seen in texts of Burrieza Sánchez (2004).
- The internal organization of the Society required the communication through ongoing reports. Colleges should send one every four months to the General Superior (the ones called *Quadrimestres Litterae*), but later they would extend to the annuity and constitute the *Cartas Annuas*, an excellent source of information about the development of the work of the Jesuits and a good way to encourage students and novices to join them.
- Under those titles I published the *Carta* of Father Pantoja with an introductory study (Moncó, 2011). I used a copy of Madrid’s National Library. I will quote referring to the original sheet first and the page of my text later.
- This is the date that shows Pantoja. In the biographies of Ricci the date is May 18th.
- In the original text: “[venimos por un río] el mayor que en mi vida ví, que por algunas partes es mas de tres leguas de ancho, y muy hondo, el qual los Chinas (por su grandeza) llaman mar pequeño”. “[...] Encontramos otro rio tambien grande, que mas parecia de lodo que de agua”.
- In the original text: “[...] es cosa de las mayores grandezas deste reyno, porque en cada ciudad ay dos, vna de embarcaciones, y otra de casas”.
- In the original text: “[...] suele ser señal de no gustar con lo que le proponen.”
- In the original text: “[...] vn licor como barniz, que corre de ciertos arboles, el qual hazen con misturas de todas las colores que en Iapon y aqui ay mucha abundancia, y los portugueses llaman charan, es cosa muy lustrosa, resplandeciente y durable, y las cosas que dan con el quedan resplandecientes como espejos”. *Charan* is the *charaô*, also known as Portuguese lacker. Normally it had several color layers, sometimes even combined with paint.
- In the original text: “[...] muy hermoso y apacible para nuestros ojos y corazon [...] Hazia gestos sin decir nada, hasta que espantado boluio la cabeça, y pregunto que cosa era aquella”.
- In the original text: “[...] eramos hombres muy ruynes, pues que con tanta inhumanidad trayamos vna figura humana, maltratada, clauada en vna cruz, y llena de sangre”.
- What Father Pantoja translates as “bells tolled by themselves”, explaining that they are watches, is the translation of *ziming zhong*. The term refers to it being rocker wheel watches and could strike the hours with sounds. The Chinese ones were hourglasses and incense watches. These watches were going to be an ideal passport to get to the emperor. It can be seen in texts of Spence, 1984 and Gernet, 1982. Moreover the images that Pantoja cite were pictures by Lucas of Leyden and his painting was obviously feeling very different volume than the one produced by Chinese technique.
- Mediation by the technique pioneered by Ricci, Pantoja and Sabbatino de Ursis was reinforced years later with the expedition called “Trigault Mission”. Here we highlight Nicolás Trigault, Johann Schreck, Giacomo Rho and Adam Schall von Bell, who would join evangelization and science (especially astronomy and mathematics) to the name of the Society of Jesus.
- In the original text: “Muchas vezes embiaua Eunuchos a nos preguntar varias cosas de nuestra tierra”.
- In the original text: “[...] sino con vna barba de un palmo y vn vestido de letrado onrado China” [...] con esta mascara nos obliga a andar la caridad y trato de esta Gentilidad, hasta que nuestro Señor quiera otra cosa”.
- He wrote several books in Chinese: *Renley yuanshi* (Descent of Man), *Tianshen Mogui shuo* (Treatise about good and evil angels), *Shouman shimo* (History of the Passion of our Lord) and his masterpiece *Quike Daquan* (Treaty of the seven deadly sins and virtues).
- For details of his biography and travel narrative see Moncó (1991) where I made the transcript of his manuscript and a preliminary study.
- The original text is incomplete. It ends at page 174 without being able to know the cause. Perhaps, knowing the dates, his death may coincide. The original is at the *British Museum Library. Collection of Manuscript in the Spanish Language*. To see the division of chapters of each of the parts check Moncó (1991).
- In the original text: “[...] desde el cual hasta la tierra firme de la gran China, que le cae al norte y tiene en frente de si recta linea, habrá cien leguas”.
- In the original text: “[...] no acababan de admirarse cómo lavándose no se volviesen más blancos”.
- In the original text: “[...] por no criarlos, arrojan muchos en acabándoles de parir en los ríos, aunque sanos y buenos, públicamente sin ningún género de temor ni de recato, particularmente sin son hembras” [...] “viendo algunas criaturas por los ríos sobreaguadas”. The Chinese system of polygyny and the low value of children are common topics in both Jesuits. They believe that the first is a cultural mistake that for Pantoja, directly involved in their refusal to convert to Christianity. To know the structure of kinship and family see Cartier (1988). For the treatment of women by Spanish travelers consult Moncó (2001).
- In the manuscript of Father Adriano one can see that he had previous readings about China. Not only those wrote by his fellow Jesuits but most likely the work of Marco Polo, Gaspar da Cruz and Juan González de Mendoza. This latter one, entitled *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del Gran Reino de la China*, was first published in Rome in 1585 and in just twenty years had forty editions, becoming an important source for developing certain image of China in Europe.
- In the original text: “[...] es raro el muchacho aunque sea tristísimo y muy rústico y bajo chino que por lo menos no aprenda a leer y a escribir sus letras, como lo es raro entre los grandes de cualquier calidad que sean el que no sepa leer y escribir. Es cosa particular la inclinación y afición que a esto tienen” [...] “morianse por vernos escribir a nosotros”.
- The Father uses the Portuguese term “palo de la China”. It is kind of a mushroom that grows underground and was used in traditional Chinese medicine particularly for spleen diseases.
- In the original text: “[...] son de poco corazón [...] sin ningún género de verguenza” [...] “dados a carnalidades” [...] “a las muy contrarias a la naturaleza, cuales animales brutos” [...] “y al latrocínio como fieras y aves de rapiña” [...] “habílissimos para con facilidad aprender cuantos oficios mecánicos hay” [...] “sutílissimos” [...] “astutos” [...] “como hallen mayor ganancia”.
- As I said before Father Adriano wrote the text once released. This led him to know what was happening among the mandarins, Macau’s government and the authorities of the Society of Jesus. So, he could include several letters in his text that clarify this process.
- In the original text: “[...] todo el camino por el reino de Chauchiufu, de sur a norte” [...] “dando la vuelta siempre hacia poniente” [...] “el reino de Cantón”.
- I refer here to the expressive and creative power of cultural images that Father Adriano’s manuscript drawings have. One aspect that I have completely ignored in this text, but that is part of a process that set an European image of China and would have its best expression with the importations of paintings, folding screens, shawls, porcelain, etc., and especially with the photographs that come to Europe since the 19th century.

28. It is important the desire that both have for the realization and the translation of what they are seeing in familiar terms for readers of their texts. The case of Father Adriano is fascinating: he measured with steps lengths of buildings, accounts the expenses that Chinese people have in rituals, questions and posts the prices of some goods and even dares to suggest the earnings of the Emperor.

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