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The Role of Cacao and Chocolate in Transpacific Exchange. Part II. Cacao as Transpacific Trade Good and Global Commodity

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Resumen: En el transcurso de la segunda mitad del siglo XVI, el chocolate y el cacao se hicieron cada vez más populares entre muchos europeos. En la década de 1630, si no antes, no sólo los españoles sino también los holandeses, los franceses e incluso los ingleses consumían una buena cantidad de cacao. Sin embargo, y a pesar de tratarse de un producto verdaderamente global, su historia de distribución en Asia Oriental apenas ha sido estudiada. Este artículo busca sacar a la luz dichas informaciones. En la primera parte de esta investigación, se aborda cómo el cacao y el chocolate llegaron por primera vez a Filipinas, China y Japón, y en los impactos que el nuevo producto tuvo en las sociedades locales. En una segunda parte, se investiga con más detalle los diversos usos del cacao y el chocolate y su surgimiento como producto global, con especial atención al viaje hacia el oeste, desde América hasta Asia.

Palabras clave: cacao, chocolate, intercambio transpacífico, Filipinas, Asia, América, China, Japón

Abstract: In the course of the second half of the 16th century, chocolate and cacao became increasingly popular among many Europeans. By the 1630s, if not earlier, not only the Spanish but also the Dutch, the French and even the English were consuming a good deal of cacao. However, despite being a truly global product, its history of distribution in East Asia has hardly been studied. This article seeks to bring this information to light. The first part of this research deals with how cacao and chocolate first arrived in the Philippines, China and Japan, and the impacts that the new product had on local societies. In the second part, it is investigated in more detail the various uses of cacao and chocolate and their emergence as a global product, with a special focus on the journey westward from the Americas to Asia.

Keywords: cacao, chocolate, transpacific exchange, Philippines, Asia, America, China, Japan

Introduction

In the course of the second half of the sixteenth century, chocolate and cacao became increasingly popular among many Europeans. By the 1630s if not earlier, not only the Spanish but also the Dutch, the French, and even the English were consuming a fair amount of cacao.¹ Cacao drinking was introduced into Britain in 1657, and by the early eighteenth century ‘*chocolaterías*’ existed throughout London, competing with the traditional coffee houses. The drinking of cacao received the support of Quakers, who considered chocolate to be a welcome substitute for ginger.² Chocolate was frequently sent as a present from New Spain, both to Spaniards living in Asia and to residents in Spain: In 1621, the Count of Santiago sent some small boxes of chocolate to his wife; in 1625, the Countess of Santiago of New Spain sent, among other things, boxes of chocolate and cacao to the Marchioness of Belvedere in Madrid.³

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¹ See also Nadia Fernández-de-Pinedo, “Global Commodities in Early Modern Spain”, in Manuel Perez Garcia · Lucio De Sousa (eds.), *Global History and New Polycentric Approaches Europe, Asia and the Americas in a World Network System* [Palgrave Studies in Comparative Global History] (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 293-318.

² Julia García Paris, *Intercambio y Difusión de Plantas de Consumo entre el Nuevo y el Viejo Mundo* (Madrid: Servicio de Extensión Agraria, Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca, y Alimentación), 58-59.

³ José L. Gasch-Tomás, *The Atlantic World and the Manila Galleons. Circulation, Market, and Consumption of Asian Goods in the Spanish Empire, 1565–1650* [The Atlantic World. Europe, Africa, and the Americas, 1500–1830, 37] (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2019), 30 (with reference to AGI, Contratación, 1866, 651-654), 41-42 (with reference to AGI, Contratación, 1880, 221-231).

In the first part of my research, I have focused on how cacao and chocolate first came to the Philippines, China, and Japan, and on the impacts the new product had on local societies⁴. We have seen that China and Japan, where the consumption of chocolate was not as readily adopted as a drink or medicine as in the Philippines, still found themselves dragged into its commercial orbit by producing the cups, containers, and jars, in which chocolate was drunk, stored, and/or prepared. In this second part, I will investigate in more detail the various uses of cacao and chocolate and its emergence as a global commodity, focussing on the ‘American-Asian Pacific world’. In this function, the importance of chocolate goes beyond that of being a luxury drink, a stimulant, or a medicine. Despite initial opposition from the Catholic Church, whose representatives considered chocolate an enjoyable luxury, chocolate soon became an almost world-wide popular drink, gradually being consumed by ordinary people as well. Cacao developed as a cash crop in the Philippines, and it helped other flavours, especially cinnamon and vanilla, to boom as a result of changing drinking habits. Interestingly, cacao beans even assumed the functions of a currency for a brief period in the Philippines.⁵ And against the backdrop of a chronological development, we can observe that Chinese actors, for example, continued to be ‘held under the spell’ of cacao and chocolate, even though they were not the big consumers of chocolate.

Of course, the development of cacao as a cash crop does not mean

4 Angela Schottenhammer, “The Role of Cacao in Transpacific Exchange. Part I, Cacao comes to Asia”, *TRANSPACIFIC Research Notes 2* (2023).

5 As to discuss the use of cacao beans as money in the Philippines would mean going beyond the focus of this chapter, namely on cacao and chocolate as food, medicine, and cash crop, I am writing a separate article discussing the use of cacao beans as a currency in Manila in the cadre of contemporary monetary history: its working title is “A Forgotten Aspect of Transpacific History: Currencies in Seventeenth-Eighteenth Century Manila”, in preparation.

that the nutritious and medical qualities of chocolate were no longer valued. It is interesting to note that the provisions required in 1842 for ‘Her Majesty’s Royal Naval Forces [of Great Britain] in China (amounting to 4,200 men)’ mention, among other food items such as bread, flour, raisins, tea, sugar, vinegar, and lemon juice (3,800 pounds), also 9,919 pounds of chocolate totalling 47,517 pounds for 4,200 men for 181 days.⁶ This is a clear indication of the nutritious and medical qualities of chocolate that were obviously highly valued at that time. Another document in the National Archives in Kew, UK, contains an announcement in *The China Mail*, vol. 12:617 from 11 December 1856, on the sale of flour barrels, galleons of lime juice, preserved meats, soups, coffee – and “Superior Manila Chocolate”.⁷ Chocolate obviously played an important role in the diet of contemporary sailors and soldiers. This may demonstrate cacao’s path from a Meso-American beverage to a global commodity, as a medicine, a nutritious food, a cash crop, and even as money.

The development of cacao as a global commodity is closely related to changing chocolate tastes and preparation methods, and the Spanish soon realised the economic potential of the plant and its fruit. In the Philippines, Spain’s colony in Asia, the introduction of cacao and a chocolate culture had particularly far-reaching consequences. It reached the island archipelago as cargo and as a provision of many galleons crossing the Pacific Ocean and was transplanted locally in

⁶ “Correspondence Relevant to Military Operations in China” (p. 26), in *Despatches, Offices and Individuals: 1842*. Manuscript Number: CO 129/1 in The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom), Archive: Hong Kong, Britain and China, 1841–1951, Collection “War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office: Hong Kong, Original Correspondence”, electronic resource.

⁷ The National Archives (Kew), November 3–December 6, 1856, Correspondence Archive Imperial China and the West part I, 1815–1881, Collection: FO 17 Foreign Office: Political and Other Departments: General Correspondence, China, document no. FO 17/252.

the early 1670s, as we have seen in Part I of my investigation. This was around the time that cacao beans also served as a local currency in Manila. By the eighteenth century, cacao came to be considered increasingly important as a commercial crop whose cultivation should be encouraged in order to sell it abroad and to pay, for example, for the Chinese imports in demand by the local community.

With the Manila galleon trade, the city of Manila developed as a commercial hub in Southeast Asia. The maintenance of the local Spanish community long remained a subsidised undertaking for the Spanish Crown. Local Spanish governors and authorities in Manila consequently early thought about means and ways to sustain the Spanish community.

Most of the silver shipped from Acapulco to Manila was finally used to pay for Chinese goods in return. The gradual destruction of local, social and economic structures by the Spanish, including forced labour and the imposition of tribute payments, accelerated this process. As a consequence, agricultural output fell continuously, peasants left their land, and gradually even food had to be imported, mostly from the Chinese. At the same time, we need to take into consideration contemporary politico-economic changes in the European-China trade and its impacts on both the production of required commodities like silk in China and on the Spanish China-Philippine and transpacific trades, which occurred in the early to mid-eighteenth century.⁸ In this context, this chapter can be seen as another small step showing that the economic history of Manila as a hub of transpacific trade “requires

⁸ For an article analysing the specific developments and changes in the China-Philippine trade, due to European competition and political-economic decisions in China, see Antoni Picazo Muntaner, “El comercio de Filipinas en el tránsito al siglo XVIII: la política comercial china”, *Vegueta. Anuario de la Facultad de Geografía e Historia* 20 (2020), 253-272.

a fuller picture”⁹ focusing on the Spanish transpacific, the Chinese and non-Chinese intra-Asian, and the European global trades. Manila was not only an entrepôt in the transpacific trade, but it was also part of intra-Asian, and global European commercial networks. Against this background, we also have to understand the various eighteenth-century projects to make the Philippines more independent from Spanish subsidies and Chinese imports and to promote, among other plants, the cultivation of cacao.

The Role and Uses of Cacao in Pre-Columbian America: A Brief Survey

The cacao plant (*Theobroma cacao* L.) or “food of the gods”, a name given to it by Carl von Linné (latinised Carolus Linnaeus, 1707–1778), the famous Swedish botanist and naturalist who laid the foundations for biological binomial nomenclature, defining natural *genera* and *species* of organisms to create a uniform system, is an indigenous American plant. Cacao beans were highly valued in pre-Columbian times, not only for the production of chocolate but also as means of circulation, or as money in other words. This alone bears witness to the high value given to the plant by the indigenous Indian population.

Five major districts of pre-Columbian cacao cultivation have been recognized, the three most important of which, Soconusco (at the Pacific coast in south Chiapas), Suchitepéquez, and Izalco, were situated along the Pacific coast, corresponding to parts of modern

⁹ Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel, *Chinese Shipping and Merchant Networks at the Edge of the Spanish Pacific: The Minnan-Manila Trade, 1680–1840*, PhD dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles, 2019), 456.

Chiapas (in Mexico), Guatemala and El Salvador.¹⁰

In pre-Columbian America, drinking chocolate was definitely a custom of the social elites. The daily consumption of cacao at the court of Nezahualcōyotl (r. 1429–1472) in Texcoco has been estimated at four *xiquipiles*, the equivalent of 32,000 cacao beans;¹¹ one of the store-houses of Moctezuma (r. 1502/03–1520) at the time of the conquest contained 4,000 loads of cacao beans packed in bales so large that they could hardly be lifted by six men.¹²

The Aztec herbal of 1552, *Códice Badiano* (also known as *Códice Martín de la Cruz*; *Códice de la Cruz-Badiano*) describes the tree, its fruit, and its various uses, especially for medicinal purposes. In addition, cacao was obviously also used as a dye: “Tlalpal-cacauatl, cacao dye. *Theobroma cacao*.”¹³ The *Códice Badiano* constitutes one of the earliest known documents to mention cacao and vanilla (*Vanilla planifolia*; *tlixochitl*), the latter being used as an aromatic flavour to add to the chocolate drink. The *Códice Badiano* also includes an image of “Cacaua-xochitl”, the cacao flower, *Theobroma cacao* L. (Fig. 1).¹⁴

The root of the word ‘chocolate’ stems from the Nahuatl

¹⁰ Pesach Lubinsky, *Historical and Evolutionary Origins of Cultivated Vanilla*, PhD dissertation, University of California Riverside, 2007, 19.

¹¹ Henry Bruman, “The Culture History of Mexican Vanilla”, *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 28:3 (1948), 360-376, 362, with reference to Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Historia chichimeca* (Mexico City: 1892), 168.

¹² *Ibid.*, with reference to Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquía Indiana* (Madrid: 1723), 3 vols., vol. I, 47.

¹³ See William Gates, *An Aztec Herbal. The Classic Codex of 1552* (first published in Baltimore: The Maya Society, 1939; Dover edition, Bruce Byland: 2000), 317, with reference to *p. 68, 8-1.

¹⁴ William Gates, *An Aztec Herbal*, 74: *Theobroma cacao* L., *Myrodia funebris* Benth.

cacaoatl, meaning ‘cacao water’, and *xoco* meaning ‘sour water’,¹⁵ an indirect attestation to the fact that cacao and chocolate as a drink were originally not sweet.

Cacao beans also circulated as money and played a major role as an equivalent of value in contemporary society. The price of cacao beans apparently remained high after the Spanish conquest, but native trade and the wealth of the natives declined. As a consequence, the use of chocolate as a beverage became even more restricted.¹⁶ Although the growing of cacao was encouraged, this was mainly because the beans continued to be used as a local currency. Around the mid- to late-sixteenth century the prices of cacao beans in Spanish America gradually fell,¹⁷ and the once crucial role of cacao beans as currency consequently declined as well.¹⁸

¹⁵ William Gates, *An Aztec Herbal*, 276.

¹⁶ Henry Bruman, “The Culture History of Mexican Vanilla”, 364.

¹⁷ This, according to Henry Bruman, can be deduced primarily from the following developments: first, a salary cut by order of the viceroy dated January 11, 1576 stated that henceforth the common labourers of Acatlin, near Atotonilco, were to be paid thirty cacao beans per day, instead of twenty; second, a shift from payment in cacao to payment in silver – an order by the viceroy dated August 1, 1580, states that the Indians tending the cacao orchards of Colima should in the future be paid in silver and not in cacao. See Henry Bruman, “The Culture History of Mexican Vanilla”, 365, footnote 21, with reference to AGNM, Ramo General de Parte, I, 108; and AGNM, Ramo General de Parte, II, 216 v.

¹⁸ As the Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún (1505?–1590) records, the cacao beans were originally so valuable that people began to produce counterfeit seeds to pass as money. The counterfeiters used items, such as “amaranth seed dough, wax, (and) avocado pits” to falsify cacao beans. See *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, que en doce libros y dos volúmenes escribió, el R. P. Fr. Bernardino de Sahagún, con notas y suplementos por Carlos Maria de Bustamente (México: Imprenta del Ciudadano Alejandro Valdés, 1830), Capítulo XVIII, “De los que venden cacao, maíz y frisóles Cacahuateros”, tomo III, 44, digital versión http://cdigital.dgb.uanl.mx/la/1080012524_C/1080012525_T3/1080012525_MA.PDF.

To prepare their chocolate drink, the Mayas “fermented and dried the cacao beans and then roasted them over fire. After removing the shells, the beans were ground and crushed into a chocolate paste.”¹⁹ Then, water²⁰, chili and sometimes honey were added. The Aztecs later added wine and cornmeal to the drink. In pre-Columbian times, therefore, several spices were added to chocolate as a drink.

The cacao tree is described in various contemporary sources of European missionaries, for example, by Bernardino de Sahagún (1499–1590), a Franciscan friar and missionary active in New Spain:

“As far as the tree is concerned from which cacao is made, it is called *cacaoaquavil*, it has broad leaves, is cupped and of medium size. The fruits it makes resemble maize cobs, or a bit bigger: inside they contain the cacao beans; the outside is purple and the inner part red or reddish. When it is fresh, if you drink a lot, it makes one drunk, and if you drink it moderately, it cools and refreshes.”

A el árbol donde se hace el cacao llaman *cacaoaquavil*, tiene las ojas anchas, es acopado y mediano: el fruto que hace es como mazorcas de maíz, ó poco mayores: tienen de dentro los granos de cacao, por fuera es morado, y por la parte interior encarnado ó vermejo: cuando es nuevo, si se bebe mucho emborraça, y si se bebe templadamente refrigera y refresca.²¹

¹⁹ “Cacao: Food of the Gods and their People”, in <https://chocolateclass.wordpress.com/2016/02/19/cacao-food-of-the-gods-and-their-people/> (accessed March 17, 2021).

²⁰ As liquid as we drink chocolate today, 1 pound of chocolate requires 3,170 gallons of water. Courtesy of Gene Anderson, “Water: Sacred Trust or Resource to Waste”, in ‘Developing Mexican Food: Globalization Early On’, *Krazy Kioto, The Gene Anderson Webpage*, October 10, 2016, <http://www.krazykioti.com/2016/10/>.

²¹ Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* (Mexico City: 1938), 5 vols., vol. III, 237.

Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478–1557)²² provides us with a detailed description of the tree, called *cacao* or *cacaguat*, its properties, how the cacao beans are collected and how the cacao mass was prepared by the natives. He tells us that “the Indians roast almonds, like hazelnuts, very toasted, and then they grind them, and because these people are friends to drinking human blood, in order to make this beverage resembling blood, they put a little bit of *bixa* into it, so that it finally becomes coloured: if the cacao is ground without *bixa*, it is of a brownish colour.”

Fernández de Oviedo continues by explaining that it takes five to six days to complete the process of obtaining a fine, well-ground mass and adding a little water. Part of the mass is very red because of the *bixa* they add; they paint their faces (cheeks, moustache and nose) so that they look very muddy, before carrying it to the market.²³ This ‘*bixa*’, that is *Bixa orellana* L., or annatto, is a small tree, the achiote tree, whose orange-red seeds serves as a symbolic red colouring of the chocolate. The tree is native to tropical regions from Mexico to Brazil.²⁴ It is used by the indigenous people for a variety of purposes, including as body paint, insect repellent, a food colorant, inks, dyes, sunscreen, soap additives and a fabric colorant, and reportedly was also for medicinal purposes, to treat fevers or dysentery.²⁵

²² Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478–1557), *Historia General y Natural de las Indias, islas y tierra-firme del mar océano* (1851), Tomo I, libro VIII. Cap. XXX, 318-319; electronic version provided by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek <https://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/title/BV020799958>.

²³ Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, 318.

²⁴ Annatto has been introduced over time to a large number of tropical areas around the world, including Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Philippines.

²⁵ Entry “*Bixa orellana*”, Missouri Botanical Garden, <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=e852> (accessed March 24, 2021).

The Spanish missionary S. J. José de Acosta (1540–1600) reports in detail about the cacao tree and the use of cacao, with spices and much chili, among the indigenous American Indians. Meanwhile, he continues, the Spanish would also “die for this black chocolate” (*se muere por el negro chocolate*). He also mentions that cacao beans are used as a currency and as alms for the poor and draws attention to its medical uses to treat chest complaints, catarrh, and stomach-ache (*dicen que es pectoral, y para el estómago y contra el catarro*).²⁶ Acosta was the first person to use the word ‘chocolate’, based on the Aztec word ‘*choco(l)atl*’.²⁷

In Peruvian folk medicine, where coca also played a central role, cacao and chocolate were introduced only in Spanish times, in contrast to the Aztec food and healing tradition.²⁸

The Gradual Path of Cacao to Become a Global Commodity

The popularity of hot chocolate in the New World increased quickly in the 1580s, obviously beginning in the south and gradually spreading north. “In the early seventeenth century it became so extraordinarily popular in Chiapas and Guatemala that its use became almost a vice”, Henry Bruman notes.²⁹ Apparently, ‘Guatemalan women’ had invented the best and healthiest ways of

²⁶ José de Acosta, (1540–1600), *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias, en que se tratan las cosas notables del cielo, y elementos, metales, plantas y animales dellas y los ritos, y ceremonias, leyes y gobierno, y guerras de los indios. Compuesta por el Padre Joseph de Acosta Religioso de la Compañía de Jesus. Dirigida a la Serenissima Infanta Doña Isabella Clara Eugenia de Austria* (Impreso en Sevilla en casa Juan de Leon, 1590), Cap. 22, “Del Cacao, y de la Coca”, 251.

²⁷ Sabine Anagnostou, *Jesuiten in Spanisch-Amerika als Übermittler von heilkundlichem Wissen* (Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000), 135.

²⁸ Sabine Anagnostou, *Jesuiten in Spanisch-Amerika*, 134.

²⁹ Henry Bruman, “The Culture History of Mexican Vanilla”, 366.

preparing chocolate.³⁰ It was a path to success with some obstacles.

Interestingly, during the anti-Christian atmosphere in China in the 1730s and 1740s, cacao and chocolate were also officially condemned. It was argued that chocolate serves to bewitch, to miscarry pregnant women, to sterilize women, to promote lascivia³¹, that the foreign missionaries used it to enchant and deceive people, but especially to prevent women from conceiving— a major concern in the contemporary world.³² And it was not uncommon for chocolate to be confiscated at customs.³³ Nevertheless, Chinese merchants, as we will see, actively contributed to the success story of cacao and chocolate.

Chocolate – A vice for Christians?

The growing popularity of chocolate is also demonstrated by a widespread dispute as to whether the use of hot chocolate was permissible during Lent, as discussed, for example, by the Mexican

³⁰ José Pardo-Tomás, “Natural knowledge and medical remedies in the book of secrets: uses and appropriations in Juan de Cárdenas’ *Problemas y secretos maravillosos de las Indias* (Mexico, 1591)”, in Sabine Anagnostou, Florike Egmond, and Christoph Friedrich (eds.), *A Passion for Plants: Materia Medica and Botany in Scientific Networks from the 16th to 18th Centuries* (Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2011), 93-108, 105.

³¹ José María González O. P., *Misiones Dominicanas en China* (1700–1750), 2 vols. [Biblioteca «Misionalia Hispanica» Publicada por el Instituto Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo], vol. IX (Madrid :1958), vol. 2, 432.

³² José María González O. P., *Misiones Dominicanas en China*, vol. 2, 145. The interest in the fertility of women appears as a global phenomenon of the time that we observe as well in other world regions.

³³ José María González O. P., *Misiones Dominicanas en China*, vol. 2, 327, 399. I will discuss this aspect in more detail in a forthcoming article.

physician Juan de Cárdenas (1563–1609).³⁴

The Jesuits favoured liquid chocolate because it could serve as a substitute for solid food during Lent,³⁵ an opinion that caused quite some controversies in the religious order. Francisco de Otazo and Valerio de Ledesma (both fl. late 16th century), for example, were alarmed about the growing custom of drinking chocolate and told the Superior General Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615) that many take poor health and illness “as an excuse for introducing the drinking of chocolate into this province, and it seems that once a person has begun to indulge in it, he can no longer live without it.”³⁶ Chocolate was considered so dangerous as to have the potential to destroy the Society of Jesus, being also a danger to chastity and a violation of the rule of evangelical poverty. Acquaviva had therefore first forbidden chocolate in Jesuit houses except as a medicine. We encounter various stories about ordinary individuals as well as priests being condemned for consuming chocolate. Inquisition documents attest to the fact that these rules were also strictly observed and enforced in the Philippine Archipelago.

Nicolas de Campos, senior clerk of the Province of Pangasinan, aged twenty-six, reported and complained about an event in the village of Lingayen, Pangasinan, in order to relieve his conscience: Don Lorenzo Bravo de Cuéllar, mayor of this province, had offered some chocolate to another individual on the festival day of San Francisco de

³⁴ Juan de Cárdenas, *Problemas y secretos maravillosos de las Indias* (2nd ed., Mexico City, 1913).

³⁵ “Does one break the law of fasting by drinking chocolate? No; for according to the common opinion of theologians, chocolate (if not compounded with corn flour or similar solid foods) is a liquid, and liquids do not break the fast”. H. de la Costa, S.J., *Jesuits in the Philippines* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 356.

³⁶ H. de la Costa, S.J., *Jesuits in the Philippines*, 248-249.

Asis (5 October 1637) and consequently violated the Law, as people were expected to fast on this Christian holiday.³⁷ And chocolate was simply considered too nutritious as a food, which would consequently violate the rule to fast.

In another case, in the afternoon of 11 March 1651, a woman called, María de Jesús, aged sixty-nine, appeared before Fray Francisco de Paula of the Inquisition Office of Manila without being judicially summoned, reportedly to relieve her conscience. She reported that approximately nine months previously, on a Christian holiday, obviously during Easter, Don Felipe de Baeza, a priest, observed Doña Jusepa de la Roca until late at night, and she, María, had heard Don Felipe de Baeza ask Doña María de Montenegro, her cousin, to provide him with some chocolate. Doña María de Montenegro told him that she would give him some chocolate, were he not having to hold the Holy Mass (*y le dixo, que sino que habia decir la Missa, le darian chocolate*).³⁸ He thereupon responded that he did not have to hold the Mass, and using this argument asked again to be given some chocolate. Then, the following day, another priest, Don Pedro Navarro, resident of Manila, came to the house of this witness and said that Don Felipe de Baeza had held the Mass in the Capilla Real, and that he had heard that Doña María de Montenegro had stated that this could not have been Don Felipe de Baeza because he had drunk chocolate after midnight that day. Then another witness, a servant of his, was asked to confirm this, but this male servant said that Don Felipe de Baeza had in fact offered the Mass that day. Thereupon, because Doña María de Montenegro had not personally seen the

³⁷ Archivo General de la Nación (AGNM, Mexico City), Inquisición, Tomo 384, 353r-354r.

³⁸ AGNM, Inquisición, Tomo 442, 379r. I want to thank David Max Findley from the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History for bringing these sources from the Inquisition to my attention.

priest drinking chocolate, she called a slave-servant named Pascuala, and asked her if she had seen the priest drinking chocolate, which the servant confirmed. Don Pedro Navarro thereupon approached Don Felipe de Baeza and asked if he had drunk chocolate that day after midnight, but the latter said he could not recall having done this.³⁹ Just the details recorded above are enough to show how serious the drinking of chocolate was taken, especially when fasting, holding the Holy Mass, or on Christian holidays.

Nonetheless the custom of drinking chocolate finally spread among Christians as well, although restrictions remained, as various documents from the Inquisition demonstrate. Other interesting cases include the use of chocolate in the field of sorcery and esoterism (December 1626). A women called Catalina Delgadin, married to a certain Juan Rodriguez Moreno, aged twenty-seven, appeared before Fray Francisco de Herrero (de la Orden de Santo Domingo), and reported the following in order to relieve her conscience: roughly two years ago she had been talking with one of her close friends (*una comadre suya*) named María de la Parra, who told her that she was looking for a remedy so that a man would love her well. She was told to take some ground-up worms that light up when flying ('lamplighters'?) so that they shed light during the night and mix it into chocolate. This would make the man die for the woman (*son buenos para que el hombre se muera por la mujer*).⁴⁰ In addition,

³⁹ The whole story is in detail recorded over various pages, providing the entire discussion in the Inquisition. AGNM, Inquisición Tomo 442, 379r et seq. GD61 Inquisición, vol. 369, exp. 17, fol. 25, Zacatecas ("por tomar chocolate antes de comulgar"), that is for taking chocolate before receiving the communion.

⁴⁰ AGNM, Inquisición, Tomo 355, microfiche, no pagination available. She also reported that about eight years ago, when she was in Mexico in the house of her father, she asked a mulatta named Francisca to provide her with some 'poyomate' herbs which served to want well" (*que la diessa unas hierbas poyomate que servían para querer bien*) that she then carried around her neck,

various documents from the *legajos* or inquisition records report cases of women mixing their menstrual blood with chocolate and giving it to their husbands or friends to drink.⁴¹ Obviously, these ‘recipes’ were intended to provide men with more energy and potency.

But even the most conservative fathers were eventually convinced that this originally Mexican drink, which was relatively inexpensive, in no way did any harm to the Christian faith. In 1644, Cardinal Francesco M. Brancaccio (1592–1675) finally put an end to the discussion in favour of chocolate.⁴²

Dominicans in the Philippines were still strictly forbidden to drink chocolate in 1686. But chocolate soon became so cheap and generally used that it was considered a necessity and no longer a delicacy.⁴³ By

other herbs she had to drink. The information that such practices originally stemmed obviously from a Mexican mulatta may attest to the general idea that mulattas played a major role in premodern sorcery and esoterism.

⁴¹ Most cases I could find stem from the AGNM and are related to cases in Mexico. GD61 Inquisición, vol. 339, exp. 89, fol. 8 (1621), Guadalajara (“Contra Isabel, esclava, por usar un dedo ahorcado y echar menstruación en el chocolate para darla a beber”); GD61 Inquisición, vol. 339, exp. 89, fol. 59 (1621), Guadalajara (“por dar beber en el chocolate la sangre de su periodo a sus amigos”); GD61 Inquisición, vol. 356, exp. 46, fol. 78 (1626), Tehuacán (“por usar de unos polvos y echar menstuo en el chocolate de su marido”); GD61 Inquisición, vol. 356, exp. 78, fol. 115 (1626), Tepeaca (“por haber dado el menstuo en chocolate a su marido”); GD61 Inquisición, vol. 363, exp. 30, fol. 15 (1629), Zacatecas (“daba a beber menstuo en chocolate”).

⁴² Martin Gimm, „Henkama, Väterchen Heng: ‘Ein Mediator zwischen Kaiser Kangxi und den Jesuitenmissionaren in der Epoche des Ritenstreites‘ im 18. Jahrhundert“, *Monumenta Serica* 64:1 (2016), 101-136, 116, with reference to Jacques Mercier, *La tentation du chocolat*, German translation, *Die Versuchung der Schokolade* (Brüssel: Racine, o.J.), 107-109.

⁴³ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803: explorations by early navigators, descriptions of the islands and their peoples, their history and records of the Catholic missions, as related*

the end of the seventeenth century, “chocolate had become a standard breakfast food on Jesuit tables in Spain and the Indies.”⁴⁴ This is also attested to by a manuscript preserved in the *Archivum romanum Societatis Iesu*. In 1690, Alejo López, Jesuit procurator for the Philippines, suggested that the ban against chocolate should either be made less strict or abolished entirely, as everybody, regardless of social status consumed, chocolate and the Jesuits could not simply make a scandal out of it. It had also become very inexpensive. In fact, “cacao was so plentiful in the Ilog mission on the island of Negros that it could be had for nothing. Finally, it was the most convenient breakfast so far discovered, especially for busy missionaries substantial enough to last one until lunch, and yet not so heavy on the stomach as rice.”⁴⁵

Changing Preparation Methods of Drinking Chocolate

When the Spanish first came into contact with the ‘Indian way’ of drinking chocolate, they were far from convinced. In the first part of the article, we have already seen that drinks containing cacao were originally considered to be “a better fit for pigs than for men.”⁴⁶ Experimenting with recipes, these were soon altered and

in contemporaneous books and manuscripts, showing the political, economic, commercial and religious conditions of those islands from their earliest relations with European nations to the beginning of the nineteenth century (Cleveland, Ohio: The A. H. Clark company, 1903-09), vol. 47, 218-219.

⁴⁴ H. de la Costa, S.J., *Jesuits in the Philippines*, 249, with reference to Antonio Astraín, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la asistencia de España* (Madrid: 1912-1925), 7 vols., vol. 5, 319-320.

⁴⁵ H. de la Costa, S.J., *Jesuits in the Philippines*, 512, with reference to *Archivum romanum Societatis Iesu*, Section *Philippinarum*, vol. 12, 136.

⁴⁶ Girolamo Benzoni (1519–1570), *La Historia del Mondo Nuevo* (Venice: Appresso Francesco Rampazetto, 1565), 103, quoted by Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America. A Socioeconomic History, 1520–1720* [Teresa Lozano

simplified. Sugar was added to get rid of the slightly bitter taste. In the late sixteenth century, the beverage gradually gained ever greater popularity, especially when flavoured with vanilla and cinnamon.⁴⁷ The growing habit of drinking chocolate, among Europeans at least, consequently also fostered the demand for vanilla and cinnamon as well as sugar as for flavoring, while the natives preferred to drink it with chili, maize, or achiote. Like the best quality cacao, vanilla was also cultivated on Guatemala's Pacific coast⁴⁸ and may have reached the Philippines for the first time around the same time as cacao or somewhat later.⁴⁹ Vanilla from Guatemala is mentioned in P. Fr. Manual Blanco's (1778–1845) and P. Fr. Ignacio Mercado's, *Flora de Filipinas* (1837)⁵⁰, implying that “it could well have been facilitated by the 300-year Manila Galleon trade between Acapulco and Manila from the mid-sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries”.⁵¹ As

Long Institute of Latin American Studies] (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 70. “Porcorum ea verius colluvies quam hominum potio”.

⁴⁷ This new recipe of adding sugar, vanilla, cinnamon or anis to the chocolate drink is traced back to the invention of nuns from the Convent of Guanaca, located in either Guatemala or Colombia. See José García Payón, Julio Monreal, *Amoxocoatl: o Libro del chocolate* (Toluca, México: Tip. Escuela de Artes, 1936), 42.

⁴⁸ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 252.

⁴⁹ “Los registros históricos nos cuentan que la vainilla (que no es nativa de Filipinas) fue introducida con anterioridad en esa región mediante el comercio de los galeones de Manila, desde América, y específicamente desde Guatemala.” See Botánica La Famosa Vainilla Tahitiana Procede de Guatemala 22 de septiembre de 2008, <https://www.amazings.com/ciencia/noticias/220908e.html> (accessed on February 27, 2021).

⁵⁰ P. Fr. Manual Blanco's (1778–1845) and P. Fr. Ignacio Mercado's, *Flora de Filipinas*. Adicionada con el manuscrito inédito del P. Fr. Ignacio Mercado, las obras del P. Fr. Antonio Llanos, y de un apéndice con todas las nuevas investigaciones botánicas referentes al Archipiélago Filipino. Gran edición, hecha a expensas de la Provincia de Augustinos calzados de Filipinas bajo la dirección científica del P. Fr. Andrés Naves (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfica, 1877), 4 vols., vol. 3, 42-43.

⁵¹ Pesach Lubinsky, *Historical and Evolutionary Origins of Cultivated Vanilla*, 113.

we will see below, vanilla was definitely shipped to Manila as early as 1714. Interestingly, the two vanilla endemics in the Philippines, *Vanilla ovalis* and *Vanilla calopogon*, are non-aromatic.⁵²

Apart from added ingredients like cinnamon and sugar, the final taste also depended on the specific beans and on where the cacao trees grew. “*Criollo*” cacao beans from Guatemala are smooth and mild, while the “*Forastero*” varieties, Guayaquil cacao especially, were often described as bitter, repugnant and even poisonous, as Murdo J. MacLeod explains.⁵³ Indigenous populations in Central America had been accustomed to drinking *patlaxtli*, a wild cacao, when no other was to be had and therefore did not really have a problem with drinking the bitter tasting Guayaquil cacao. “When cacao from Venezuela began to be exported to Europe in large quantities in the 1630s, Creole and European tastes became more eclectic, but until the end of the century Guayaquil cacao tended to be cheaper and drunk by Indians, while Guatemalan and Soconusco cacao was more appreciated by Spaniards.”⁵⁴ Venezuela produced some of the highest quality cacao worldwide, with rich and round flavours, from earthy, nutty to fruity.

The taste for drinking chocolate with lots of sugar and cinnamon was also propagated by the French, who actually discarded all other flavours except for cinnamon and vanilla.⁵⁵ The English, on the other

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 241.

⁵⁴ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 241-242.

⁵⁵ Henry Bruman, “The Culture History of Mexican Vanilla”, 367, with reference to Pierre Pommet, *Le marchand sincere, ou trait general des drogues simples et composees* (Paris: 1695), 206-208. Bruman also stresses that Pommet speaks of both cinnamon and vanilla and that the idea of using either cinnamon or vanilla, of chocolate ‘a la española’ vs. chocolate ‘a la francesa’, in other words, may have been a development of the eighteenth century.

hand, did not appreciate the taste and value of cacao for quite some time. Once, obviously in the late seventeenth century and recorded by the Dominican friar and traveller Thomas Gage (ca. 1603–1656), when the English had captured a ship loaded with cacao, unaware of its value, they threw the entire cargo overboard into the sea.⁵⁶ This story is also recorded by S. J. José de Acosta, who mentions that an English corsair burnt an entire cargo in the port of Huatulco.⁵⁷ Huatulco was a major depot for the cacao trade between the producing area of Sonsonate and the trading outlet at Acajutla and New Spain.⁵⁸

In the seventeenth century, chocolate in the Philippines was prepared by hand by artisans, who received 12 reals and about half a gallon of wine “for preparing each day the portion of chocolate from sixteen libras of dear cacao.” The chocolate thus prepared and sold was called “health chocolate”.⁵⁹

“The rule for making chocolate is to take ten libras of cacao, ten of sugar, and eight onzas of cinnamon, or even less, and on account of the waste it is computed that the result will be twenty libras net.”⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Mariano de Cárcer y Disdier, *Apuntes para la historia de la transculturación indo-española* (Segunda edición, México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 1995), Libro II, 352, with reference to Fr. Tomás Gage, *Los Viajes de Tomás Gage a la Nueva España, sus diversas aventuras y su vuelta por la provincia de Nicaragua hasta La Habana, con la descripción de la Ciudad de México*. Prólogo de Artemio de Valle-Arizpe (Ediciones Xóchitl México: 1947).

⁵⁷ S. J. José de Acosta, “Del Cacao, y de la Coca”, 251.

⁵⁸ Woodrow Borah, “Early Colonial Trade and Navigation Between Mexico and Peru”, *Ibero-Americana* 38 (1954), 1-170, 24.

⁵⁹ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803, The Philippine islands*, vol. 47, 274 (footnote 13, resp. page 285 in the online version).

⁶⁰ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803, The Philippine islands*, vol. 47, 273-274.

Partly because of the added cinnamon, it remained a luxury drink that was initially only consumed by the social elites. When still in the late eighteenth century a certain Don Nicolas Norton Nicols, originally an Englishman who became a naturalized Spaniard living in Manila, states that if cinnamon should become cheap, much chocolate would be consumed by the poor.⁶¹ This suggests that it was rather the price of cinnamon than of chocolate that made the beverage unaffordable for the lower classes in society.

In a memorandum describing the commerce of the Philippine Islands and the advantages they could yield for His Majesty (1759) King Carlos III (r. 1759–1788), its author, Don Nicolas Norton Nicols discusses, among other things, the economic use of cinnamon. Cinnamon came to be an important component in the preparation of chocolate in early modern times. Norton Nicols states, for example: “This is what I have learned from the experiment with a quantity of chocolate which I have ordered to be made in my own house at Manila; this product has been greatly liked by the ladies, and by people of taste and understanding, in the said city.”⁶² And he suggests that cinnamon be systematically cultivated in the Spanish Philippines: “No one is ignorant of the vast amount of silver which goes every year from España to the Dutch for the supply of cinnamon, for it is not less than many millions of pesos duros each year, as they have estimated; but I affirm that this is because they [*i.e.*, the Spaniards] are willing to let the silver go out [of the country]. . . . It is well known that España consumes more cinnamon than all the other nations; can there, then, be greater folly? In order (as I suppose) to humor the Dutch, España leaves unused the cinnamon which she has in her own house, in order

⁶¹ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803, The Philippine islands*, vol. 47, 269.

⁶² Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 47, 264.

to buy it from those enemies and the destroyers of the holy faith in those countries.”⁶³

Still some years later, in 1771, the Philippine governor, José Vasco y Vargas, in fact suggested the large-scale cultivation of, among other products, sugar cane, cacao, and cinnamon.⁶⁴ Cinnamon’s history as a commercial crop in the Philippines can be traced back to the 1560s. There are basically three different species: *Cinnamomum cebuense* Kosterm, *Cinnamomum mercadoi* S. Vidal, and *Cinnamomum mindanaense* Elmer. When the Spanish first conquered the islands, they considered cinnamon “the only product of the islands which can be made profitable to the Spaniards”.⁶⁵ From Legazpi’s time, cinnamon was shipped to New Spain and Spain.⁶⁶ But it was also re-exported, for

⁶³ “Commerce of the Philipinas Islands; the benefit and advantages which the said islands ought to yield to his Majesty (whom may God preserve)”, in *The Philippine Islands*, vol. 47, 254-281, here 261-262.

⁶⁴ Reyna María Pacheco Olivera, *Análisis del intercambio de plantas*, 23. Cinnamon from Ceylon was shipped to the Philippines and New Spain. In 1785, the galleon *San Carlos*, voyaging from Acapulco to Manila, carried cinnamon water (*aguas de canela*). The galleons *La Sacra Familia* (1719), *Nuestra Señora de la Portería* (1758), *Galeón Santísima Trinidad* (1761), *Nuestra Señor del Rosario* (1762), carried cinnamon as cargo on board. The *San Joseph* (1768) had cinnamon syrup, two other not identified galleons (1780) carried cinnamon water and powder, another galleon (1782) cinnamon oil, and the galleon *San Andrés* (1787) cinnamon water. See Pacheco Olivera, *Análisis del intercambio de plantas*, 63. In 1724, the *San Francisco de Paula*, proceeding from Mexico to Paita, had ‘Chinese cinnamon’ on board (*canela de China*), in 1748 the *San José y San Antonio*, proceeding from Mexico to Realajo-El Callao in Peru, carried pepper, cinnamon, estoraque and Chinese clothes. See Mariano A. Bonialian, *El Pacífico hispanoamericano*, 302-303.

⁶⁵ This is mentioned in a letter from Legazpi (dated 1 July 1569), cited in Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 3, 6, online <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/13616/pg13616-images.html>. See also vol. 3, 35, 42, 43, 147, 148, 170, 175, 271.

⁶⁶ In July 1568, the *capitana San Pablo*, for example, carried “than four hundred quintals of cinnamon for your Majesty”, Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 3, 18, see also p. 22, 162 (shoots

example from Sri Lanka, from where the best quality cinnamon in the world originates. As Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel has shown, cinnamon made up the majority of the Manila's import market around the 1740s.⁶⁷

As Maria Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo has emphasized, at the time when Don Nicolas Norton Nicols was writing, the Spanish were estimated to be consuming around 16 million pounds of chocolate annually, “in the preparation of which 400,000 pounds of cinnamon were necessary. At 58 rials *vellón* the pound, this meant 23,200,000 rials worth of cinnamon imports a year, a considerable sum for that period.”⁶⁸

Spanish Measures to Promote Cacao Cultivation in New Spain

Against this background, the Spanish soon recognised the high economic potential of cacao. A first step was to oblige the natives to pay their tribute in the form of cacao.⁶⁹ Originally, Soconusco and southwestern Guatemala developed as major source regions for cacao paid as tribute by the indigenous population, and they too become important vanilla-producing areas in the colonial period, as did parts of Oaxaca and Michoacán.⁷⁰ Next to Guatemala, Soconusco cacao was generally considered to be one of the best available.

As Julio Castellanos Cambranes explains, cacao had the advantage that no initial capital investment was required, as there

of cinnamon and pepper trees were sent), 171, 191, 222, 251, 258.

⁶⁷ Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel, *Chinese Shipping and Merchant Networks*, 455.

⁶⁸ Maria Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, “Philippine Economic Development Plans, *Philippine Studies* 12:2 (1964), 203-231, 211.

⁶⁹ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, provides excellent surveys on what is happening in different central American regions.

⁷⁰ Henry Bruman, “The Culture History of Mexican Vanilla”, 363.

already existed various plantations in this region when the Spanish arrived.⁷¹ Starting in the 1540s the Spanish started to develop local plantations, also called *cacaotales*, in commercial centres. Acosta, as we have briefly mentioned above, describes some of the conditions of local cacao cultivation in his *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*. In order to protect the trees from the burning sun, the locals plant another tree which only serves to provide shade. This tree is called “mother of the cacao”, and in the *cacaotales* the trees are cultivated like grapevines in vineyards or olive trees in the olive cultivations in Spain. He also mentions Guatemala as the province that was cultivating most of the cacao trees in so-called “*cacaotales*”.⁷²

In the mid-sixteenth century, no less than 3,000 merchants were active in these productive zones. Approximately 50,000 *cargas* (1 *carga* [load] = 50 *libras* [pounds] containing approximately 24,000 beans) with a value of 400,000 pesos in gold were exported annually around the mid-sixteenth century.⁷³

But the cacao plant required lots of care and investment in labour

⁷¹ Julio Castellanos Cambranes, *Introducción a la Historia Agraria de Guatemala – 1500–1900* – (Guatemala: Serviprensa Centroamericana, 1986), 126.

⁷² Josef de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*. Edición crítica de Fermín del Pino-Díaz [De Acá y de Allá. Fuentes Etnográficas] (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2008), libro V, cap. 22, 125: *El árbol donde se da esta fruta es mediano y bien hecho, y tiene hermosa copa: es tan delicado que para guardarle del sol – no le queme – ponen junto a él otro árbol grande que sólo sirve de hacelle* sombra, y a éste llaman «la madre del cacao». Hay beneficio de cacaotales donde se crían, como viñas u olivares en España, por el trato y mercancía: la provincia que más abunda es la de Guatemala*. Paulina Machuca also draws our attention to the binom of ‘cacao-coco’, *Theobroma cacao* and *Cocos nucifera*. Paulina Machuca, *El Vino de Cocos en la Nueva España: Historia de una Transculturación en el Siglo XVII* (Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2018), 98.

⁷³ Julio Castellanos Cambranes, *Introducción a la Historia Agraria de Guatemala*, 127.

throughout the entire year.⁷⁴ In addition, the plants were extremely susceptible to natural disasters and hurricanes.⁷⁵ Many local cacao planters (*cacaotales*) eventually only survived because of the continuously rising demand for high-quality cacao, which prompted new investments.⁷⁶

In addition to environmental issues, labour shortages as well as exploitation and over-taxation particularly affected smaller plantations.⁷⁷ In 1571, for example, the number of tribute-paying indigenous Indios in Soconusco had decreased from 30,000 at the time of the *conquista* to some 2,000. Consequently, the cultivation and output of cacao also decreased significantly, in 1571 just reaching about

⁷⁴ Julio Castellanos Cambranes, *Introducción a la Historia Agraria de Guatemala*, 126.

⁷⁵ The “understaffed and aging cacao groves of Soconusco were particularly susceptible to the effects of natural disasters. Hurricanes in 1641 and in 1659 further reduced many of the surviving plantations, and if it had not been for the rising demands for high quality cacao among the upper classes in both New Spain and Europe during the second half of the seventeenth century, there is no doubt that the *cacaotales* in Soconusco would have disappeared”. Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 238.

⁷⁶ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 237-238.

⁷⁷ With increasing exploitation of the natives by the Spanish, as the former could no longer invest enough time the cultivation of cacao, many passed away through exploitation, and, in addition, they had to pay incredibly high tributes. Julio Castellanos Cambranes, *Introducción a la Historia Agraria de Guatemala*, 126-127. The mayor of Suchitepéquez in 1602/03 is said to have extorted 15,000 ‘silver pennies’ (*tostones*; 1 *tostón* was a coin with a value of half a peso) from the province of Zapotitlán to buy 1,000 *cargas* of cacao, each *carga* having a value of 50 to 60 silver pennies, which he finally sent to Mexico, making a big fortune. *Op.cit.*, 240, with reference to “*Cartas del Obispo de Guatemala Fray Juan Ramírez de Arellano O.P., al Rey de España*”, Guatemala 3.II.1603, included in the appendix to his book, *Documentos Para la Historia Agraria de Guatemala*. While a nativewho hires another person, provides him with two meals and cacao beverage per day, the Spanish, the bishop records, do not provide the locals they hire with any food or drinks at all. *Op.cit.*, 227.

400 *cargas*.⁷⁸ Manuel Rubio Sánchez claims that cacao production in Guatemala, for example, fell from approximately 150,000 *cargas* in 1600 to only 25,000 in 1700.⁷⁹ But the local cacao fields survived, despite the competition from other places, such as Guayaquil, Caracas or Maracaibo. Following Murdo J. MacLeod, this should be traced back to Guatemala's relatively protected geographical position (as the produce could also be sent to Mexico by land), to local custom and tradition, and to the smooth and mild quality of Guatemalan cacao (in contrast to the bitter cacao from Guayaquil), but especially to the steadily increasing demand.⁸⁰

MacLeod also notes that the inability of Spain to provide the New World with sufficient quantities of wine might have prompted "Spaniards to turn reluctantly to chocolate".⁸¹ Account should also be taken of the fact that local and royal decrees added specific bans on Guayaquil cacao in both Guatemala and Mexico in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, though they were frequently not very effective. Although by the 1680s the Guatemalan cacao industry had decreased significantly,⁸² even in the later eighteenth century the cacao from Suchitupéquez, Guatemala, was being described as "so excellent in quality as to be preferred by many to that which is produced in Soconusco."⁸³

⁷⁸ Julio Castellanos Cambranes, *Introducción a la Historia Agraria de Guatemala*, 127.

⁷⁹ Manuel Rubio Sánchez, "El Cacao", *Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia* (Guatemala) 31 (1958), 81-129, 88-90, 102-103.

⁸⁰ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 241-242.

⁸¹ Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 242.

⁸² Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America*, 244.

⁸³ Domingo Juarros and John Bailey, *A statistical and commercial history of the Kingdom of Guatemala in Spanish America... : with an account of its conquest by the Spaniards and a narrative of the principal events down to the present time*

In 1682, Basil Ringrose (ca. 1653–1683), an English buccaneer, navigator and geographer who also left us a travel account, speaks of the coast around the port of Sonsonate, with “the land and Valley of Salvador open where stands a small towne called Guaymoco, has a chief commodity, namely “Cocao”.⁸⁴ He also describes the “towne of Amapall” in the Gulf of Fonseca as consisting of 100 houses and with a “greate Traffick for its Cocao”.⁸⁵ Interestingly, describing a cape called Cavo de Mendocino (located along the northern Californian coast, north even of modern San Francisco), Ringrose mentions “a small village of Indians” there “who have Cocao walks”, possibly an avenue bordered by cacao trees?⁸⁶ These “Cocao walks” also appear in his description of a “hill called Xalisco” (Monte San Juan in the region of Jalisco, Mexico), close to the island of Maxantelba. As both locations are actually located quite far north for cacao trees, Derke Howse and Norman Thrower suppose that Ringrose might have meant coconut trees,⁸⁷ but this remains unclear. Also the coasts around the port of Navidad, where the Spanish built ships, the biggest of the South Seas fleet and where they “built the first that ever sailed for the East Indias from this part of the world” are full of “Cocao walks and Stantions”.⁸⁸

translated by J. Baily (London: J. Hearne, 1823), 22.

⁸⁴ *A Buccaneer’s Atlas: Basil Ringrose’s South Sea Waggoner. A Sea Atlas and Sailing Directions of the Pacific Coast of the Americas 1682.* Edited by Derek Howse and Norman J. W. Thrower. With special contribution by Tony A. Cimolino. Foreword by David B. Quinn (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 88.

⁸⁵ *A Buccaneer’s Atlas: Basil Ringrose’s South Sea Waggoner*, 92.

⁸⁶ *A Buccaneer’s Atlas: Basil Ringrose’s South Sea Waggoner*, 50.

⁸⁷ *A Buccaneer’s Atlas: Basil Ringrose’s South Sea Waggoner*, 50, note 4, 60. Also Isla del Caño, off the Western coast of modern Costa Rica, is described as having a great number of cacao trees (see p. 109).

⁸⁸ *A Buccaneer’s Atlas: Basil Ringrose’s South Sea Waggoner*, 60.

The American, Atlantic and even the Pacific trade reflect the increasing focus on cacao from Guayaquil. Although it tasted more bitter, it was much cheaper and gradually replaced the high-quality cacao from Guatemala. In order to be able to sell cacao more cheaply and to make more profit, it is little wonder that we also encounter various forms of adulteration. Among foodstuffs used in the context were wheat and rice flour; ground lentils, peas, beans, or maize; potato starch, dextrin, olive oil, sweet almond oil, egg yolk, tallow of veal and mutton, storax, chestnut flour, and gum tragacanth (a mixture of polysaccharides obtained from sap that is drained from the root of the plant and dried). But we also encounter chemical substances, such as cinnabar, red oxide of mercury, red lead, and lime carbonate.⁸⁹

Cacao as Cargo of Galleons Crossing the Pacific Ocean

Although chocolate and cacao were not only shipped less frequently but also in significantly lower quantities especially in comparison to all the silks and ceramics, they nevertheless constituted an important part of transpacific exchanges, less in terms of quantity than in terms of cross-cultural exchanges and transfers of knowledge and food cultures. Generally speaking, cargo records reporting about cacao as a cargo of Manila galleons in Spanish documents are not overabundant, the information we possess stems mostly from the eighteenth century. But we can nevertheless get an idea of cacao shipments. We also need to consider that cacao crossed the Pacific as part of the galleon's provisions, which means that it was not recorded in cargo lists. Further insights are provided by additionally consulting manuscripts and descriptions in other languages, such as Dutch, English, French, or Portuguese.

On a journey in the early eighteenth century, Woodes Rogers (1679–1732) mentions cacao being loaded on board, together with

⁸⁹ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 47, 274.

water, in Guayaquil. He speaks of “some assets of water and 24 packs of cacao” (*sommige baten water / 24 pakken cacao*)⁹⁰. Cacao from Guayaquil is here described as particular cheap⁹¹.

The French diplomat to Siam, Simon de la Loubère (1642–1729), led an embassy to Siam in 1687 and left us a description of his impressions, *Du Royaume de Siam*, published in 1693. He reports that in the late seventeenth century cacao and chocolate were already being exported from Manila to Siam, and he also confirms that it is first shipped from Spanish America: “(T)he Portuguese do drink Chocolate, when it comes to them from Manille, the chief of the Philippines, where it is brought from the Spanish West-Indies.”⁹²

The “Summary of the cargo of the galleon *Nuestra Señora de Begoña*” (1714) on its return voyage to the Philippines shows the

⁹⁰ Woodes Rogers (1679–1732), *Nieuwe reize naa de Zuidzee, vandaar naar Oost-Indien, en verder rondom de Wereld. Begonnen in 1708, en geëyndigd in 1711. Inhoudende een Dagregister van zeer aanmerkenswaardige voorvallen, waaronder het veroveren van de Steden Puna en Gujaquil, en het schip van Acapulco, en andere pryzen, enz.* Gedaan onder het bestier van William Dampier. In ’t Engels beschreven door Woodes Rogers, Kommandeur en Chef van de schepen de Hertog en Hertoginne van Bristol. Vertaald door P. C. met naauwkeruige Kaarten en Konstplaten verciert (Amsterdam: Oosterwyk en van de Gaete, 1715), 166; online version of the Digital Library Münchener Digitalisierungszentrum, <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb11298435?page=200,201&q=cacao> (accessed on 19 March, 2022).

⁹¹ Ibid., 172.

⁹² Monsieur Simon de De La Loubère (1642–1729), *A new historical relation of the kingdom of Siam; done out of French*, by A.P. Gen. R.S.S. La Loubère, Simon de, 1642–1729., A. P, Chapter IX, “Of the Gardens of the Siameses, and occasionally of their Liquors”, 23, online <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A48403.0001.001/1:4.9?rgn=div2;submit=Go;subview=detail;type=simple;view=full text;q1=chocolate> (accessed on 8 May 2023).

shipment of cacao, vanilla, and achiote (annatto; Bixa Orellana) to the Philippines⁹³:

“Derechos que se causaren de los generos y frutos y regalos q se remiten a las Islas Phelipinas en el tornaviaje de mandaba a su M[e]r[ce]d mando se haga información de los precios que oy tienen los gen. siguientes:

Cajones de regalo de chocolate y cafetas

Medios caxones dichos

Tinajas de vino

Botijas de azeite

Tercios de cacao de la costa de a dos cargas

Cajones de jabon

Cacao de Maracaibo

...

Tinajas de achiote

...

Mazos de bainillas.”⁹⁴

⁹³ “Testimonio del cuaderno general del recibo de dependencias del galeón Nuestra Señora de Begoña que ejecutó su tornaviaje el 31 de marzo para las islas Filipinas a cargo del general Juan Pablo de Orduña” (México, 11 de agosto de 1714), AGI, Filipinas, 206, N.1, fols. 119r-188r, 165v.

⁹⁴ See “Expediente sobre el comercio entre Filipinas y Nueva España” (1712-06-25, Manila, Luzón, Filipinas), AGI, Filipinas, 206, N. 1, fol. 165v; a zoomable image of the reference is also available on the digital adaptation of “Flavors that Sailed Across the Seas. How the Manila galleon helped to enrich the world’s cuisine”, exhibition organised by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, via the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sport, via the Sub-directorate General of Spanish State Archives, under the responsible curator Antonio Sánchez de Mora, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/summary-of-the-cargo-of-the-galleon-nuestra-se%C3%B1ora-de-bego%C3%B1a/8gFa2qpU51828Q?hl=en> (accessed on April 10, 2022). The full exhibition is available under <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/globalization-of-flavors-archivos-estatales/SAXB4EQiMLmnIw?hl=en>.

In 1785, the provision lists of the *schooner* (goleta) *La Felicidad*, alias “*La Mexicana*” (1785)⁹⁵ and the *paquebot* *San Carlos* (1785)⁹⁶ mention chocolate. The Peruvian *paquebot* *Santo Cristo de Burgos* in 1779-80 carried 2,945 bushels (*fanegas*) à 110 pounds per bushel (*de a 110 libras cada una*)⁹⁷. The same document mentions later 4,000 loads of cacao in bushels (*cuatro mil cargas de cacao que hagan fanegas*), but obviously this cargo was consumed in Mexico and not shipped to Manila.⁹⁸

As far as the route from Manila to Acapulco is concerned, Reyna María Pacheco Olivera identified the *Nuestra Señora de la Portería* in 1758 and the *Santa Rita* in 1817⁹⁹. Her investigation confirms that chocolate was carried on board mainly in the crew’s personal belongings. This would fit my observation from an analysis of documents in the AGI in Seville, that rarely mention cacao as cargo.

⁹⁵ “Estado y reglamento de rancho que por la Contaduría de la Real Hacienda del Departamento de San Blas se forma para la tripulación de la goleta de S. M. nombrada la Felicidad alias la Mexicana para 25 plazas de ración y 181 días que se le consideran de navegación al viaje que de orden superior va a verificar” (1785), AGN, Filipinas 21, exp. 7, 174r-175v. Provisions, diseases, and the situation on sea are also discussed in María del Carmen Reyna y Jean Paul Krammer, “Las travesías marítimas en el siglo XVIII,” *Historias* 42 (1999): 57–74, <https://revistas.inah.gob.mx/index.php/historias/article/view/13815>.

⁹⁶ AGN, Filipinas 21, exp. 7, 232v-233r.

⁹⁷ “Expediente sobre la descarga del Paquebot nombrado Sto Cristo de Burgos procedente del puerto de Huayaquil” (1780), AGN, Filipinas 14, 291r; 317r-v. 323r: Real Palacio de Manila (10 May 1779). Reyna María Pacheco Olivera mentions the *Santo Cristo de Burgos* sailing from Acapulco to Manila in 1779 with a cargo of cacao on board powder (*con polvos*; cf. AGN Ramo Filipinas 1781). See Reyna María Pacheco Olivera, *Análisis del intercambio de plantas entre México y Asia de los siglos XVI al XIX* (Master thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2006), 138.

⁹⁸ AGN, Filipinas 14, 297r.

⁹⁹ Reyna María Pacheco Olivera, *Análisis del intercambio de plantas*, 138.

Cacao sent to the Catholic nuns may have formed part of what the *Contaduría* documents mention as personal gifts. Also, the plant that was allegedly transported by the pilot Pedro Bravo de Laguna may have been shipped as part of his personal belongings or as a gift.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, finally, cacao had obviously become one of the principal cargoes carried by ships coming from Peru through the *nao de China* (see AGN Ramo Filipinas 1781)¹⁰⁰. William Lytle Schurz states that “staple American exports to Manila generally consisted of cacao from Guayaquil, some cochineal from Oaxaca in Mexico, oil from Spain, wines and other peculiarly national goods.”¹⁰¹ This suggests a not insignificant quantity of cacao being shipped to Manila.

A direct reference to cacao cargos stems from the 1743 “Registro de la Carga que lleva el Patache Capitána de Philipinas Nra Señora de Cobadonga”.¹⁰² The galleon was captured by the famous English admiral George Anson (1697–1762), who was lying offshore with his ship the *Centurion*, waiting outside the San Bernardino Strait for the incoming Acapulco treasure ships. After a brief intermezzo, the Spanish captain surrendered, the *Covadonga* was integrated into Anson’s fleet, and the two ships sailed to Canton, where the *Covadonga* was sold in December at Macao for 6,000 piastres.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Reyna María Pacheco Olivera, *Análisis del intercambio de plantas*, 137-138.

¹⁰¹ William Lytle Schurz, *The Manila Galleon. The romantic history of the Spanish galleons trading between Manila and Acapulco* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1959), 275.

¹⁰² I wish to thank my colleague Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel for bringing this manuscript to my attention.

¹⁰³ Thomas Bennett, *Shipwrecks of the Philippines* (E-book. last edited version 2012), 12. See also the entry “Nuestra Señora de la Covadonga” in Thomas Bennett, *Treasure Ships of the Philippines* (E-Book, printed in the Philippines, 2016).

“Caxones de Bainilla a setenta y cinco pesos
surrone de grana cochinita de ocho arrobas a quinientos pesos
surrone del dicha, silvestre, del mismo peso? a ochenta p[eso]s
tercios de cacao Caracas a ciento y veinte pesos
dichos de Maracaibo a ciento y veinte pesos”¹⁰⁴

This entry is extremely valuable,¹⁰⁵ not only because it attests to the fact that even cacao from Venezuela (Caracas and Maracaibo) finally found its way across the Pacific to the Philippines – as we have already seen above with the cargo of the *Nuestra Señora de Begoña* – but also because these are two of the very few references to vanilla being shipped across the Pacific.

Another example: The cargo manifest for the *San Josef*, preserved in the National Archive of the Philippines (NAP), is an inbound cargo manifest showing what was shipped to Manila from Acapulco in 1784 in addition to silver. The most prominent commodities were cochineal (with 7,455 lbs at 15,841.88 pesos) and cacao (with 64,624 lbs = 29,733.50 kg = 29.734 tons at 8,078 pesos).¹⁰⁶ Assuming that 7–8 beans or 5g of cacao are required to produce one cup of chocolate, this quantity would be sufficient to make 5,862,000 cups in total. Four

¹⁰⁴ “Registro de la Carga que lleva el Patache Capitána de Philipinas Nra Señora de Cobadonga Año de 1743”, Manuscript held by the National Archives, Kew, Prize Papers, 11°1, 2r. “Expediente sobre la presa del patache Nuestra Señora de Covadonga” (1754-02-14, Madrid), AGI, Filipinas, 257, N. 1.

¹⁰⁵ It is even more valuable when we consider that this shipment occurred before the foundation of the Real Compañía de Filipinas in 1785, with the goal of promoting commercial relations among the different colonies and between Spain and its colonies, as a consequence of which from 1793 onwards this company also obtained the rights to trade directly between Manila and the Viceroyalty of Peru.

¹⁰⁶ National Archives of the Philippines (NAP), 6208 Aduana, August 1784, no pagination. In total, 29,733.50 kg were imported. I am very grateful to Dr. Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel for sharing this information with me.

cargoes are specifically labelled ‘cacao of Guayaquil’: one of 1,943.92 kg (169 *arrobas*),¹⁰⁷ worth 528.13 pesos, belonging to Don Antonio Campos (S-258v); one of 4,193.81 kg (9,115 *libras netas*), worth 1,139.38 pesos, belonging to Don Manuel Conde (fol. S-359v); one of 1,115.28 (97 *arrobas* = 2,425 lbs), worth 303 pesos and belonging to Don Candido Dominguez (S-360v); and one of 1,661.88 (144 *arrobas* and 12 *libras*), worth 451.5 pesos, belonging to Don Salvador Avenos (S-365v). This might suggest that the remaining cacao did not originate from Guayaquil. Prices, however, were mainly the same.

Cacao from Tabasco, Caracas and Maracaibo also reached the Mariana Islands for consumption, as shown by information stemming from 1751–52.¹⁰⁸ Chocolate and cacao were also requested and shipped from the Philippines to the Marianas (2 *tercios* = 1 load in 1732 and 2 *tercios* = 1 load in 1733) and belonged to the regular food shipments to the islands between 1725 and 1769.¹⁰⁹ In 1729, Antonio de Echandía, a merchant from Mexico, indicated and confirmed that the salaries of the Marianas were invested in the Philippines in order to obtain, among other things, cacao, sugar, chocolate, flour and biscuits (*cacao, azúcar, chocolate, harina y pan abizcochado*).¹¹⁰

In the later eighteenth century, a real competition, even rivalry, between the cacao plantations (*cacaotales*) of Guayaquil and Caracas

¹⁰⁷ 1 *arroba* = 25 lbs = 11,34 kg.

¹⁰⁸ Table 6.7. ‘Gastos en comestibles, utensilios culinarios y otros géneros de consumo pertenecientes a la misión de Marianas (1751–1756)’, in Verónica Peña Filiu, *Alimentación y colonialismo en las islas Marianas (Pacífico occidental) Introducciones, adaptaciones y transformaciones alimentarias durante la misión jesuita (1668-1769)*, Doctoral dissertation, Barcelona, Universidad Pompeu Fabra, 2019, 236.

¹⁰⁹ Verónica Peña Filiu, *Alimentación y colonialismo en las islas Marianas*, 237, table 6.9.

¹¹⁰ Verónica Peña Filiu, *Alimentación y colonialismo en las islas Marianas*, 230.

emerged for the provision of markets not only in New Spain, but also in Europe and Asia, including Russia.¹¹¹ For the period around 1800, Alexander von Humboldt confirms that cacao from both Guayaquil and Caracas is being shipped to Manila:

“The galleon usually departs in February or March: it sails almost in ballast, since its cargo on the voyage from Acapulco to Manila consists only of silver (*plata*), a very small amount of cochineal from Oaxaca, cacao from Guayaquil and Caracas, wine, oil, and Spanish woollens. On average, the amount of precious metals exported to the Philippine Islands is one million, often 1,300,000 piasters. There is usually a considerable number of passengers, which sometimes increases because of the colonies of friars that Spain and Mexico send to the Philippines.”¹¹²

Another interesting document talks about the loss of mercury from the mines in Huancavelica and mentions in passing that 550 *quintales* (ca. 27,000 kg) of mercury were eventually discovered on board a galleon, the San Telmo, in Chametla (in Sinaloa), at that time part of the Audiencia de Guadalajara, among bags of cacao.¹¹³ It is not clear

¹¹¹ Eduardo Rubio Aliaga, *La Disputa de Guayaquil y Caracas por el Comercio del Cacao en Nueva España en el Siglo XVIII*, Master thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2016, 68.

¹¹² Alexander von Humboldt, *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, Volume 2: *A Critical Edition*. Edited with an introduction by Vera M. Kutzinski and Ottmar Ette. Translated by J. Ryan Poynter, Kenneth Berri, and Vera M. Kutzinski. With annotations by Giorleny Altamirano Rayo, Tobias Kraft, and Vera M. Kutzinski (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 2 vols., vol. 2, 357 (IV.103).

¹¹³ “Real Cédula al presidente y oidores de la Audiencia de Lima, reiterando la orden dada por despacho de 6 de marzo de 1700 para la averiguación de los cómplices en el extravío de los azogues de la mina de Huancavelica, que salieron de los puertos de Cañete y de Lurinchincha en dos embarcaciones, una llamada ‘San Telmo’ con destino al puerto de Chametla, en el distrito de la Audiencia de

how the mercury was packed and stored, but one can imagine that it was not a good practice for whoever later consumed the cacao. The *San Telmo* obviously regularly shipped cacao together with mercury.¹¹⁴ It is also important to note that on 5 June 1789, the regulation which limited the export of cacao from 8,000 to 10,000 bushels was annulled.¹¹⁵

Cacao Cultivation as a Cash Crop in the Philippines

In the first part of this investigation on the role of cacao and chocolate in transpacific exchanges, we have seen how chocolate made its way to the Philippines and was locally transplanted. Here, we will take a closer look at projects encouraging the local cultivation of cacao as a cash crop. As mentioned in the introduction, we have to see the plans to foster domestic agriculture and the production of cacao in the Philippines in the context of both the transpacific and intra-Asian and global-European trade. Local Philippine products, including

Guadalajara, donde se aprehendió encontrándose en ella 550 quintales de azogue entre zurrone de cacao...”; see “Extravío de azogue de las minas de Huancavelica” (1701-03-27, Madrid), AGI, Guadalajara, 232, L. 9, F. 29r-30v.

¹¹⁴ See also “Pleitos de la Audiencia de México”, Escribanía, 187A (1700): El fiscal con Luis de Rozas [Meléndez] y Pedro de Ampuero, y José de Rozas [Meléndez], corregidor de Jauja, como cómplice, sobre el extravío de 600 quintales de azogue, cacao y otros que condujo la fragata ‘San Telmo’ del reino del Perú al puerto de Chamela en Nueva España. Fenecido en 1702.

¹¹⁵ Mariano Bonialian, *La América Española: Entre el Pacífico y el Atlántico. Globalización mercantilyeconomiapolítica, 1580–1840* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2019), 229, https://ri.conicet.gov.ar/bitstream/handle/11336/126987/CONICET_Digital_Nro.04fdc845-c2d2-4542-84bd-b5e79e3c7958_A.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y. Between the 1770s and early 1790s, the amount of cacao imported through the port of Acapulco increased steadily. In 1774, Acapulco absorbed 18.55% of the total of exported cacao; in 1779, 43.66%, and in 1791, 62.55%. Between 1779 and 1783, Acapulco received 63.71% of the cacao later sold from Guayaquil (“unas 212 579 cargas de cacao por Acapulco”), most of the cacao in the later eighteenth century was, thus, of lower quality.

cinnamon, for example, also constituted part of the galleon shipments to Acapulco. But in terms of value, mostly they did not even reach 10% of the entire cargo.¹¹⁶

The Chinese maritime trade ban between 1717 and 1727, prohibiting Chinese trade with Southeast Asia and especially the Philippines,¹¹⁷ ultimately had relatively few negative effects on the Manila trade, despite its initial decline. The volume of this trade enjoyed relative stability, with non-Chinese ships especially prospering from it.¹¹⁸ And “Spaniards ventured to Amoy, even after the imposition of the Canton system in 1757 had legally barred them from doing so.”¹¹⁹ In the 1740s, however, as Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel has shown, the junk-galleon trade experienced a serious crisis which had worsened progressively by the middle of the decade.¹²⁰

Important in the present context is also the fact that, due to an ever-increasing demand for Chinese products by other Europeans, especially the Dutch, French, and English, the requested quantities could only be met in China by contracting additional households and small workshops in the hinterlands, which had no real experience with the production of silks, for example. A significant consequence was the drastic fall in the quality of Chinese products, which was

¹¹⁶ Benito J. Legarda, Jr., *After the Galleons Foreign Trade, Economic Change, and Entrepreneurship in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, and Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999), 33.

¹¹⁷ This prohibition was issued by the Kangxi Emperor who considered Southeast Asia to be the place of origin of Chinese renegades and pirates (*jinzhi Nanyang yuan'an* 禁止南洋原案).

¹¹⁸ Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel, *Chinese Shipping and Merchant Networks*, 32.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel, *Chinese Shipping and Merchant Networks*, 382.

noted with discomfort.¹²¹ The European competitors also started to contract Chinese workshops to produce silks and textiles for them using the same frames and measurements as in Europe, which they then exported at minimal tax rates, selling them cheaply throughout Europe:¹²² From the port of Canton in China, they brought to Europe silk fabrics and other goods which they had ordered to be made in China in the marks and quality identical to those of Europe, and they were produced without difference to those of Europe. And without doubt they would finally try to introduce these products in Cádiz, saying they were produced in France and England. Eight or nine years ago, it was public knowledge that the French traded Chinese goods in the Kingdom of Peru, which they brought from Canton, under various pretexts, making lots of profits. This was also recognised by the large amounts of silver they shipped from Peru to Canton.¹²³

Contemporary merchants, such as a certain Luis Satur, an Armenian trader from Isfahan, Iran, 52 years old, observed that the English and French brought to Canton “samples of fabrics from Europe and some masters to make silk fabrics”, while the Sangleyes “then learned and worked the fabrics so similar that they were indistinguishable.”¹²⁴

The conclusion of the Manila authorities in face of the current situation and the pernicious effects of European competition in the

¹²¹ “Consulta sobre proyecto para mejorar el comercio de Filipinas”, AGI, Filipinas, 97, N. 14, image 53.

¹²² “Expediente de comercio de Filipinas con Nueva España” (1722–1733), AGI, Filipinas, 208, N. 1, 293v, 295v–296r; 312; see also Antoni Picazo Muntaner, “El comercio de Filipinas en el tránsito al siglo XVIII”.

¹²³ AGI, Filipinas, 208, N.1, 312r–v.

¹²⁴ “Expediente de comercio de Filipinas con Nueva España”, AGI, Filipinas, 208, N.1, fol. 323v. This story is actually confirmed by another Armenian who was interrogated, Don Carlos de Viago, also Armenian from ‘Ispahán’, 52 years old, and resident of Extramuros in Manila, fols. 308v and 213r.

China and Asia trade, as well as the decreasing quality of Chinese silks and textiles intended for silk production in Andalusia, Spain, which they sought to protect, was obvious. The damage was not a direct consequence of the Philippine trade, as the islands, after all, only sent one ship a year, with limited cargo and capital, but a result of foreign competition.¹²⁵ Moreover, not all the cargo on the trans-Pacific voyages consisted of silks, and the Chinese who provided the Spanish with all kinds of supplies necessary for the maintenance of the colony were themselves confronted with many obstacles.¹²⁶

Re-exporting Asian commodities and increasing local production in the Philippines, trying to sell local products in exchange for the necessary staple goods and commodities, were two solutions. At the same time, it should be remembered that the contemporary Spanish Empire was not a capitalist country. The search for reducing the costs of maintaining the Philippines as a colony for the Spanish Crown was consequently not identical with profit-making as the ultimate goal of its economic undertakings. On the other hand, the eighteenth-century was the time of the gradual development of ‘merchant capitalism’ that reached its peak with the activities of the Dutch VOC. The discovery of the riches and wealth in the Americas and Asia exacerbated competition among the early mercantilist European countries, and the world oceans turned into a battlefield of navies, capers, “pirates” and pirate-merchants. We see here the birth of the world market as a competition of early modern mercantilist states, characterized by an enormous degree of violence, force, coercion, and murder. Across the Pacific, we find actors of many European countries, all of whom tried to use and exploit the Spanish networks to seek for profit.

¹²⁵ AGI, Filipinas, 208, N.1, 300v, but see also 63v (26)-64r (17), 293r-296r.

¹²⁶ See, for example, Tina S. Clemente, “Spanish Colonial Policy toward Chinese Merchants in Eighteenth-Century Philippines”, in Lin Yu-Ju, Madeleine Zelin (eds.), *Merchant Communities in Asia, 1600–1980* (London: Routledge, 2015), 123-139.

The Economic Plans Suggested by Norton Nicols, Richard Bagge, and other Europeans

In the period between the 1740s and 1750s, various individuals brought up plans to reform the economy of the Philippines. The cultivation of cacao in particular was propagated by various contemporary botanists.¹²⁷ Don Nicolas Norton Nicols (fl. 1759) proposed plans to develop a stable economy and commerce in the Philippines. Among other things, he suggested local agricultural products such as rice, sugar, cotton, indigo, pepper, coffee, tobacco, oil, and also cacao, to be sold to specific countries in Asia so as to increase Spain's income.¹²⁸ In his view cinnamon too, as we have seen above, could be developed as a commercial crop and be produced and sold much more cheaply

¹²⁷ "Carta de Casimiro Gómez Ortega" (12 de Marzo de 1788), fols. 1a-b, AGI, Filipinas, 723, N. 2, 8. He suggested the cultivation of black pepper, coffee, cacao, indigo, and tea, in addition to mulberry trees for silk production in the Philippines ("plantas de pimienta negra, Café, Cacao, Añil, y Thé, me parece digno del aprecio y protección del Gobierno"). Juan de Cuéllar (ca. 1739–1801), the botanist and naturalist of the Real Compañía de Filipinas (1785–1795), made similar suggestions, although he mostly omits tea, see "Sobre el cultivo de la canela, nuez moscada, pimienta" (1770-1792), AGI, Filipinas, 723, N. 2, 8 (carta de Casimiro Gómez Ortega) and Filipinas, 723, N. 2, 11, 14, and 17 (cartas de Juan de Cuéllar).

¹²⁸ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 47, 255-256: "As the products of the Philipinas Islands are enumerated by the reverend Father Murillo (whom may God keep in Paradise), whom I have cited, and those of each island separately, in order not to extend this little work needlessly I will state the most important ones, which are the following: Rice, sugar, cotton (of choice quality and very fine), indigo, sulphur, siguey, balate, wax, pepper, coffee, tortoise-shell, mother-of-pearl; gold, mines of iron, and mines of copper (like that of Japon); tobacco, brazil-wood [sibucao], and pearl-fisheries; oil, cacao, birds'-nests, and ebony wood; lead (I believe that, as for the soil in some parts of Bisayas, it melts into lead, just as in the island of Mauricius, which belongs to the French, it melts into iron); cocoanuts, which produce abundance of oil; horses; deer and buffaloes, from which the people make what they call tapa [i.e., dried beef], and also use the sinews; and bichuca, or rattans."

than Dutch cinnamon from Sri Lanka.¹²⁹ Referring to Father Pedro Murillo Velarde (1696–1753), and therefore to the mid-eighteenth century, he lists cacao as already one of the major products of the contemporary Philippines, but he does not mention it as a product to be sold to China.¹³⁰

Another project of economic reform (1740–1758) was proposed by a mid-eighteenth-century Irish private trader, Richard Bagge (Don Ricardo Bagge).¹³¹ Bagge was a navigator, although a bad one – as master pilot of the Manila-Acapulco route, he navigated the galleon of 1740 – and his various travels enabled him to acquire this really exceptional knowledge on the cultivation of certain plants. He was engaged in illicit trading activities as well, and was actually a cheater, as also repeatedly noted in Spanish sources.¹³² On 17 February 1746, “he drew up a commercial project around the formation of a trading company by the Confraternity of Mercy of Manila and the Venerable

¹²⁹ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 47, 261–262.

¹³⁰ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 47, 255 and 257: “The commodities that I have mentioned are exported to the places that are enumerated as follows, and sell at prices that are very profitable, although commerce has, as in all regions, its ups and downs [*sus altos y bajos*]. To various ports of China: rice, sugar, cotton, indigo, bichuca or rattan, balate, pepper, tortoise-shell, mother-of-pearl, brazil-wood, ebony, *tapa*, the sinews of cattle, birds’-nests, and lead when they have it. To the Malabar coast and Persia: sugar in large quantities, which is sold for money.”

¹³¹ “Expediente sobre proyecto de Ricardo Bagge” (1757-07-24, Manila; Luzón, Filipinas), AGI, Filipinas, 160, N. 23, *passim*.

¹³² He had amassed lots of debts with his trade, as a consequence of which he needed money and thus suggested this plan which he hoped the local Spanish authorities would like. The background of why an Irish trader came to suggest such a plan to the Spanish-Philippine authorities will be discussed in detail by Wim De Winter as a part of our project. Bagge’s project, dated Manila, 27 February 1746, is to be found in AGI, Filipinas, 228.

Third Order”, institutions that lent money to Manila merchants trading with Acapulco. Bagge’s plan was to take over the trade now dominated by not only Chinese, but also Armenian, Dutch, Malabar and other foreign merchants, so that the money sent annually from Mexico would no longer disappear into foreign pockets (because the Spanish on the Philippines had to buy everything from foreigners) but would stay in the country.¹³³ His company would devote itself especially to the Philippine trade with China, where, among other things, cacao from the Philippines could also be profitably sold,¹³⁴ to Europeans in all probability. Chinese and Sangleyes in particular should no longer be able to make the bulk of the profits from these fruits (“...*sin que los Chinos o Sangleyes tengan su mayor grangería en estos frutos*”), buying them cheaply from the locals (Fig. 2).¹³⁵

Among the Philippine products to be sold were sea-slug, camphor, sea-shells, pearls, and gold, goods that could be profitably sold in China and exchanged for cotton goods, silks, and porcelain.¹³⁶

¹³³ “Consulta sobre proyecto para mejorar el comercio de Filipinas”, AGI, Filipinas, 97, N. 14, passim, for example, images 2-3, 5, 16-17, 72-73. Maria Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, “Philippine Economic Development Plans”, 205.

¹³⁴ “Consulta sobre proyecto para mejorar el comercio de Filipinas”, AGI, Filipinas, 97, N. 14, passim, no pagination, for example, images 18-19, 27, 65-68, esp. 27. “Expediente sobre proyecto de Ricardo Bagge”, AGI, Filipinas, 160, N. 23; see also Maria Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, “Philippine Economic Development Plans”, 205.

¹³⁵ AGI, Filipinas, 97, N. 14, image 5; see also image 7. There he mentions that the local population had been obliged to plant cotton to produce textiles like ‘elefantes’ or ‘lampotes’, and introduce silkworms for silk production (image 10), especially in the province of Cagayan.

¹³⁶ Maria Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, “Philippine Economic Development Plans”, 205, with reference to AGI, Filipinas, 228; AGI, Filipinas, 160, N. 23, image 64; AGI, Filipinas, 97, N. 14, image 18 speaks only of ‘the other mentioned goods’ (*los demás generos expresados*), which would include cacao. Image 27 states that the local population could easily obtain from the enemies’ provinces goods like, among others, cacao, goods that are all abandoned (*los havitantes de las Islas pudieran conseguir*

The role cacao played in this intermediate trade is not yet entirely clear. Certainly, the Chinese did not consume large quantities of cacao and chocolate. Nevertheless, they definitely played a not unimportant part in the resale of cacao to Europeans, and cacao and chocolate continued to occupy a significant place in their trading networks, not only through the sale of tableware, cups, dishes, and jar used for their consumption.¹³⁷

In the Philippines, cacao was, for example, cultivated on the fertile island of Mindanao, from where obviously the best quality originated.¹³⁸ Bagge's idea was to encourage the indigenous Philippine population not only to cultivate certain plants and fruits and thus foster domestic agriculture,¹³⁹ thus decreasing the need for imports, but also to produce certain goods and products for export.

con facilidad de las Provinias enemigas, cacao, balate, alcanfor, carey, perlas en abundancia, y de bien oriente, oro y otras cosas estimables, que todo se abandona, y cada dia se hallan mas pujantes los enemigos por la poca oposicion).

¹³⁷ José Miguel Herrera Reviriego speaks of a high demand for cacao in Asia and concludes that silver and cacao were the two of the very few commodities the Europeans could offer and by which Chinese merchants felt attracted ('Estos dos artículos [that is, silver and cacao, A.S.] eran de los pocos productos por los que los mercaderes chinos se sentían atraídos de cuantos podían ofrecerles los europeos y, por tanto, se convirtieron en piezas fundamentales para mantener abierto el trato con China'). See José Miguel Herrera Reviriego, "Flujos comerciales interconectados: El mercado asiático y el americano durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVII", *Historia mexicana* 66:2 (2016), 495-553, here 523. I am still looking for more evidence on the Chinese involvement in the cacao trade.

¹³⁸ Pedro Murillo Velarde, *Historia de la provincia de Philipinas de la Comp. de Jesus*, 187.

¹³⁹ See also "Registro de oficio de la Audiencia de Filipinas", AGI, Filipinas, 335, L. 17, 107r: "...el que trata de motivo el aumento de las frutas de esas Yslas, ...se les obligase bajo de varias penas, a plantar en cada año, diez pies de árbol de cacao, coco, bonga o pimienta, según la oportunidad de terreno, encargando a los alcaldes mayores de los respectivos pueblos, su observancia y responsabilidad, previniéndolos reciban en efectos de algodón los tributos Reales de todo lo que quieran satisfacerlos en esta especie y que los esfuercen a su siembra, y beneficio...".

Instead of using the great quantities of silver that were shipped annually to the Philippines from Acapulco to pay for foreign imports, Bagge suggested investing this money locally and thereby enriching the island. His policy was also meant to bring about a cost relief for the government, thereby decreasing its expenditure, increasing customs revenue, and above all stopping the continuous outflow of silver to China and other Asian countries.¹⁴⁰ He proposed to oblige the local ‘Indians’, for example, to plant annually ten feet of cacao, coco, bonga (kapok or silk-cotton tree; *Ceiba pentandra*), or pepper trees (*cada indio tributario se le obligase a plantar cada año diez pies de árbol de cacao, coco, bonga o pimienta*).¹⁴¹ The manuscript then lists all “fruits necessary and useful for subsistence and comfort of the natives and residents in the entire island district (*todos los frutos necesarios y utiles para la subsistencia y comodidad de los naturales y residentes en todo el distrito de estas islas*)”.¹⁴²

	Cacao
Provincia de Tondo	11,136
Provincia de Bulacan	69,107
Provincia de la Pampanga	62,457
Provincia de Pangasinan	57,704
Provincia de Ilocos	62,575

¹⁴⁰ Maria Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo, “Philippine Economic Development Plans”, 205.

¹⁴¹ “Aprobación de medidas para fomentar la agricultura” (1759-10-06), AGI, Filipinas, 335, L.17, F.106r-107v. “Expediente sobre proyecto de Ricardo Bagge”, AGI, Filipinas, 160, N. 23 (images 4, 101) says that each year at least ten plants or trees have to be sown or planted in all areas where the soil is appropriate.

¹⁴² “Expediente sobre proyecto de Ricardo Bagge”, AGI, F Filipinas, 160, N. 23 (image 101). Cultivated were rice, maize, sugarcane, tobacco and sometimes wheat, while the territory is described as, for example, not being adequate for the cultivation of cinnamon. Op. cit., images 61, 62.

No more could be planted, the text continues, partly because of the destruction of the flowers, partly due to the irruption of the volcano of Balayan, partly due to general epidemics, and partly because the strong monsoon winds posed a threat to the trees¹⁴³, which, as we have noted already, should also be protected against strong sunshine.¹⁴⁴ On Ilocos (or Ilog), as we have seen above, cacao was already abundant in the late seventeenth century.¹⁴⁵

The Jesuit missionary José Calvo (1681–1757) also introduced a project to improve the economic situation in the Philippines and proposed to exploit of the local agricultural and mineral resources that should then be used to trade with Spain. He, too, reproaches foreigners, like the Chinese, out of their selfish interests for causing excessive expense for the Spanish Crown by “depriving Spain and the Islands of many goods that they could enjoy through trade” (*privando a España y a las Yslas de muchos bienes que pudieran gozar por medio del comercio*).¹⁴⁶ Among the local resources to be exploited he mentions cinnamon, pepper, cloves, tobacco, cacao, sugar, indigo, mulberry trees, cotton, wax, and some other products: The cacao was almost better than that from Venezuela, he states (*el cacao, tan bueno, o mejor, que él de Caracas, y en tanta abundancia que ya vale a menos*

¹⁴³ “Expediente sobre proyecto de Ricardo Bagge”, AGI, Filipinas, 160, N. 23 (image 102).

¹⁴⁴ Cf. the description by de Acosta, see footnotes 25 and 65.

¹⁴⁵ H. de la Costa, S.J., *Jesuits in the Philippines*, 512.

¹⁴⁶ “Proyecto que hace a S.M. el P. Joseph Calvo manifestando el engaño del descredito en que unos pocos no verdaderos vecinos de las Yslas Philipinas, encomenderos de chinos, extranjeros, y de 10s de Mexico, por su interés obligan a S.M. a gastos excesivos, privando a España y a las Yslas de muchos bienes que pudieran gozar por medio del comercio, mediante la opulencia de sus riquezas en minas de todos metales y frutos”, Biblioteca de Palacio, Madrid (BPM), Miscelánea de Ayala V, 330r-339r, online <https://rbdigital.realbiblioteca.es/files/manifests/II-2820.json>

de 1 real por libra’).¹⁴⁷ And even balsams, resins, and medicinal drugs can be found locally (*‘Deja de contar los Balsamos, y gomas, los palos, raices, y Drogas medicinales en que son singulares aquellas yslas’*).¹⁴⁸ He suggested that local Filipinos, who had to pay tribute to the Spanish Crown, should be obliged to dedicate part of their farming to the cultivation of pepper, nutmegs, cacao and mulberry trees.¹⁴⁹

Francisco Leandro de Viana (fl. 1764–1775), who was appointed attorney-general to the Audiencia of Manila in 1756, even suggested “that only those be considered eligible for the office of petty governor and other municipal posts who plant and harvest a specified quantity of rice, wheat, sugar, cocoa, cotton, beeswax or some other product, depending on the region in question”, in order to encourage people to engage in agriculture.¹⁵⁰ Labour was cheap and abundant, and the natives were considered to learn quickly. The project of Richard Bagge proposed “to take fruits from the Philippines, valued by the people of these nations [i.e. *‘vecinos’*, which means above all the Dutch, English, and French], as there are cacao, *balat*,¹⁵¹ camphor, sea turtle shells (*carei or carey*),¹⁵² pearls from the Orient, and gold, for commerce to the coast of China, in order to exchange these for products our islands need” (Fig. 3).¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ “Proyecto que hace a S.M. el P. Joseph Calvo”, 333r.

¹⁴⁸ “Proyecto que hace a S.M. el P. Joseph Calvo”, 334r.

¹⁴⁹ “Proyecto que hace a S.M. el P. Joseph Calvo”, 334v.

¹⁵⁰ Maria Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo, “Philippine Economic Development Plans”, 216.

¹⁵¹ This refers to *‘balate’*, that is sea slugs. Cf. Manel Ollé, *Islas de Plata. Juncos y Galeones en los Mares del Sur* (Barcelona: El Acantilado, 2022), 182.

¹⁵² This refers to *‘carey sea turtle shells’* and/or its eggs which were obviously very highly appreciated in China. I wish to thank Dr. José Casabán and Dr. Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel for assisting me with the final identification.

¹⁵³ “Expediente sobre el proyecto de Pedro Calderón Enríquez”, AGI, Filipinas, 183, N. 6, image 153: “Dice que el fin de este sujeto es proponer para el aumento y fomento de las Yslas philipinas una compañía en que interviniessen las venerables mesas de

The Role of Cacao and Chocolate

Provincia de Tondo	11,136
Provincia de Bulacan	69,107
Provincia de la Pampanga	62,457
Provincia de Pangasinan	97,903
Provincia de Ilocos	88,488
Cavite	3,133
Provincia de Balayan	14,587
Provincia de Camarines	190,942
Provincia de Capiz	16,146
Provincia de la Laguna de Bay	55,000
Total	608,092¹⁵⁴

A letter by Pedro Manuel de Arandía Santisteban (1699–1759) provides yet more extensive data on cacao trees planted in various locations across the Philippines, speaking of a total of 608,092 sown cacao plants (see Fig. 4):

The Royal Decree to the Governor of the Philippines for the promotion of agriculture, dated 1757, actually first rejects Richard Bagge's plans, which he had suggested in 1746, arguing that this Irishman was not trustworthy, but then stresses the interest of the Spanish Crown in encouraging at least certain crops, including cacao, pepper and especially cotton. And the natives could then pay their tribute in raw cotton.¹⁵⁵ From the documentation, it is clear that cacao, coco, and pepper trees were more extensively cultivated. But what about the role of the Chinese in this trade in cacao?

la misericordia, y tercera orden de aquella Ciudad, con otros vecinos acacetalados de ella, y que S. M. interesase la quinta parte, concediendo las gracias, y privilegios correspondientes, por cuia mano se havia de hacer comercio en la costa de la China llevando frutas de las Yslas que estiman las de aquellas naciones como son Cacao, Balat, Alcanfór, Carei, Perlas de buen oriente, y oro, para permutarlo en cambio de los Generos que necesitan nuestras Yslas.”

¹⁵⁴ “Carta de Pedro Manuel de Arandia sobre árboles sembrados en Filipinas”, AGI, Filipinas, 386, N. 3 1, image 7.

¹⁵⁵ “Aprobación de medidas para fomentar la agricultura” (1759-10-06), AGI, Filipinas, 335, L. 17, fols. 106r-107v.

The Intra-Asian Cacao Trade

Bagge's plan to sell cacao "for commerce to the coast of China"¹⁵⁶ would imply that it was highly valued by merchants involved in the coastal China trade, including the Chinese presumably. Bagge clearly states that among "the fruits from the Philippines, valued by the people of these nations" is cacao (see above). In the first part of my analysis, I suggested that cacao and chocolate were not as readily accepted as a consumption article in China, where tea was and remained the beverage of choice. The chocolate culture nevertheless had a far-reaching impact on Chinese society and economy by influencing its ceramics industry. But this is not the entire story.

Generally speaking, Chinese merchants had little interest in European products and only demanded silver. But various merchants valued cacao as well as a commercial crop. This may partly explain why larger quantities of Guatemalan and Peruvian cacao were shipped to the Philippines despite the fact that, as we have seen above, cacao was already widely cultivated in the island archipelago and was obviously of good quality. Fray Álvaro de Benavente (1647–1709), the founder of the China mission of the Augustinians whom I quoted already in the first part, describes the local situation in the Philippines in 1677, including which products are cultivated. While they have grapes, for example, they cannot yet make wine, that comes from Europe. "But now they have started planting cacao again, and it is growing as well as in America" (*Aora nuebamente an dado en sembrar cacao y se da tan bien como en América*).¹⁵⁷ Obviously, cacao cultivation had been abandoned again in some places.

Norton Nicol's observation confirms that the local products he

¹⁵⁶ Expediente sobre el proyecto de Pedro Calderón Enríquez", AGI, Filipinas, 183, N. 6, image 153.

¹⁵⁷ "Relación de las islas Filipinas, extraída de una carta de fray Alvaro de Benavente, de la orden de San Agustín y secretario del padre provincial de Filipinas. Hace una descripción de sus cultivos, costumbres, oficios, etc." (1677-06-06, Manila), AHN, Diversos-Colecciones, 31, N. 86, 2r.

mentions “sell at prices that are very profitable—although commerce has, as in all regions, its ups and downs [*sus altos y bajos*].”¹⁵⁸ This would include cacao. Bagge speaks of ‘fruits’ like cacao being shipped (‘taken’) to the Chinese coast for sale.¹⁵⁹ But what does this mean?

The Chinese obviously acted as dealers or middlemen in the cacao trade, and this already since the late seventeenth century, purchasing cacao in Manila and then selling it (in their own ports) to other Europeans. Especially the Sangleyes bought small quantities of certain spices whose trade was controlled by the VOC, for example sandal wood from Timor¹⁶⁰ and some cacao, goods that could be resold to the Spanish and other Europeans. A document probably from the 1660s¹⁶¹ describes the contemporary commercial situation in Manila and the Parian (that is, the local Chinese community).

¹⁵⁸ Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1803*, vol. 47, 257. See also footnote 128 above.

¹⁵⁹ “Expediente sobre el proyecto de Pedro Calderón Enríquez”, AGI, Filipinas, 183, N. 6, image 153.

¹⁶⁰ Roderich Ptak, “The Transportation of Sandalwood from Timor to China and Macao, c.1350-1600”, in Roderich Ptak (ed.), *Portuguese Asia. Aspects in History and Economic History, Beiträge zur Südasiensforschung* 117 (Stuttgart: 1987), 103-109, especially footnotes 25 and 38.

¹⁶¹ “Avisos de El comercio de Filipinas, [en manos de los sangleyes], y su estilo hasta hoy”, directed to Doctor Francisco Orieta de Filipinas (entre 1601 y 1700), BNE, MSS, 11014, 1r-3v, to be downloaded from <https://datos.bne.es/edicion/biam0000002605.html>. On page 3v twice the name of ‘Pumquan’ is mentioned, a Spanish designation used for Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624–1662). This name appears more frequently in contemporary Spanish documents, see, for example, “Carta de Diego Salcedo sobre socorros, comercio, etc.” (1667-08-04, Manila; Luzón, Filipinas), AGI, Filipinas, 9, R. 3, N. 50, so that it is reasonable to date the manuscript to the early 1660s. I would, thus, basically agree with José Miguel Herrera Reviriego, *Manila y la Gobernación de Filipinas en el Mundo Interconectado de la Segunda Mitad del Siglo XVII*, PhD dissertation, Universitat Jaume I, 2014, 137, who suggests 1663 as a possible date.

The text discusses the causes of local price increases, for which the Sangleyes are considered responsible and portrays the Sangleyes as a kind of sworn, even secret, community. The solution, according to the anonymous author, would be that the Spanish personally take over the trade with China.¹⁶² We will not discuss this manuscript in detail here, but the fact alone that it mentions ‘wax, blankets, and cacao’ (la cera, las mantas, el cacao) as three major commodities with which the Sangleyes traded, clearly shows that these were important products in whose trade the Chinese were involved in the second half of the seventeenth century. Their concrete engagement still awaits a more thorough investigation (if we can find more relevant sources), but it becomes clear from such scattered statements that the Sangleyes also dealt with cacao in Manila.

Complaints about the Dutch siphoning off high profits for dealing with products the Spanish possess in their own colony suggest that Dutch merchants in the form of the VOC were also active in the ‘Asian cacao trade’. Dutch official records, however, rarely mention any cacao trade, and few entries mention the growing and planting of cacao trees.¹⁶³ Nonetheless the Dutch introduced cacao as well

¹⁶² “A comprarle el género como la cera, las mantas, el cacao, y este acude tres o 4 días con el precio señalado del Parián”, in “Avisos de El comercio de Filipinas”, fol. 1v. The document is also discussed by Antoni Picazo Muntaner, “El comercio sedero de Filipinas con México y su influencia en la economía de España en el siglo XVII”, in Francisco José Aranda Pérez, *La declinación de la Monarquía Hispánica en el siglo XVII* (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2004), 501-509, 504, who dates it to 1601.

¹⁶³ For example, in 1718 in North-Ceram, an island in the southern Moluccas: “Cacao seems to grow very well and produces large nuts” (*‘cacao schijnt goed te willen groeien en zeer grote noten te geven’*), see *Generale missiven van gouverneurs-generaal en raden aan heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, Deel 7*, 1713-1724, GS 164, 414. In Ambon Island, Maluku, cacao trees were planted with the hope to be able to use the fruits for commercial purposes, but the result was not good. See Jeroen Bos, “Laboratoria van de VOC herbergden schat aan kennis. Kwikzilver, kaneel en drakenbloed”, lees het na

as sugar and coffee to Java and the hinterlands of Malacca during the 1770s, probably from the Philippines.¹⁶⁴ Possibly they were also responsible for the introduction of the plant into Ceylon (Sri Lanka).¹⁶⁵ But we know from scattered sources that chocolate became popular in other parts of Asia too, for example, in Siam (modern Thailand),¹⁶⁶ and it may have reached Ceylon before the Dutch. As we have seen in the first part of my investigation, it was also the Dutch who introduced cacao and chocolate to Japan.

On the one hand, we can conclude that, in addition to ceramics, there was yet another commercial sector of the chocolate boom in which Chinese merchants from both mainland China and Manila were involved. They acted as resellers or dealers of cacao in Asia. But obviously the cacao was not officially imported into China. Paul van Dyke has carefully examined customs lists from eighteenth-century Canton and Macao, none of which mentions cacao.¹⁶⁷ Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century memorials of local officials and other Qing documents reporting special events to the palace (*zhupi zouzhe* 殊

6 (2012), 85.

¹⁶⁴ William Clarence-Smith, *Cacao and Chocolate, 1765–1914* (London, 2000), 95.

¹⁶⁵ For a detailed discussion, see Tilman Frasch, “The Coming of Cacao and Chocolate to Ceylon”, *Food & History* 12:1 (2014), 137-152, doi: 10.1484/J.FOOD.5.105146.

¹⁶⁶ Monsieur Simon de De La Loubère (1642–1729), *A new historical relation of the kingdom of Siam; done out of French*, by A.P. Gen. R.S.S. La Loubère, Simon de, 1642–1729., A. P., Chapter IX, “Of the Gardens of the Siameses, and occasionally of their Liquors”, 23, online <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo2/A48403.0001.001/1:4.9?rgn=div2;submit=Go;subview=detail;type=simple;view=fulltext;q1=chocolate> (accessed on 8 May 2023).

¹⁶⁷ Paul Van Dyke, *Merchants of Canton and Macao*, Vol. 1, *Politics and Strategies in Eighteenth-Century Chinese Trade* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011); Paul A. Van Dyke, *Merchants of Canton and Macao*, Vol. 2, *Success and Failure in Eighteenth-Century Chinese Trade* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016).

批奏摺) concerning relations with Luzon speak of ‘Lüsong ships’ (most of them reaching a port in Fujian) carrying mainly rice, but also cotton, fabrics in general, agricultural products, tobacco, seaweed, timber, sapan wood, foreign tin, and even meat and lard (豬油), but no cacao or chocolate is mentioned.¹⁶⁸ Based on the foreign sources I consulted, I can currently only speculate that this exchange, if it did not take place in Manila, was probably carried out on offshore islands close to Hong Kong, Macao, or possibly the Fujian coast, or perhaps even directly at the ports of China but without being taxed, as the products were immediately reexported. The negative official attitude towards chocolate in the China of the 1720s to at least the mid-eighteenth century would also suggest smuggling in the coastal waters.

More concrete evidence for Chinese involvement in the intra-Asian cacao trade comes from the nineteenth century. As William Clarence-Smith has shown, Manado in Sulawesi (modern Indonesia) started to export cacao to Manila in the 1820s, a trade that was run by Chinese ‘syndicates’ (*gongsi* 公司). The Chinese sailed annually and sought certain staple products like sea-slugs, as well as cacao for the Philippine market.¹⁶⁹ This implies that the Philippines were not a great exporter of cacao but rather an importer in the early to mid-nineteenth

¹⁶⁸ Diyi lishi dang’an guan (ed.), *Qingdai Zhongguo yu Dongnanya geguo guanxi dang’an shiliao huibian* 清代中國與東南亞各國關係檔案史料彙編, vol. 2, Feilubin 菲律賓 (Beijing: Guoji wenhua chuban gongsi, 2004), 115-117, 148, 166, 168, 169, 199, 216.

¹⁶⁹ William Clarence-Smith, “From Maluku to Manila: Cocoa Production and Trade in Maritime South East Asia from the 1820s to the 1880s”, Workshop paper, University of London, 1993, p.8, with reference to the Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia (ANRI), 31, 50-II, “Verslag van de Kommissaris voor Menado” (1846), and Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine life, 1850–1898* (New Haven: 1965) for a general background on the Chinese. I wish to thank William Clarence-Smith for sharing this paper with me.

century. Later still, by 1882, the Manila Chinese “stopped coming to Ambon to buy cocoa, at least for a couple of years”, which may have been related to an increase in production in the Philippines.¹⁷⁰

Chinese in Manila, the Sangleyes, were in various ways also directly engaged in the preparation, consumption and sale of chocolate. It was common for the *alcalde mayor* of the Parian in Manila to invite the Chinese to a banquet of chocolate – an indirect attestation that among the Sangley community in Manila, the consumption of chocolate was known, though not necessarily common. The cups of chocolate were sent by members of the Royal Audiencia to the heads of the *petates*, the game tables used in the *metua* game by Chinese Sangleyes in Manila.¹⁷¹ Some Chinese in Manila also offered their services for the preparation of chocolate, as Blas Sierra de la Calle notes – they went from house to house with the grinding stones, preparing different chocolate recipes, according to personal likes (*‘iban de casa en casa, con sus piedras de moler, preparando las diferentes recetas de chocolate, según los gustos’*).¹⁷²

Eberhard Crailsheim has introduced some merchants who were involved in partly illegal trade with various goods, including cacao.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ William Clarence-Smith, “From Maluku to Manila”, 8.

¹⁷¹ “Consulta XXV: Si ay obligación de restituir lo que dan los Sangleyes en retomo del de los Alcaldes mayores, en orden chocolate, que les embia el Alcalde, o en tiempo del juego de la metua.”, Juan de Paz (O.P.), *Consultas y resoluciones varias theologicas, juridicas, regulares y morales* (Sevilla: por Thòmas Lopez de Haro, 1687), 483. I wish to thank my colleague Marina Torres Trimález who brought this reference to my attention.

¹⁷² Blas Sierra de la Calle, *Vientos de Acapulco. Relaciones entre América y Oriente (Valladolid: Museo Oriental de Valladolid, 1991)*, 67, quoted by Beatriz Palazuelos Mazars, *Acapulco et le Galion de Manille, la réalité quotidienne au XVIIe siècle*. Histoire. Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle (Paris III, 2012), 316 HAL Id: tel-00846697 <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-00846697>.

¹⁷³ Eberhard Crailsheim, “Trading with the Enemy. Commerce between Spaniards and ‘Moros’ in the Early Modern Philippines”, *Vegueta. Anuario de la Facultad de Geografía e Historia* 20 (2020), 81-111.

In the early 1750s, a certain Antonio Ramón de Abad y Monterde was accused of illegal involvement in private commerce, for example, with the Moros (Muslims). He bought wax and cacao in Tuboc, a village close to the heart of the Maguindanao Sultanate, and sent these goods to his business partners in Manila.¹⁷⁴ Although the quantity of cacao was relatively small – about ten *fanegas*, i.e. a total of 555 liters and supposedly only for his personal use¹⁷⁵ – this attests to the existence of a trade in Philippine cacao in Asian waters.

Such illegal trading activities can still be observed at the turn of the eighteenth century, as Crailsheim shows. In particular “*the alcaldes mayores* (the regional Spanish administrators) and the governors of Zamboanga” seem to have been involved in illegal trade and the appropriation of public funds for personal gain by trading especially in rice, *Musa textilis* (*abacá*), wax, cacao, textiles and gold.¹⁷⁶ However, locally produced cacao was also consumed locally. Cacao from Jolo, Crailsheim stresses, was “competing successfully with cacao from Acapulco.”¹⁷⁷ We can therefore see that cacao spread more widely across Asia than one would expect at first glance but that it was mainly produced in the Philippines, becoming a trade good specific to the islands.

¹⁷⁴ Eberhard Crailsheim, “Trading with the Enemy”, 93.

¹⁷⁵ Eberhard Crailsheim, “Trading with the Enemy”, 94, with reference to Juan de la Concepción, 1788–1792, vol. 13, 66-68, 75-78, 85, who reports in detail about the lawsuit against Antonio Ramón de Abad.

¹⁷⁶ Eberhard Crailsheim, “Trading with the Enemy”, 94.

¹⁷⁷ Eberhard Crailsheim, “Trading with the Enemy”, 101.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have been concerned to reconstruct the path of cacao and chocolate from a Mesoamerican food item to a global commodity by focusing on its westward journey from America to Asia. The story of its rise to become a global commodity requires a closer investigation of its introduction into Asia, a history which has long been ignored or underestimated. This chapter has consequently looked at local cultivation and transplantation projects, transpacific trade, and intra-Asian exchanges. Cacao, it becomes evident, was not just considered a product that one finds in nature and then uses for consumption or medical purposes. In the course of the eighteenth century in particular, cacao developed as a product that local and global actors wanted to modify according to their economic purposes. In a more conceptual way, this implies a changing attitude of man towards nature, towards his natural environment: Nature became something that can and should be modified independently of immediate local circumstances. The role and importance of cacao and chocolate changed over time, transplantation became more important, and cacao was cultivated as a cash crop, to be sold to others – cacao, thus, became a real commodity in other words, a product which, possessing the quality of satisfying specific human demands, was only produced to be exchanged for money.

In my analysis I have also argued that, although Asian societies did not consume large amounts of cacao and chocolate, they were still, in various ways, an essential part of the cacao boom and/or actively contributed to its success story.

However, trying to reconstruct the intra-Asian resale, commodity and knowledge flows of both American and locally (Asian) grown cacao in the form of beans or powder, or processed as blocks or paste, and in rare cases as plants or seeds, has turned out to be a great challenge.

We possess various hints that Chinese merchants were directly involved in the resale of Philippine (and American?) cacao, but much information on how this was practically carried out on the ground remains unclear. Chinese sources mostly tell us little or nothing, last but not least because many of these activities were carried out clandestinely or by Manila Sangleyes. As we have seen in the first part of my investigation, a Spanish-Chinese dictionary of terms used in Luzon also introduces two transcriptions for cacao, ‘gegao’ 格膏 and ‘gugu’ 谷古, one for chocolate, ‘zhugülü’ 朱古律”, and explains the words ‘chocolatera’, ‘jicara’, and ‘molendero, ra’ (磨朱古律人), a person who is grinding cacao beans¹⁷⁸.

Although we continue to discover new information on intra-Asian cacao and chocolate flows, mainly in Spanish and other European-language sources, many details still need to be explored. One conclusion we can definitely draw: Chinese individuals, whether traders, craftsmen in the porcelain workshops, businessmen, or other economic actors, were much more affected by and actively contributed to the contemporary ‘chocolate hype’ than one expects at first glance. Moreover, the fact that also Chinese consumption traditions changed over time is clearly demonstrated by looking at Portuguese Macao, where today we find many sweets and drinks that contain milk and cacao.

¹⁷⁸ See *Lüsong Huawen hebi zidian* 呂宋華文合璧字典. *Diccionario Español-Chino enciclopédico* por Tam Pui-Shum 譚培森 (no place of publication: no publisher, 1927), 162, 299, 569, 650. National Library of China, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NLC511-023031404022999-9781_呂宋華文合璧字典_增廣改良.pdf.



Fig. 1: “D. de Quélus (possibly Jean-Baptiste de Caylus, French, d. 1722), *Histoire naturelle du cacao, et du sucre, divisée en deux traités, qui contiennent plusieurs faits nouveaux, & beaucoup d’observations également curieuses & utiles* (Paris: L. d’Houry, 1719), preface.

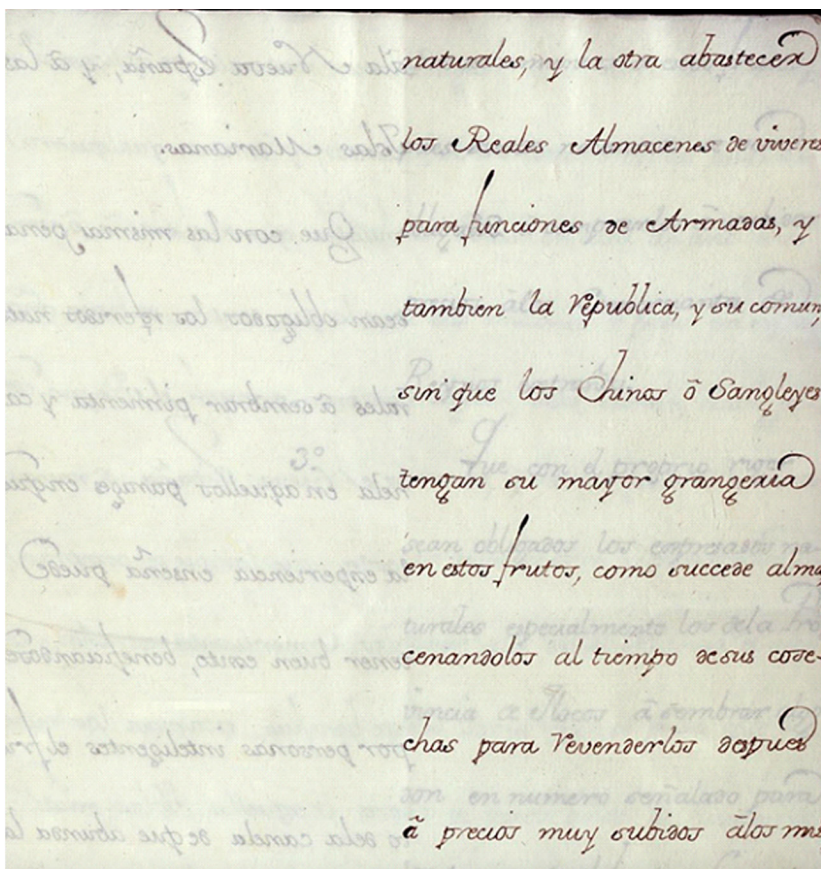


Fig. 2: “Consulta sobre proyecto para mejorar el comercio de Filipinas”, AGI, Filipinas, 97, N. 14, image 5.

Real améndose enserado a una representación que
 hace D.ⁿ Ricardo Bazz, vecino de Manila, Islas de
 nación, y empleado en la Maquinaria de las Islas Philipi-
 nas, y sujeto según el contrato ineligente en los comercios
 y traficos de la Asia, y Nueva España. = Dice que el fin
 de este suero es proponer para el aumento y fomento de las
 Islas Philipinas una compañía en que interviniere la ve-
 nerable mesa de la misericordia, y tercera orden de aquella
 Ciudad, con otros vecinos acomodados de ella, y que el R.
 interesase la quinta parte, concediendo las gracias, y privile-
 gios correspondientes, por cuya mano se avia de hacer el co-
 mercio en la costa de la China llevando frutos de las Islas
 que criman las de aquellas naciones como son Cacao, Balas,
 Alcañoz, Caxer, Pezalar de buen oriente, y Oro, para per-
 mutarlo en cambio de los Genexos que necesitan nuestras
 Islas, todo lo qual se alla absolutamente abandonado, como tam-
 bien el que se podría establecer con la cria de la seda en
 la Provincia de Cagaian y de Ilocos, cuyos naturales son
 aplicados a cosas que pudieran muy bien remediar qual
 quiera genexo noble de la China o de otra qualquier parte
 y asi mismo establecer el salitre que se descubrió en aque-

FILIPINAS, 183, N.

Fig. 3: “Expediente sobre el proyecto de Pedro Calderón Enriquez”, AGI, Filipinas, 183, N.6, image 153.

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