

Birgit Tremml

A global history of Manila in the beginning of the Modern Era

Tackling an overdue subject in history

Major scholars of global history consider the establishment of Manila as the capital of the Spanish Philippines, in 1571, as the kick-off for global trade. Dennis O. Flynn and Arturo Giráldez write in their often quoted article about international silver flows' impact on world affairs that "Manila was the crucial entrepôt linking substantial, direct, and continuous trade between America and Asia for the first time in history."¹

In the light of Manila's undeniable importance for the emergence of a continuous Pacific Rim trade, the project of writing a history of the early modern² Philippines is not as bizarre as it may seem at first glance. This article is considered as an introduction into a far larger study of the Philippine's early global integration. The basic idea here is to give a concrete example of how to apply global historical research. Late sixteenth century Manila offers the perfect setting for such a study since its mere existence depended on its attraction for several pre-modern economic players. In my research I will focus on the three most influential powers in that context: Castile, China and Japan. As a matter of fact, Manila was of both economical and political significance for these three pre-modern states. What drove their actions apart from economic forces of supply and demand? How did its trading system work, how did each side react to each other and what crucial knowledge do we gain from it?

Looking at things from a broader angle is crucial for the understanding of complex matters and far-reaching processes. By using a global historical focus we might gain deeper understanding of processes leading to major changes in world

Birgit Tremml, Institute for Economic and Social History, University of Vienna. birgit.tremml@univie.ac.at

politics and economics, which have been overlooked by twentieth-century-writing of national history. In the best of all possible worlds, we might even be able to link our results to contemporary challenges on a global scale.

The early modern period is of particular interest in that regard since it was the time when a single connected world emerged. Manila, the capital of the only long-lasting Spanish colony in Asia, grew as a result of the mergence of this world-wide interconnectedness. The fact that silver arrived in the young urban trading port under Spanish dominion to then quench Ming China's enormous thirst for this precious metal was of major global significance. Silver made the world go round and Manila thrive. All activities of people calling at Manila for trade were connected to bullion.³ Recent research has shown that Chinese silk, the major commodity that was exchanged for American silver, was the second important item in the long-distance trade linking Asia, the Americas and Europe.

When the Spanish *conquistadores* arrived there in 1570, after being unsuccessful in establishing permanent rule over the Southern island of Cebu after 1565, a Muslim clan was ruling over the area. Because of the city's perfect location, the Spaniards decided to build their capital there. The Muslim leader Rajah Sulaiman III agreed on a friendship treaty, but did not want to submit to Spanish sovereignty. As a result of a subsequent revolt, the Spanish captured and burnt the city. The following year Miguel López de Legazpi occupied the territory and founded a Spanish settlement at this small trading port. Within only a few years it turned into a prosperous port city, calling the attention of early modern global players like China, Japan and the Netherlands. In that regard, the case of early modern Manila may be studied according to the world-system theory with its focus on the role of centers and peripheries, with the Philippines being a classical periphery exploited by the metropolis.⁴ The history of South East Asia has hardly been studied from this angle. Only recently a few scholars started to set this record straight.⁵ According to Wallerstein, the sixteenth century saw the emerging of the modern world-system. In the processes of global interaction that took place, Manila became the stage for trade and intercultural exchange between Asia, the Americas and Europe and we may ask what role it played exactly in this process of global transformation.

Another interesting question is, how remote Spain – that has also often been considered as an economically backward state – managed to dominate such an attractive location despite the pressure of fierce competition with other potent pre-modern states? Here a thorough comparative research might provide the missing link in these entangled histories of pre-modern states and their long-lasting and far-reaching influence on seventeenth century's world affairs. Events in allegedly peripheral sixteenth-century Manila had an impact on developments in different corners of the world while Manila itself offered a stage for various civilizations and

pre-modern states' foreign affairs. Because of this compactness, I regard Manila as an ideally suited focal point for studying global transformations and global interdependencies in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

In my research, I focus on Manila's position within the foreign policies of the Castilian Monarchy, China and Japan. Important indicators will be the aspirations of these pre-modern states⁶, their political economies and institutions, as well as their notions of being culturally superior compared to each other. Besides one has to consider their political and economical embedment on a broader scale. In order to receive satisfying results, these matters have to be dealt with comparatively and approaches from various disciplines will have to be applied.⁷ Here, we are bound to consider the idea of a "clash of cultures".⁸ My hypothesis is that striking differences in political economies and culture mattered.⁹

For this article, I chose two case studies in order to analyse whether the supposed clash of cultures did indeed take place in East and South East Asia after the Europeans had entered this part of the world. Firstly, I will look at the aspirations of the Tokugawa¹⁰ government to establish permanent trade with New Spain and to catch up in international trade. Then I will switch to the rebellion of the Chinese settlers of 1603 that became known as "the Spanish massacre of the Chinese". Both cases provide evidence for my thesis of prevailing striking cultural differences, and both cases offer good opportunities to study culture's impact on global political and economic developments. Before discussing these cases, I provide a brief overlook on early modern Manila's urban development.

Early modern Manila

This study of early modern Manila covers the period between 1570, when it was occupied by the Spaniards, and the early 1640s, when Spanish relations with China and Japan deteriorated dramatically due to major political changes in East Asia as well as a decline in American silver imports to the Philippines. It now is as if these three pre-modern states were bound to go in a certain direction when they met in sixteenth century Manila. Their contributions to Manila turning into an unparalleled urban phenomenon and the Philippine's early modern global integration are numerous. But it is not only the fascinating story of early modern multicultural encounters that makes this period worth studying. Manila became the new home for people from these three pre-modern states. However, it stands to reason that the indigenous people of the archipelago, who were called *indios* or Filipinos, regardless of their heterogeneous origins, were by far the largest ethnic group that settled in and around Manila and also had its share in these developments. Strong interde-

pendence characterised Manila's population. The Spanish depended on Chinese and Japanese supply, labour and taxes as well as China's demand for silver – both American and Japanese – which is said to have been the reason for the Spaniards to be in the first place in South East Asia.¹¹

In certain times the ruling Spaniards could not have maintained their sovereignty without Chinese or Japanese help, either monetary or military. In return, they offered a safe harbour and governmental protection, freedom of trade for incoming traders, and general conditions for a broad variety of specialised labour as well as their share in long-distance trade in silver and silk. However, peaceful co-existence was challenged by various factors and incidents, as we will see later.

Tools and Sources

As I have already mentioned, this study in global history is based on a comparative research aiming to answer big questions by tracing far-reaching processes and large structures.¹² The 'big question' here will be whether or to what extent a "clash of cultures" jeopardised early modern Manila and its intercultural relations. Therefore, I chose to look at the major economic players living in and coming to the Philippines in its early decades as Spanish colony. New results shall be drawn from Spanish and Japanese primary sources. Here, it is of major importance to read them both with and against the grain. In dealing with sixteenth and seventeenth century-records we constantly have to ask why certain information is given and what may have been the reasons for the lack of other information. An interdisciplinary linguistic approach can provide us with crucial information about cultural differences. In many cases, even allegedly ordinary things produced misunderstanding, distrust and resentment consequently leading to major political measures. New insights gained from such a critical empirical study of early modern events shall be compared to the results of recent studies in these fields, as well as relevant theories of global history. The variety of sources shall help to resist the temptation of seeing things too one-dimensional. It will, moreover, be of utter importance not to neglect the possibility of arbitrary behavior and selfish acting of protagonists on any side.

It has often been said that a study in history is as good as the choice of its sources. The sources I have selected for this research include data from the *Archivo General de Indias* – all sort of correspondence regarding the Spanish early governing of the Philippines – and two seventeenth century instruments of Japanese foreign affairs, namely the *ikoku nikki* (Diary of Foreign Countries) and the *tsûkô ichiran* (Records on Navigation).

I am analysing large structures here on a broader level, including various states and cultures as well as complex historical contexts over time and space. Here, comparative methods will be applied in order to analyse and understand the processes of early modern change. In-depth knowledge of every case's historical context is crucial in order to gain satisfying results.¹³

Case Study 1:

Manila and Japan – 40 years of seesawing across the Chinese Sea

“The Japanese are those who are more feared in the islands than all the neighbouring nations, for they are very courageous and arrogant.”¹⁴

After Japan had entered international politics in the course of the second half of the sixteenth century, one of the reasons for investing in good relations with the Spanish was the country's new rulers interest in improving offshore navigation and mining technology. Speaking of political economy, sixteenth century Japan, which gradually developed an orientation towards the sea and the world outside the Sino-centric culture, lay somewhere between Spain and China. Although based on Confucian ideology, government was more open to commerce and could rely on several institutions controlling trade and foreign policies. However, this changed rapidly in the 1610s, when the ruling elite, the Tokugawa *bakufu*, introduced strong Neo-Confucian ethics and the government of the centralised country gradually became oriented inwardly. Portuguese and Spanish missionaries' ardent zeal to spread Catholicism all over Japan led to a certain degree of domestic instability and has to be regarded as one of the reasons for such a drastic change in Japanese foreign policies. But before saying more about that, let us turn to how it all began.

In the wake of the ongoing civil war the islands lacked central power throughout the sixteenth century so that Ming China cut off its tributary trade relations with Japan, and even after 1567, when the Ming ban on foreign trade was eased, all sort of commerce with Japan continued to be prohibited.¹⁵ As a consequence, Japanese traders had to find new ways to take part in maritime trade: pirate trade and smuggling carried out by so-called *wakô*¹⁶ re-emerged. Local warlords supported this kind of external commerce carried out by groups of Chinese and Japanese private merchants and pirates, and Japan consequently faced a political and economic transformation.¹⁷ In the context of early Spanish-Japanese encounters it is crucial that the *wakô* network stretched over the entire South Chinese Sea and that the first Japanese merchants reaching the Philippine archipelago undoubtedly were part and parcel of it.¹⁸

For the sake of unifying the country, both Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1582–1598) and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1600/03–1616) were eager to gain control over external trade. This is why they took measures to ban *wakô* raids and finally sought to organise maritime power and commerce in the South Chinese Sea by a new positioning of Japan within Asia.¹⁹ Toyotomi Hideyoshi was the first to impose a law, banning illicit trade in the South Chinese Sea in 1588.²⁰ In 1602 Tokugawa Ieyasu – Japan’s soon to be *shôgun* and new hegemon – continuously expressed his aspirations of establishing regular trade between Japan and Mexico by offering the Spanish galleon – passing annually between Acapulco and Manila – access to a port in the Kanto area where its crew could seek refuge.²¹ Another measure taken in order to control and secure foreign trade was the introduction of passes embossed with the ruler’s vermilion seal – *shuinjô*.²² Only merchant ships equipped with a seal from the *bakufu* should be allowed to sell their goods in South East Asian ports. Interestingly enough, Luzón was among the most popular vermilion seal trading ships’ destinations during the first two decades of the Tokugawa reign.²³ Here, it is particularly remarkable to see that around 1600 China and Japan, although coming from a similar ideological and cultural background, took completely different measures of foreign policy.

In the 1580s, merchant ships from Nagasaki and Hirado started their voyages to Manila and regular economic ties came into existence. They carried flour,²⁴ salted fish, weapons, silk and handicrafts and in the first years they exchanged their goods to gold, honey and mirrors. Japanese products such as swords and armour, following picture screens, lacquer ware, rice, barley, wheat, flour, salted fish, pork and horses are mentioned by the Spanish writers in their lists of Japanese imports to the Philippines. Silver and copper bars were also included in some of the cargoes. Japanese wheat (*udon*) is often mentioned in the Japanese sources to be the main trading item on the Japanese side. Exports from the Philippines to Japan consisted mainly of Chinese raw and manufactured silks, gold, and the old Chinese ceramics sought after by connoisseurs of *chanoyu*²⁵, in addition to European items, as well as incense and aromatic woods.²⁶

A group of seafarers is said to have settled in Northern Luzón in the early sixteenth century, founding the town of Aparri at the river Cagayan where their pirate-captain Taifusa built a fortress for 600 people in which they both lived and stored their captured goods, primarily gold and arms.²⁷ In 1582, Spanish soldiers were sent to that Japanese settlement in Aparri and the Japanese are said to have surrendered and left their colony to the Spaniards after a fierce battle.²⁸

Before the Japanese were settled in their own residential district, they lived among the Spaniards within the fortified city, called *intramuros*. But this community of sojourners from Japan became too large and difficult to control in the eyes of the Spaniards. Ranking colonial officials considered the Japanese a proud and

sometimes arrogant people who proved more resistant to Spanish authority than other Asians and whose dealings with the Filipinos and Chinese too often ended in conflict. As a result they were placed in a special area where they could be more easily observed. In 1585 they were assigned to Dilao – the Tagalog word for yellow – and placed under the supervision of the Franciscans.²⁹

For almost fifty years this Japantown, or *nihonmachi*³⁰, preserved a Japanese cultural atmosphere. Its residents continued to use their mother tongue, to wear traditional dress like kimono and maintained their native cooking and specific forms of entertainment.³¹ This shows that most Japanese at Manila were not willing to be integrated in the society of their new home country, a fact that explains why they permanently faced suspicion of the ruling class and other residents.

Even though the number of Japanese residents was far smaller than that of the Chinese, they are said to have caused significant troubles to the Spanish authorities, especially in the period between 1605 and 1609, when a series of riots occurred. They were disposed to be more turbulent and resentful of any attempt to control; and they generally conducted themselves as though conscious of the support of a government that was very tenacious on points of national honour, which made them more independent compared to Fujianese settlers who could not count on the patronage of Chinese authorities.³²

William D. Wray divides Japanese emigrants in three categories: The vermilion-seal ship businessmen, Christian refugees and mercenaries or political exiles from the unification process as well as veterans from Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea; the last group consists mainly of opponents of the Tokugawa clan who left the country due to increasing political and social pressure.³³

Like some of their Chinese counterparts, many Japanese residents, too, managed to accumulate a certain amount of wealth and social status by running their own shops, trading the cargo of the Japanese ships or finding employment as captains, sailors, soldiers, personal assistants or mercenaries for the Spanish.³⁴ As a result of these activities, some Japanese settlers played an important role in the urban society. However, it would be wrong to ignore the fact that several hundred Japanese were brought to Manila as slaves during this period.³⁵

An ambivalent attitude – a mixture of appreciation and fear – towards Japanese traders and residents increased after 1592, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi at the height of his power and imperial boastfulness menaced the Spaniards with his potential to conquer the Philippines.³⁶ In 1592 and in 1593, he sent his ambassador Harada Kiyemon with letters to the Spanish governor in Manila, informing him about his enormous might and his intention to conquer the Philippines, unless the Spanish paid tribute to Japan.³⁷

The Spanish answers to this threat remained vague but they felt more and more uneasy about the growing number of Japanese in the city and some officials suggested that they should all be sent back to Japan, “for they are of no benefit or utility, but, on the contrary, very harmful.”³⁸ The Japanese continued, however, to make annual journeys in which they preyed on the Chinese junks bound for Manila. Regardless of ongoing chilly relations, the Franciscan friar Pedro Baptista – on behalf of Governor Dasmariñas – and Hideyoshi signed a kind of friendship treaty in 1593. However, this act of friendship had little effect. When in 1596 the Manila galleon San Felipe capsized on the coast of Shikoku due to a broken keel, pent-up tensions on both sides gave rise to one of the most dramatic episodes in the history of early modern Japanese-Spanish relations. These events can be seen as an escalation of mutual distrust and serious communication problems.³⁹ After Hideyoshi had confiscated the whole cargo the distressed captain of the galleon threatened the Japanese with a Spanish conquest.⁴⁰ Fierce competition in proselytising among Portuguese Jesuits and Spanish Franciscans present another crucial aspect in the aggressions that followed. In February 1597, one Mexican, one Portuguese, six Spanish friars as well as twenty Japanese Christians were crucified in Nagasaki where they are commemorated until today as the first Japanese martyrs. The incident had a significant effect on the situation in Manila where fear of a Japanese intrusion revived. Governor Tello who was frightened of a Japanese invasion of the Philippines sent a present to Toyotomi Hideyoshi, immediately after having been informed about the incident. After Hideyoshi’s death in 1598 and the transformation of power to the Tokugawa clan, relations with Japan improved considerably. One of the first things Tokugawa Ieyasu did in order to propitiate the Spanish at Manila, was issuing a new ban on piracy. In 1601, he sent Jerónimo de Jesús – who was already sent on a political mission to Japan in 1594 by the Spanish – as an envoy to the Spanish governor, ensuring the latter about his intentions to establish regular trade relations with the Philippines and New Spain. In February of the following year, Ieyasu ordered another Spanish friar and some Japanese to the new governor, Pedro Acuña, eager to accomplish his commercial aspirations. In a letter Ieyasu introduced the *shuinjō*-system including all its conditions, as well as his wish of establishing relations with New Spain.⁴¹ Acuña, however, avoided pledging anything regarding that delicate matter.⁴²

However, pirates continued attacking Spanish ports in the Philippines. In 1604, Pedro de Acuña informed the Spanish king that Japanese pirates were again operating around the Luzón coasts.⁴³ In 1609, a Japanese ship was overcome and its crew killed by the Spaniards. At last governor Tello protested to Ieyasu against the piratical practices of his people and the *shōgun*, to show his good faith, ordered the seizure of six ships that had cleared from southern ports of Japan to plunder in Phil-

ippine waters and had more than 200 of their crew members crucified as a warning. Besides he encouraged the Spanish in a letter to execute any Japanese troublemaker.⁴⁴ In this period of rising tensions, the retired governor Vivero and Ieyasu met unexpectedly in 1609. Again, a Manila galleon happened to be shipwrecked in the waters around Japan and the two former opponents started to negotiate a friendship treaty between Spain and Japan. Ieyasu agreed to grant fair treatment of the Spanish friars, but evaded an anti-Dutch article suggested by Vivero. He was willing to tolerate the presence of the friars on condition that regular trade would finally be established between New Spain and Japan. For the sake of economic advancement of his nation, he further requested the services of 50 Spanish miners from Mexico who should introduce Western methods of silver exploitation. To further his merchant maritime program, Ieyasu asked for shipwrights who could instruct the Japanese in the construction of ocean-going vessels.⁴⁵ At that time Japan still lacked its own offshore-vessels. For the most of its far overseas adventures it depended on junks and navigation skills of Fujian entrepreneurs.

But things did not go according to plan. Various reasons and events can be called to account therefore. One of them was the reluctant behaviour of the Spanish concerning the Japanese wish to enhance overseas trade. Complying Ieyasu's request was considered contra-productive in the eyes of the Spanish who still feared a Japanese attack, especially after they had become aware of the friendly relations between the Tokugawa clan and Dutch merchants. The mere presence of the Dutch in Asia was a thorn in the Spaniards' flesh but things even aggravated when they started to boycott all Spanish action in the South China Sea in the early seventeenth century. The Dutch were determined to drive their archenemies out of Asia and spared no pains to attain that goal. On the Japanese side, the spread of Christianity remained a source of irritation and was considered to disturb domestic peace by the leading authorities. On this account, various measures were taken by the *bakufu*. During 1612 and 1614 two anti-Christian edicts were issued and, as a further means of strengthening Japan's position within Asia, all foreign policies were based on the so-called *shinkoku*-ideology, the idea of Japan as the land the of gods.⁴⁶

In 1620, king Philip III (1598–1621) ordered the governor and the *audiencia* to adopt whatever measures seemed best to them, though they were warned to take care not to jeopardise the relations of trade and friendship then existing.⁴⁷ Before this letter could have been received in Manila, Governor Fajardo wrote to the king that many Japanese had been expelled. However, a royal decree of the following year complained that the Japanese were allowed to stay because of the “negligence and carelessness” of the authorities at Manila.⁴⁸

In 1623, Governor Alonso Fajardo sent a mission to the *shōgun* informing him about the enthronement of Philip IV. The envoys arrived at Satsuma and not until

March 1624 were told that they would not be received by *shōgun* Iemitsu. The same year the *bakufu* decreed breaking off all sort of relations with the Spaniards and expelled them from Japan. From that time on the ports of Japan were officially closed to vessels that had cleared from Manila. Four ships, which later appeared in Nagasaki harbour, were turned away. The lord of the city threatened one Spanish captain that any of his countrymen who dared to enter the port in the future would have both ship and crew burned. Finally an edict of 1638 forbade the Spaniards, on pain of death, to put foot on Japanese soil or to enter a Japanese port under any pretext.⁴⁹

However, despite official restrictions Japanese merchants continued to call on Manila. In 1630, two ambassadors came to Manila, one of the governor of Nagasaki, the other representing the feudal lord of Satsuma. It is not surprising that the Spanish were again puzzled by the ambiguity of these events. In that period the authorities in Manila experienced continuous pressure of the Council of the Indies that wanted the authorities in the Philippines to maintain good relations with the Japanese. This fact bewilders insofar as in earlier years the council tended to be very reluctant when it came to dealing with matters concerning Japan, which shows the complexity of reacting to problems in such a huge empire.

As I am seeing things, early modern relations between Japan and the Castilian Empire are a classical case of complicated embedment. Promising stages of well-balanced diplomacy based on bilateral agreements were always of short-lived character. When the Spanish first came to South East Asia and established reign over the Philippines they offered the Japanese a most welcome new port where they – like in Portuguese Macao – had both access to Chinese silk and European luxuries. But in the course of the early seventeenth century things changed rapidly. Thanks to the arrival of the English and the Dutch, who soon established trade factories on Japanese soil, the Japanese were no longer dependent on Iberian traders and therefore it became easier for them to get rid of the hated Catholic missionaries. Many records show that Spanish missionary zeal triggered off a certain ill-feeling among the Japanese. On the other hand, Spanish measures to ease tensions and maintain commercial links between Manila and Japan were often belated since foreign policy still remained in the hands of the king and his councils in distant Spain.

I even dare to claim that this seesaw would have continued for several decades had not Japan reduced its maritime affairs to a trickle. The reason why Japan finally backed out despite its ambitious goal to participate in global economic affairs in the days of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who dedicated a good deal of his political efforts to establish international relations, is simple. After about hundred years of civil war the rulers regarded internal stability as a matter of top priority. When they realised that they would not be able to accomplish it as long as Christian beliefs interfered with

their Neo-Confucian concepts, they broke off relations with the Catholic powers. Alongside with a change in ideology aiming at a new positioning in Asia and economic strengthening thanks to huge silver deposits and technological advancement, it gained liberation from the Chinese tributary system. The encounters with the Europeans in the late sixteenth century definitely had a hand in this transformation process.

Case study 2: The Chinese rebellion of 1603

Recent research on the European's arrival in South East Asia in the early modern period has shown that all Western powers owed their presence as well as their commercial success to a long existing and vivid overseas trading network of Chinese, Muslim and other local traders. Within this system Manila soon turned into a link between these Sino-Indian-Muslim networks⁵⁰ and new ones, namely those sustaining Mexican and European trade. But the Spanish benefited not only from their involvement in trade and their role as middlemen. The young colony's capital drew its direct income from introducing residence permits⁵¹ and a tax for visiting merchants called *almojarifazgo*. Its supply depended highly on Chinese settlers. Until 1581 all trade was carried out tax-free. In the year 1581 governor Don Gonzalo Ronquillo ordered to levy a three percent tax on all goods coming from China for the sake of improving the financial situation of the impoverished colony. The scales of interdependence between Europeans and Chinese soon tipped under the weight of increasing influence wielded by the Chinese.⁵² Frictions between the European headquarters and the Chinese settlers, *sangleyes*⁵³, on account of this led to tension and distrust which at times erupted into violent uprisings. Consequently, the incumbent governor Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa assigned the Chinese their own quarter, the *Parian* in the early 1580s.⁵⁴ First it was located within the city, but when fires devastated Manila in 1583, the Chinese quarter was rebuilt outside the city walls. Nevertheless, many Chinese merchants and artisans still had their shops within the city.⁵⁵

Soon after the Spanish had established their reign over the archipelago, the colony's first governor Miguel de Legazpi informed King Philip II about Chinese junks calling on ports in Luzón bringing "silks, woollens, bells, porcelains, perfumes, iron, tin, coloured cloths, and other small wares, and in return they take away gold and wax."⁵⁶

As we have noted before, Chinese traders used to participate actively in inter-Asian trade for a long time illicitly, since the Ming court by any means wanted to abide by its tributary trade system and expressively forbade overseas trade. In 1567

and again in 1589, restrictions were smoothed for Haicheng traders, granting them 88 licenses for foreign destination. Similar to the Tokugawa vermilion seal system, the highest number of such licenses was issued for Luzón.⁵⁷ Hence, a number of Chinese junks called on Manila and every year many Chinese stayed. The reason why they remained in the Philippines was not only because they wanted a better life but also because of the monsoon conditions that only allowed travelling between May and July. So there was often not sufficient time for trading transactions, which is why many Chinese decided to stay over for one year – despite a strict prohibition from the Ming court.⁵⁸ Like in Dutch Batavia, the real colonists of Spanish Manila were Fujianese people who settled in a far larger number than Spaniards and managed to exploit the economy with their sophisticated merchant skills.⁵⁹ But it was not only their outstanding economic success that created envy among other residents and caused harm to the social balance in the city. According to Adshead, the reason that overseas Chinese communities were the product of private enterprise, much of it small-scale, non-established and often even criminal, meant that these Chinatowns hosted many unwelcomed, plebeian emigrants.⁶⁰

The *sangleyes* monopolised urban services by earning their money as bakers, barbers or shoemakers, in short they technically engaged in most crafts. Besides they were highly valued in the ship construction business, participated in the galleon commerce, and even provided much food for Manila's residents through their trading network with South China. Their dedication to fishing and gardening in the surroundings of Manila also helped nourishing the city.⁶¹ Their products were often considered more beautiful and cheaper than those of Spain. The Chinese responded soon to the needs of *intramuros* by producing clothes in the latest Spanish fashion and catering for the everyday needs of the Spanish population, while craftsmen back home in Fujian contributed to quench the Americas' new elite's thirst for luxury items.⁶² It is claimed that the Spaniards did not only buy the low-cost crafts of the Chinese, but also frequented their eating-houses, where they will probably have experienced lots of Chinese culture since the Chinese kept their language and their traditions in everyday life.

From a social-economic point of view it is also interesting to see that several bootless Chinese even crossed the Pacific by the Manila galleon to Mexico in order to set up their business there. We have record of Chinese passengers on a Manila galleon as early as in 1585.⁶³ In 1635, the Spanish barbers complained of unfair competition.⁶⁴

Some of the restrictive Spanish policies towards the Chinese can be seen as measures to maintain urban safety. So, for example, an initiative by General Governor Francisco Tello de Guzmán who forbade Chinese to settle "*intramuros*" since their wooden houses were a fire hazard.⁶⁵

In various aspects we find striking differences in the attitude towards Chinese among churchmen and representatives of administration. One major example concerns the matter of self-governance of the *sangleyes*. Since the number of Chinese settlers grew steadily, and probably since they realised their important position for the prospering of the city, they started to demand the right for self-governance at the turn of the seventeenth century. Both royal and church officials finally confirmed the need for a special protector as long as the office would be held by a Spaniard.⁶⁶ Here, Spanish officials were probably only driven by greed, not understanding for the East Asian neighbours,⁶⁷ since such an office was a promising source of revenue.⁶⁸

But let us turn to the main issue: What caused the uprising of 1603? In spring 1603 three mandarins came to Manila onboard of a great ship without merchandise, determined to explore the supposed gold mountains of Cavite, the port region of Manila. No wonder, such a strange mission raised the suspicion of the Spanish who had been on alert because of the constant rise in Chinese settlers for a long time. Even if this mission can be regarded as the source of the tensions that led to the uprising, it was certainly not the only reason. The problems lay far deeper. The Chinese in Manila had experienced severe repressions and unfair treatment for several years. General Governor Dasmariñas, for example, is said to have forced the governor of the Chinese to provide 250 men for his expedition to the Molucas in 1592.⁶⁹ Besides, the coasts of Manila had experienced increased Japanese and Chinese piracy in previous years. Simultaneously with the mandarins' presence in the Spanish colony's capital a fire broke out in the hospital for the Chinese. For whatever reason the Spanish authorities did not take any measures to prevent further losses. Therefore the governor was later on accused of purposely letting the fire continue in order to harm the Chinese.

In his latest book on early modern global connectedness, Timothy Brook gives another interesting anecdote worth mentioning in the context of lacking intercultural sensibility: "The Spanish archbishop, who had recently arrived in Manila and had not yet gotten a feeling for the delicacy of the situation, made things worse that summer by delivering an ill-timed sermon accusing the Chinese of sodomy and witchcraft."⁷⁰ Tensions soon led into violence and in autumn 1603 the Chinese settlers finally joined their forces against the authorities.

Much has been written on the uprising of the *sangleyes* and the severe punishment by the Spaniards, and both contemporary and later descriptions of the event differ largely depending on the author and his standpoint.⁷¹ The Spanish are said to have burnt the Chinese silk market, the *alcaicería*,⁷² and in the following dreadful events joint Spanish-Filipino and Japanese forces are said to have killed at least 20.000 Chinese. Here, we should turn to our relevant clash-of-cultures-analysis. It

goes without saying that 1603 was a particularly hard year for the Chinese settlers at Manila.⁷³ Both the Chinese and the Spanish, who were in permanent need of financial support from the mother country, may have had good reasons for exaggerating the numbers. No matter how big the loss on the Chinese side, one would expect the Chinese emperor to take revenge for the unrighteousness that happened to his people. Point is that it is not clear whether the Ming Court still considered the settlers of these overseas communities as Chinese. All it did was asking the *audiencia* to serve up for justice.⁷⁴ Other sources state that the Fujianese magistrate was blamed for provoking the Spanish and disgracing Ming China. Again, one can speak of entirely different policies of China and Spain in this context. Chinese self-conception differed completely from the Japanese and Spanish perspectives. Early seventeenth-century China was inwardly oriented, while foreign relations played a major role in Japanese and Spanish daily politics during that time. Boraio concludes that “since the events had taken place outside China, it was difficult for the imperial officers to verify them, which is why they put forward brief and detached explanations”.⁷⁵ Xu Xue-ju, an administrative commissioner of Fujian calls for revenge for this unjust Spanish manoeuvre, lamenting the fact that the Chinese had contributed mainly to Luzón’s development. Emperor Wan-Li finally turned his demand down, using the following arguments:

“(1) Due to their long tradition in trade and commerce, the people of Luzón were practically their subjects. (2) The antagonism, as well as the confrontation, took place outside of China. (3) Merchants are humble folk, and therefore, not worth waging battle for. (4) Their merchants, upon going to Luzón, abandoned their families without considering their filial ties. (5) An expedition to Luzón will only drain their armed forces.”⁷⁶

Other official records show that Fujian officials, who were called Chinese viceroys by the Spanish, demanded restitution for the slaughter of 1603. In 1606, the Council of the Indies finally granted compensation for the victims of 1603.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, Chinese merchants started reviving trade with Manila, resettling in the rebuilt *Parian* – 1,500 resident permits were issued in 1606⁷⁸ – and already in the same year one could find some of them in the service of Spaniards.⁷⁹ We know that right after the revolt, the city and its inhabitants faced lean years since the entire network of supply that was based on the *sangleyes* had collapsed.⁸⁰

As I have mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Manila flourished thanks to various activities of Chinese merchants and settlers. The city would not have turned into a pivot for global trade without their contributions. Difference in culture and ideology, however, often became a hindrance for smooth interaction. Hence, Manila’s full potential as a global port-city was never fully tapped and utilised.

Final Comments

This article is part of a larger project aiming to understand East and Southeast Asia's integration into one global society and its entanglement in early modern history on a global scale. It aims to give a well-balanced view on the structure of early modern encounters in the Pacific and to show non-European actors' cultural and economic contribution to world affairs. Dealing with primary sources shall help to set the record straight and clear up common misunderstandings like the one that the Spanish were only determined to spread their imperialism and Catholicism as far as possible, regardless of the consequences. I will not argue the point that proselytising was of great importance to the Spanish colonisers and that at times missionary issues even had impact on political decisions. Looking at the small number of Spanish settlers – not more than 1,300 settlers in 1603 – and their frequent petitions to the Spanish king to send both money and people one may ask how they should have been able to pursue an independent policy at all. However, so far scholars have overlooked that fact in their reflections on the Spanish Philippines. Next to anti-Spanish historiography there has been a tendency to ignore the singularity of matters in South East Asia and to deal with the Philippines as an appendix of Spanish America. However, the situation in South East Asia was completely different and, as we have seen, the Spanish were not always sufficiently prepared to (re-)act properly. At the same time East Asia faced several changes. Japan became independent and almost autarkic, while the Chinese Empire, on the other hand, for the first time in its glorious history saw itself dependent on foreign, “barbarian” support.

Governing and living in multicultural Manila often meant responding to altering situations in East Asia. Not only the Spaniards' attitudes often fluctuated from one extreme to another. Thus, at times Japanese or Chinese traders were encouraged to settle in Manila, at times they were forced to leave. At times the East Asians cooperated with the Spanish and welcomed them in their countries, at times they tried to expel them for good.

Finally, I would like to get back to Manila as a place where all these pre-modern states met. Spanish, Chinese and Japanese people travelled to Manila for different reasons. Although they all faced various difficulties in establishing themselves in the newly founded city on its path to global integration, they all came because of better economic outlooks and the chance to improve their lives. The city, its people and visitors were interacting permanently. Manila would not have advanced without contributions from abroad, while all three countries benefited from their connections to Manila and its position as intermediary trading port for Sino-Japanese trade. As such it played an important role in the early modern global integration processes of all three countries. For Spain it became a steppingstone to East Asia and

an essential element in its long-distance trade in silver and silk. For China it was an essential provider of silver and offered many opportunities for entrepreneurial spirited immigrants from Fujian. For Japan it was one of the first and most important places to prove itself on an international business stage and to become globally connected.

A profound study in global history – which cannot be given in a limited paper like this – should help us to differentiate our views of early modern international relations and power distributions as well as the role of political economies within them. Culture and ideology matter as much here, as do institutions.

Notes

- 1 Dennis O. Flynn, Arturo Giráldez, Born With a “Silver Spoon”. The Origin of World Trade in 1571, in: *Journal of World History*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1995), 201.
- 2 “Early Modern” is a rather clumsy, Eurocentric label that does not always fit historical developments in East and South East Asia. However, since nobody has come up with a good solution, I will stick to the term for pragmatic reasons.
- 3 William S. Atwell, International Bullion Flows and the Chinese Economy Circa 1530–1650, in: *Past and Present*, no. 85 (1982), 68–90.
- 4 Immanuel Wallerstein, *World Systems. An Introduction*, Durham 2004.
- 5 See among others: Momoki Shirou, Sekaishi, tōnanajiashi, gurōbaru historii [World History, Southeast Asian History and Global History], in: Mizushima Tsukasa, *Gurōbaru historii no chosen*, [Challenges in Global History], Tokyo 2008, 56–65; Victor Liebermann, *Strange Parallels. Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830*, Cambridge 2003.
- 6 Much thought has been spent on labeling these three powers. Most scholars would agree that Ming China was an empire, while opinions with regard to Spain, respectively the Castilian Empire, show wide differences. For Ming China see S.A.M. Adshead, *China in World History*, Houndmills and London 1988. For Spain/the Castilian Empire see Henry Kamen, *Empire. How Spain Became a World Power 1492–1763*, New York 2003. Pre-modern Japan is not considered as an empire, although Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s reign showed imperial aspirations. For pragmatic reasons I will call them pre-modern states hereafter. Most Chinese settlers were of Fujianese origin.
- 7 An interdisciplinary approach is essential in order to gain results. Here, historiography applies methods and findings from various disciplines like, for example, sociology, geography, paleography, linguistics.
- 8 Eric L. Jones, *Culture Merging. A Historical and Economic Critique of Culture*, Princeton 2008.
- 9 Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence. China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton 2000; Peer Vries, *Via Peking back to Manchester. Britain, the Industrial Revolution, and China*, Leiden 2003.
- 10 Tokugawa- or Edo-*bakufu* (1603–1867), a military reign best described as centralized feudalism.
- 11 Dennis O. Flynn has a particularly ‘pessimistic’ view of the performance of the Spaniards in South East Asia. Based on his research on silver flows he concluded that Western bullion exporters were evidently middlemen, who did nothing but responding to China’s and India’s demands for silver. See: Dennis O. Flynn, Comparing the Tokugawa Shogunate with Hapsburg Spain. Two Silver-based Empires in a Global Setting, in: James Tracy, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires*, Cambridge 1991, 332–356.
- 12 See: Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, New York 1984. In this famous work the American sociologist and historian postulated the study of structures and processes and

- demanded large-scale analyzing of world historical issues, like for example the phenomena of industrialization or migration.
- 13 James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Comparative Social Analysis. Achievements and Agendas, in: James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds., Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences, Cambridge 2005, 3–40.
 - 14 Diego Aduarte, 1618 to the Council of the Indies, quoted in: Schurz 1959, 91.
 - 15 Richard von Glahn, Fountain of Fortune. Money and Monetary Policy in China 1000–1700, Berkeley 1996, 118.
 - 16 Group of Japanese and Chinese illicit traders active in the South Chinese Sea. Some of them acted under the patronage of Japanese local lords who were trying to increase their power and independence from the central government during the civil war period, *Sengoku Jidai* (1467–1600).
 - 17 Angela Schottenhammer, The East Asian Maritime World, 1400–1800. Its Fabrics of Power and Dynamics of Exchanges. China and Her Neighbours, in: Angela Schottenhammer, ed., The East Asian Maritime World, 1400–1800. Its Fabrics of Power and Dynamics of Exchanges, Wiesbaden 2007, (= East Asian Maritime History 4), 1–86, here 58–63.
 - 18 AGI (= Archivo General de Indias) Sevilla, Filipinas 18A, r. 5, n. 31, Carta de Vera sobre situación, comercio, japóneses, etc., 1587–06–26. On the Spice Islands and the Philippines role in the the *wakó*'s trading route see: Igawa Kenji, Daikókai jidai no higashi ajia. Nichiô tsúkô no rekishiteki zentei [East Asia in the Period of Great Navigation. Historical Preconditions for Japanese-European relations], Tokyo 2007, 249–253.
 - 19 Japan's history within a larger Asian context has been a popular research topic for the last two decades. See: Arano Yasunori, ed., *Ajia no naka no nihonshi* [Japan's History within Asia], Tokyo 1992.
 - 20 Nagazumi Yôko, Shuinsen [Vermilion Seal Ships], Tokyo 2001, 2.
 - 21 Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, Mexico 1609 (London 1971), 162–163. The sea route between Manila and Acapulco covered the longest offshore journey in the Early Modern Era. Several trading ships experienced severe losses in and around Japan. The two most prominent Manila galleons which unintentionally went ashore Japanese coasts were the San Felipe in 1596 and the San Francisco in 1609.
 - 22 Firstly introduced by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1592. See: Tarao Sato, *Five Centuries of Filipino-Japanese Relations*, Tokyo 1994, 5.
 - 23 Nagazumi 2001, 41.
 - 24 Wheat flour was of special importance for the nutrition of the Spanish settlers. See Akio Okada, *Nanban suizô* [Some Thoughts on Nanban-Trade], Tokyo 1984, 227–228.
 - 25 Traditional Japanese tea ceremony.
 - 26 Tsúkô ichiran, roll 179, 575.
 - 27 Sato 1994, 3; Some people even suggest that Japanese immigration to the Philippines started as early as in the 12th century, others speak of the foundation of the Japanese trading post Aparri some time after 1400. However, it is difficult to prove such speculations. See: <http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Aparri>. (October 25, 2008).
 - 28 Juan Gil, *Hidalgos y Samurais, España y Japón en los siglos XVI y XVII* Madrid 1991, 23–24.
 - 29 Morga 1609, 182.
 - 30 For the success-stories of other Japanese overseas communities in Ayutthaya, Hoi An or Tonkin see Seiji Iwao, *Nanyô nihonmachi* [Japantowns in the South Chinese Sea], Tokyo 1966.
 - 31 Reed 1977, 53–54.
 - 32 William Lytle Schurz, *The Manila Galleon*, New York 1939, 99–100.
 - 33 William D. Wray, *The 17th-Century Japanese Diaspora. Questions of Boundary and Policy*, 2001, www.eh.net/XIIICongress/cd/papers/10wray383.pdf (January 25, 2009), 8.
 - 34 Okada 1983, 157.
 - 35 Tatijana Seijas, *The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish Manila 1580–1640*, in: *Itinerario* vol. xxxii (2008), 1, 19–38, 22: “In the case of Manila it appears that Asian slaves were much preferred over African slaves.”
 - 36 AGI Filipinas 18b, r. 2, n. 12, Carta de G. P. Mariñas enviando cartas de Japón, 1592– 06–11.
 - 37 Sato 1994, 6.
 - 38 Morga 1609, 230.

- 39 See: Diego Pacheco, The Europeans in Japan, in: Michael Cooper, ed., The Southern Barbarians. The First Europeans in Japan, Tokyo 1971, 35–76.
- 40 AGI, Filipinas 35, n. 18, Carta de Matías de Landecho sobre Japón, 1598–07–04.
- 41 Borao 2005, 7.
- 42 AGI, Filipinas, r. 7, n. 26, Carta de Acuña sobre asuntos de gobierno, 1605–07–08.
- 43 Schurz 1939, 102.
- 44 Nagazumi 2001, 47; Tsúkó ichiran, roll 179, 576.
- 45 AGI, Filipinas 1, n. 133, Consulta sobre carta del emperador de Japón, 1611–05–13.
- 46 Takagi Shōsaku, Hideyoshi's and Ieyasu's Views on Japan as a Land of the Gods and its Antecedents. With Reference to the "Writ of Expulsion of Missionaries" of 1614, in: Acta Asiatica. Bulletin of the Institute for East Asian Cultures, no. 87 (2004), 59–84, 60–62.
- 47 AGI, Filipinas, 329, L. 2, F. 379R–286V, Respuesta a Fajardo sobre varios asuntos, 1620–12–13.
- 48 Cited in Schurz 1939, 101.
- 49 AGI, Filipinas, 330, l. 4, f. 4V–5R, Aviso sobre malas relaciones con Japón y martirios, 1635–02–16.
- 50 Muslims from Mindanao and Sulu made regular visits to Manila in order to buy Chinese silk. "Their monopoly of silk, both raw and finished, their numerical superiority of vessels, their long experience in South East Asia and their geographical nearness gave the sampan traders an initial advantage which the Europeans did not have in the earlier phase of the Western expansion." See Serafin D. Quiason, The Sampan Trade, 1570–1770, in: Alonso Felix, Jr., ed., The Chinese in the Philippines 1570–1770, vol. I, Manila 1966, 160–174, 160.
- 51 The *oidores* of the *audiencia* were in charge of issuing those permits. When it came to frictions with Chinese settlers they were often blamed of maladministration and corruption. AGI, Filipinas 76, n. 53, Carta del Obispo de Nueva Segovia Diego de Soria, sobre alzamiento de sangleyes, 1594–07–08.
- 52 Leonard Blussé van Oud-Alblas, Strange Company. Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia, Leiden 1986, 78.
- 53 *sangleyes* or *sangleys* = Chinese traders and settlers in the Philippines. This term was already used in official Spanish letters without any further explanation in the 1580s. However, the origin of the word remains unclear until the present day.
- 54 Records on the establishment of the first *parian* vary between 1579 and 1581. In the course of the 17th century not only the number of Chinese settlers increased, but so did their settlements and Manila and its surroundings hosted many different *parians*.
- 55 Governor Dasmariñas writing in a letter to King Philip II, 1591, quoted in Alberto Santamaria, O.P., The Chinese Parian 1966, 90: "Within the city is the silk-market of the Parian where the Chinese merchants trade. They have 200 stores which probably employ more than 2,000 Chinese."
- 56 Cited in Reed 1978, 31.
- 57 Von Glahn 1996, p. 119.
- 58 Maria Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo, The Role of the Chinese in the Philippine Domestic Economy (1570–1770), in: Alonso Felix, Jr., ed., The Chinese in the Philippines 1570–1770, vol. I, Manila 1966, 176–208, 176; Nakajima Gakushō, 16 seikimatsu no Fukien Firipin Kyūshū bōeki, in: The Shien, vol. 144 (2007/9), 62.
- 59 Felipe Fernández-Armesto, Civilizations, London 2001, 345.
- 60 Adshead 1988, 210.
- 61 AGI Filipinas 74, n. 22, Carta de Domingo de Salazar sobre China y Japón, 1583–06–18.
- 62 Chuan Hang-Sheng, The Chinese Silk Trade with Spanish-America from the Late Ming to the Mid-Ch'ing Period (San Francisco 1975), in: Dennis O. Flynn et al., eds., European Entry into the Pacific, Aldershot 2001, 241–260, 249.
- 63 Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza, The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China (1588), vol. 1, London 1853, 95.
- 64 Adshead 1988, 211.
- 65 AGI, Filipinas 6, r. 9, n. 167, Carta de Tello sobre asuntos de gobierno, 1599–07–12.
- 66 AGI Filipinas 84, n. 72, Carta de dominicos contra el gobernador, y otros asuntos, 1597–06–24.
- 67 AGI, Filipinas 85, n. 84, Decreto del Consejo de Indias, 1629–05–09.
- 68 AGI, Filipinas 85, n. 34, Decreto del Consejo de Indias, 1629–05–09. According to this source the protector of the *sangleyes* got an annual salary of one thousand pesos.

- 69 Borao 1998, 24.
- 70 Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat. The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World*, London 2008, 169.
- 71 AGI Filipinas 7, r. 1, n. 12, Carta de Acuña sobre sublevación de sangleyes, galeras, 1603–12–08; AGI Filipinas 35, n. 68, Carta de Juan de Bustamante sobre la sublevación de los sangleyes, 1603–12–18; Filipinas, 19, r. 6, n. 91, Carta de audiencia sobre asuntos de gobierno, 1605–06–30.
- 72 AGI, Filipinas 84, n. 118, Carta del cabildo eclesiástico de Manila sobre sublevación de sangleyes, 1603–12–11.
- 73 For a detailed description of the events that led to the tragedy of 1603, see Rafael Bernal, *The Chinese Colony in Manila, 1570–1770*, in: Alonso Felix, Jr., ed., *The Chinese in the Philippines 1570–1770*, vol. I, 42–66.
- 74 AGI, Filipinas 74, n. 60, Testimonio de memoriales de Benavides sobre sangleyes, 1605–07–07.
- 75 José Eugenio Borao, *The Massacre of 1603. Chinese perception of the Spanish on the Philippines*, *Itinerario* 1998/1, 22–39, 24.
- 76 Cited in Borao 1998, 33.
- 77 AGI, Filipinas 1, n. 77, Consulta sobre restitución de dinero a sangleyes, November 9, 1606.
- 78 Diaz-Trechuelo 1966, 184.
- 79 AGI, Filipinas 74, n. 58, Testimonio de Luis de Salinas sobre sangleyes, 1606–06–15.
- 80 AGI, Filipinas 27, n. 48, Carta de la ciudad de Manila sobre comercio, japoneses ... etc, 1604–07–09.