

**AHILA Paris 2020**  
**Panel Proposal**

**Coordinators**      Prof. Dr. Adolfo Polo y La Borda  
Universidad de los Andes (Colombia)

Dr. Laura Dierksmeier  
Universität Tübingen (Germany)

**Participants**      Dr. Fabian Fechner  
FernUniversität Hagen (Germany)

Dr. Irina Pawlowsky  
Universität Tübingen (Germany)

Prof. Dr. Kazuhisa Takeda  
Meiji University (Japan)

**Panel Title**      Considerations for the Research of Local Knowledge Circulation: The  
Interaction between Europe and the Americas in the Early Modern Era

**Panel Summary**

The early modern global empires were built upon the extensive movement of people, goods, and ideas across the world. Thousands of people migrated and crossed the oceans seeking for a better future, but many other men and women moved against their will. Moreover, this era saw the development of complex global networks of trade through which American silver poured into European and Asian markets. Visual images and works of art also moved with extreme ease throughout the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Last, but not least, prejudices, stereotypes, expertise, and knowledge circulated profusely, shaping people's understanding of their own regions and the wider world.

This symposium aims to study the latter kind of movement in order to explore the ways in which knowledge that was operative in one context was adapted, manipulated, reframed, or dismissed, as spurious or heretical in another framework. Particularly, it seeks to analyse the role of indigenous knowledge, from the Americas, but also from other areas such as the Canaries or the Philippine Islands. We seek to explore how indigenous knowledge was preserved, disputed, challenged, incorporated, refuted, reframed, and subsumed by European knowledge. Moreover, we expect to discuss how historians can unveil and recover such knowledge.

**Abstracts**

**Global Interactions on the Margins**  
**Adolfo Polo y La Borda, Universidad de los Andes (Colombia)**

In 1616, a Japanese man who was navigating his small sampan on the waters around Capul, a tiny but strategic island in the Philippines, was captured by Dutch pirates who were lurking in the area. The Japanese, who was Christian and had settled in the Philippine islands, was taken in the presence of the Dutch captain who interrogated him about Manila and its defenses, the

commerce with China and Japan, the number of ships that had arrived to the Spanish port and the goods they brought, and especially about the forces of the naval squadron that the Spanish governor had sent to fight the Dutch in the Moluccas. Most remarkably, this conversation on international politics and economy occurred in Spanish (although some days later the Japanese would note that the Dutch spoke it rather poorly). In this paper, I will explore this and other unexpected, and most often disregarded, encounters that took place across the Spanish Empire in order to explore the circulation of knowledge propelled by this early modern globalization, as well as the emergence of Spanish as a global lingua franca.

**Translating Local Knowledge: 18<sup>th</sup> Century French Mapmakers  
and their Sources from the New World  
Irina Pawlowsky, Universität Tübingen (Germany)**

During the 18th century Paris was an important center of cartography. Maps of geographers like Guillaume Delisle, Philippe Buache and Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville were influential throughout Europe. However, these geographers never visited foreign countries themselves in order to make observations and take measurements. Instead, they exclusively relied on sources by other people from abroad. Travelers and missionaries who knew the New World were important informants for those European mapmakers. Their reports, travelogues and maps included not only information from their own observations, but also from testimonies of indigenous people. Based on the fact that the interests, goals and audiences of Paris 'armchair' geographers differed from those of colonial actors, this paper asks how the geographers dealt with different kinds of local knowledge. Did they indicate the sources they used, e.g. when information came from indigenous informants? Did they change the representation of local knowledge in their own maps compared to maps from abroad? Did they let out information which was of special importance for local needs but did not seem noteworthy for people in France? On the whole, this paper aims at illustrating cultural translation processes that effected cartographic knowledge production in Europe.

**From Indigenous Knowledge to the Republic of Letters  
Laura Dierksmeier, Universität Tübingen (Germany)**

In a newspaper article from 1772, Mexican Scientist and Priest José Antonio Alzate y Ramirez identified the herb *pipilitzintlis* as cannabis. Drawing on empirical evidence, he argued in favor of its medicinal use, its prohibition by the Inquisition notwithstanding. Ranging from his own admitted first-hand experience to second-hand accounts to medical encyclopedias, Alzate employed a wide array of sources to argue *pipilitzintlis* was a narcotic with beneficial and natural, rather than harmful and demonic effects. Treatments for cough, burns, tumors, depression, and melancholy, among many others, he avers as legitimate medicinal uses of the herb. This example sheds light on the transfer of indigenous knowledge into the European Republic of Letters, as well as on the challenges and opportunities of religious men in colonial Mexico to reconcile church doctrine with scientific experiments during the Latin American Enlightenment.

**Beyond Command and Obey – the “consulta” as a Dialogic Method of Knowledge  
Production in the Viceroyalty of Peru (1560-1600)  
Fabian Fechner, FernUniversität Hagen (Germany)**

In the history of governance in colonial Spanish America, most of the processes are explained with the classical concept of command and obey, or with the famous formula “I obey but I do not comply” (“*obedezco pero no cumplo*”). This view is supported by the impressive amount of *reales cédulas* and *informes* in the communication between the Spanish Crown and local

authorities. But there were many other mechanisms in governance and decision making. Some administrative entities, as for example religious orders, tended to develop decentralized committees as the meetings of a provincial and his counselors in “*consultas*”. These committees worked as dialogic knots between local experts and decision makers in Lima and Madrid. With the interference of local knowledge, they prepared decisions for specific regions. In this paper, I will analyze how local committees tried to bridge the gap between a local pragmatism and a global and homogeneous self-perception of the religious order. To a certain degree, the positions of these committees were a result of the direct contact with the indigenous population. Only a small number of local “*consultas*” were simply accepted or rejected. Most of them were adapted and reframed in a complex decision making process.

**The Guaraní Kinship and *cacicazgo* as the Product of Spanish Colonization and Missionization: The Case of Jesuit Missions of Paraguay**  
**Kazuhisa Takeda, Meiji University (Tokyo, Japan)**

The main discussion of this presentation is the reexamination of the concept of kinship (*parentesco*) among the Guaraní Indians who lived in Jesuit reductions under Spanish rule in order to trace the interaction of local and global knowledge, and influences on language and naming practices. Many scholars have discussed that the Guaraní kinship in the colonial period was strongly linked with *cacicazgo*, political power and its influential realms of the indigenous chief (*cacique*), and this *cacicazgo* has been considered as a traditional indigenous social organization. In the case of the Guaraní language, however, there is no aboriginal term similar to *cacicazgo*, and based on the research result of the census records (*padrón*) and related complementary documents, it is very difficult to say that the true nature of *cacicazgo* can be traced back to indigenous “nativeness” before the contact with Spanish colonization and missionization. Rather than that, *cacicazgo* is the hybrid product invented under colonial circumstances, and the Guaraní kinship, although it kept its indigenous authenticity, is influenced by the Spanish colonial missionary regime. This presentation will reexamine the fundamental concept of indigenous kinship and social organization focusing on the case of Jesuit Missions of Paraguay during the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Coordinator CVs**

**Adolfo Polo y La Borda, Universidad de los Andes (Colombia)**

Adolfo Polo y La Borda is an Assistant Professor of History at the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia. His focus of research is the political culture of the early modern Spanish Empire. He received his PhD in history from the University of Maryland, College Park, and has researched and taught in Peru, the United States, Spain, and Germany. He is currently working on his book manuscript, *Global Servants of the King. Cosmopolitanism and Mobility in the Early Modern Spanish Empire*, which explores the worldwide mobility of the seventeenth-century Spanish imperial officials and the effects of such global movement in the governance of the empire and how it was imagined by its subjects.

**Laura Dierksmeier, Universität Tübingen (Germany)**

Dr. Laura Dierksmeier is a postdoctoral researcher in the German Research Council (DFG) group “Resource Cultures” at the University of Tuebingen in Germany. She is an associated member of the University of Pamplona research group on the Council of Trent. Previously, Dierksmeier worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the DFG group “Religious Knowledge in Pre-Modern Europe.” Her dissertation, completed in 2016 at the University of Tuebingen, focused on indigenous and missionary practices in Latin America. Dierksmeier received the

American Academy of Franciscan History Fellowship in 2014 and the Las Casas Dissertation Award from the University of Fribourg in Switzerland in 2017.