



**COLUMBUS, THE LILY OF QUITO,
AND THE BLACK LEGEND: THE
CONTEXT OF JOSÉ MANUEL
PERAMÁS' EPIC ON THE DISCOVERY
OF THE NEW WORLD: *DE INVENTO
NOVO ORBE INDUCTOQUE ILLUC
CHRISTI SACRIFICIO* (1777)¹**

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The missions to the Guarani Indians in Paraguay are among the Society of Jesus' most famous endeavours in colonial Spanish America. Their early renown in Europe was due to Jacques Vanière, who praised the Indians' capacity for communal living in Book 14 of his influential didactic poem *Praedium Rusticum* or 'Country Estate' (1730), a bestseller in the later eighteenth century.² Vanière inspired another Jesuit to provide a first-hand account of the missions. That prose work is now far better known to historians of colonial Spanish America: *De administratione Guaranica comparata ad rempublicam Platonis commentarius* 'A Memorandum Comparing the Administration of the Guarani to Plato's *Republic*' (1793).³ The author, José Manuel Peramás, had settled in Italy, after he was compelled to leave the province of Paraguay when the Jesuits were expelled from all of Spain's territories in 1767.⁴

The *De administratione Guaranica* addressed the Guarani systems of legislation and urban planning, private and public possession of property, education, music and the arts. Though guided by the missionaries, the Indians were presented (as they had been in Vanière) as active and

¹The authors would like to thank Marcela Suárez, and Rebecca Earle for her comments on this paper.

² Yasmin Haskell in *Loyola's Bees* has noted there were some thirty Latin editions of Vanière's poem which was translated into several European languages (38).

³ The text was originally presented in Peramás' posthumously published biographies of Jesuit missionaries in Paraguay: *De vita et moribus tredecim virorum paraguaycorum* (1793), 1-162. Peramás' *La República de Platón y los Guaraníes* (1946) and *Platón y los Guaraníes* (2004) are Spanish translations. Stelio Cro, *De administratione guaranica* is a study in English accompanying an Italian translation.

⁴ Miguel Batllori, *La cultura hispano-italiana de los jesuitas expulsos* (1966) is the authoritative intellectual history of the Spanish Jesuits in Italy; Niccolò Guasti, *L'esilio italiano dei gesuiti spagnoli* (2006) is more socio-historical in approach. Both studies are indispensable.

resourceful citizens of their 'Republic': they voted on the main authorities in their towns, they were allowed to bear arms in order to defend themselves from the bands of slave-hunting *Mamelucos* from São Paulo; and they fought for their *patria* when Spain ceded their land to the Portuguese. The Roman historian Tacitus had supplied the prototype for the early modern myth of the Noble Savage in his *Germania* and Peramás' comparisons of the Guarani to Tacitus' Germans accumulated to portray the natives of Paraguay as virtuous barbarians.⁵ There were no firm conclusions about the similarities and differences between Guarani social organization and Plato's ideal Republic, but the treatise was clearly opposed to the arguments of Enlightenment thinkers, like Cornelius de Pauw and the Abbé de Raynal who had been tarnishing the reputation of the Jesuits and their work in the New World. The *De administratione Guaranica* has thus been subject to a variety of interpretations: as an account of 'missionary socialism', as utopian literature, as an ethnographic and historical source, and as a robust defence of Catholic and Jesuit values against the criticism from Enlightenment *philosophes*.⁶

José Manuel Peramás' memoir of the Guarani missions has long eclipsed his other Latin writings, which include two long poems: *De invento novo orbe inductoque illuc Christi Sacrificio*, 'On the Discovery of the New World and the Introduction there of Christ's Sacrifice' (1777), and *Adveniente Faventiam Episcopo*, 'On the Bishop's arrival in Faenza' (1787). The latter, billed as an epic poem [*carmen epicum*] to celebrate the installation of Domenico da Marchesi as Faenza's diocesan bishop, is wrongly believed to be lost.⁷ On the other hand, the earlier work about the voyage of Columbus and the Christianization of the Americas has long been known and available. It is remarkable that such a text, which really can be classed as a heroic epic, has received barely any scholarly attention.⁸

⁵ Stelio Cro, "Classical Antiquity, America and the Myth of the Noble Savage".

⁶ Guillermo Furlong, *José Manuel Peramás* reviewed early twentieth-century debates about the 'communism of the missions' (78-9); Cro sees the *De administratione* as Utopian literature; for Bartomeu Melià it is of anthropological interest (12); Miguel Batllori, *La cultura hispanio-italiana* (584) and Alberto Caturelli, "Ciudad platónica y ciudad cristiana" (30) see the *De administratione* as a response to the De Pauw and Raynal.

⁷ We have located the quarto volume of 24 pages in the Vatican Library: *Adveniente Faventiam Episcopo illustrissimo ac reverendissimo D.D. Dominico e marchion. Mancinforte ... vota et gratulatio. Carmen epicum Josephi Emmanuelis Peramasii. Faventiae, ex Typographia L. Genestri, 1787* [Stamp.Ferr.II.712(int.48)]. Furlong, *José Manuel Peramás* includes the title in his bibliographical catalogue of Peramás' works without having seen the book and states that no earlier bibliographer appeared to have done so either (41).

The present survey is therefore intended to serve as a stimulus and orientation for future work on the *De invento novo orbe*. The poem is not just of literary historical interest: it conveys Peramás' distinctive conception of American identity and it shows many convergences with the vision of Christian governance he later set out in the *De administratione Guaranica*. The *De invento novo orbe* can also be seen as a response to European ignorance of the New World and to criticism of Spain's role as a colonizing power. Following a summary account of Peramás' career, we will examine the preliminaries of the *De invento novo orbe*, focusing on the author's verse Dedication and prose Prologue – texts and translations of which are appended to this discussion.

Peramás' life and works⁹

José Manuel Peramás was born on 17 March 1732 in Mataró, Cataluña. He attended the Jesuit college of Manresa and entered the novitiate at Tarragona in 1747. After studying philosophy at Zaragoza, he moved to the University of Cervera – known at this time for its progressive tendency in reconciling the 'New Science' of Descartes, Locke and Gassendi with the tenets of scholastic theology.¹⁰ In 1755 Peramás set sail for America. His elder brother Ignacio Pablo, already a Jesuit, was working in Panama, having previously been at Quito. On arrival at Córdoba, José Manuel continued his studies of theology at the College of Montserrat and was entrusted with writing the official reports on the missions of Paraguay, the *Litterae Annuae Provinciae Paraquariensis*. Ordained in 1758, he spent three years at the Indian mission of San Ignacio Miní. Peramás was then recalled to Córdoba to teach rhetoric and moral theology, where he composed the *Laudationes Quinque* (1766), a set of orations to commemorate Ignacio Duarte y Quirós who had founded the College of Montserrat in Córdoba eighty years before.¹¹

⁸ There are no modern editions or translations. Furlong, *José Manuel Peramás* gives an overview (36-40); Alberto Caturelli, "Ciudad platónica y ciudad cristiana" briefly considers the poem's reception of Plato's Atlantis myth (20). *Brill's Encyclopedia of the Neo-Latin World* edited by Philip Ford is the first notice of the poem in English (830, 1120).

⁹ More detailed accounts, citing numerous primary sources are given in Batllori's chapter "En torno a José Manuel Peramás" (345-354), and by Furlong: "Su vida" in *José Manuel Peramás* (7-24) preceding the catalogue of Peramás' works (25-90).

¹⁰ Alain Guy, *Historia de la filosofía española* describes the liberal 'Escuela de Cervera' and its luminaries, including Peramás' fellow students Mateu Aymerich and Francisco de Llampillas who joined him in exile (218-219).

After Charles III's 1767 decree, which expelled the Society of Jesus from Spain's territories, Peramás settled in Faenza in Italy where a community of former Jesuits from Paraguay was soon established. There he wrote and published his major works: *Annus patiens* (1768), a record of the events in the wake of his expulsion from America; his poems *De invento novo orbe* (1777) and *Adveniente Faventiam Episcopo* (1787); and a set of biographies of Jesuit missionaries in Paraguay: *De vita et moribus sex sacerdotum paraguaycorum* (1791). Peramás' next collection of biographies was published posthumously in the year of his death: *De vita et moribus tredecim virorum paraguaycorum* (1793). That volume contained the *De administratione Guaranica* and was prefaced with an anonymous life of the author.

Presentation of the *De invento novo orbe inductoque illuc Christi Sacrificio*

The text is in an octavo volume of 96 pages. The poem is 2,375 hexameters in length, divided into three books of about 800 verses each. The poem begins the account of the discovery of America with the circumstances leading to Columbus' voyage, advancing towards its essential theme in the third book: the introduction of 'Christ's Sacrifice', the sacrament of the Eucharist, to the New World. The text on the frontispiece of the first and only edition is as follows:

JOSEPHI EMMANUELIS/ PERAMASII/ SACERDOTIS
HISPANI/ DE INVENTO/ NOVO ORBE/ INDUCTOQUE
ILLUC/ CHRISTI SACRIFICIO LIBRI TRES./ FAVENTIAE
MDCCLXXVII./ EX CHALCOGRAPHIA JOSEPHI ANTONII
ARCHII./ SUPERIORIBUS ANNUENTIBUS

José Manuel Peramás, a Spanish Priest, Three Books *On the Discovery of the New World and the Introduction there of the Sacrifice of Christ's Mass*. Faenza 1777. The Press of Gioseffantonio Archi. With the Superiors' Assent.

The next verso page presents three quotations from the Latin Vulgate (given here in the King James version):

For, the islands wait for me, and the ships of the sea in the beginning: that I may bring thy sons from afar: their silver, and their gold with them, to the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. (Isaiah 60: 9)

¹¹ Marcela Alejandra Suárez's edition of *the Laudationes Quinque* (3-6) endorses Furlong's finding, summarized in *José Manuel Peramás* (27-36), that the orations once ascribed to a Bernabé Echenique, were by the Catalan Jesuit.

Go, ye swift angels to a nation rent and torn in pieces: to a terrible people, after which there is no other: to a nation expecting and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled (Isaiah 18: 2)

For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered a clean oblation. (Malachi 1: 11)

These passages are recalled when the celebration of mass is recounted in *De invento novo orbe* Book 3, verses 29-36. The significance of the epigraphs for the poem's theme requires little elaboration: Columbus himself, perceiving the significance of the New World for Christian eschatology, had instituted the tradition of assembling apparent biblical and classical references to the Americas in his *Libro de las profecías*, which he compiled during 1501-3.¹²

The Dedication

The verses beginning on the third page are addressed to Mariana de Paredes y Flores (1618-1645) who was canonized in 1817, forty years after Peramás was writing. Born in Quito to a Spanish father and to a mother from a privileged creole family, Mariana de Paredes was inclined to prayer, extreme mortification and fasting from early childhood, reportedly sustaining herself by the Eucharist alone. She entered the Third Order of St. Francis, taking the name of Mariana de Jesús. She was reputed to have been able to discern others' secret thoughts, to predict the future and to see distant events she was not present to witness. She was also supposed to cure sickness by means of the sign of the cross or holy water, and even to have brought a dead woman back to life. Amidst the epidemics plaguing Quito after the 1645 earthquake, Mariana publicly offered herself as a sacrificial victim for the city, and died shortly afterwards. According to an early account published in 1702 by a Jesuit from Quito, Mariana had had a barber purge her regularly and a maidservant had been collecting her blood in a pit in the garden. A few days after Mariana's death, the servant witnessed a prodigy: lilies were growing from the pool of her mistress' fresh blood – a miracle which earned Mariana de Jesús her title of 'Lily of Quito.'¹³

¹² James Romm, "Biblical History and the Americas" considers Columbus' use of scripture; "New World and "novos orbes"" examines Columbus' interpretation of Seneca.

¹³ Jacinto Morán de Butrón, *La azucena de Quito* (18). Gustavo Amigó Jansen, "Santa Mariana de Jesús Paredes" is a modern digest of traditions about the saint; Ronald J. Morgan, *Spanish American Saints and the Rhetoric of Identity* shows how Morán de Butrón's life appropriated Mariana for the Jesuits as well as for Quito (99-118).

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Peramás' Dedication hails Mariana as the pride and glory of the New World. The poet concedes that his gifts are humble and the work of a lowly Muse, but Mariana's desire for virtue has always led her to reject the continent's abundant gold and jewels. Nor is she moved by poetry, which is classical in inspiration and theme ('songs boasting of the vain springs of Apollo's mountain'). She will prefer the singer whose breast is fired with truly divine inspiration to sound out praise of the Eucharist, which the ruler of heaven has granted to pagan peoples, rather than a poet who explains the secrets of nature and the production of American gold. These verses will accordingly praise Jesus' passage across the ocean to Quito and to previously unknown parts of the world, whose peoples build temples and altars to God. Mariana's realms are indeed the greatest on earth, and the renown of her city and the New World has been borne to heaven, so that the figures of Faith, Hope and Love often descended to earth, bringing Jesus himself to Mariana. As she incurred a mortal wound from accommodating such a guest in her heart, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance have received her in heaven. Now that Mariana has left her native land, the poet asks her to give her assent to his work – there is a greater reason for her to come to Europe bearing the lilies which symbolise her purity and modesty: Rome is celebrating Mariana's 'heroic virtue'.

Even as the poet professes an allegiance to Christian rather than classical themes, there is playful syncretism in these verses. Along with mentions of a Muse and the Pillars of Hercules, pagan imagery is used to convey the Eucharist: 'the gods' banquets set out with nectared liquor' [*structaque nectareis Divum convivium succis*]. God himself is the 'ruler of starry Olympus'.¹⁴ The four cardinal Christian virtues are called *divae*, 'goddesses', and Prudence is endowed with a hundred eyes, like Ovid's Argus or perhaps Fama, Virgil's personification of rumour.¹⁵ More striking still is the poet's modelling of the theological virtue of Love, normally *Caritas*, 'Charity', on the pagan *Amor*, often identifiable with Cupid: 'fire-bearing Love, brandishing a holy bow' [*vibrans AMOR ignifer arcum*].¹⁶

The closing invocation of Mariana de Paredes and her miraculous lilies has a strong classical resonance:

Laeta veni, TECUMque TUO fer LILIA JESU;

¹⁴ Jacopo Sannazaro, *De partu Virginis* (1526) used similar epithets of the Christian God.

¹⁵ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1.624; Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.181.

¹⁶ The theological virtues of *Fides*, *Spes* and *Caritas* are in I Corinthians 13: 13; Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.658-60, 4.66-72; Propertius, *Elegies* 2.12; Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 4.30-1 are among the sources for iconography of the pagan *Amor*. The three virtues are described similarly in *De invento novo orbe* 3.22-6.

LILIA, quae spinas inter, sparsique cruoris
Undas, servasti niveo inviolata pudore.

Come joyfully, bring with you the Lilies from your own Jesus,
bring the Lilies, which between thorns and the torrents of blood shed,
you have kept inviolate with your snow-white modesty.

Lilies, long associated with the Virgin Mary, symbolise purity in the Christian tradition, but in pagan antiquity they were associated with a premature death, and the wording of these verses recalls the response to the untimely passing of the young Marcellus in Virgil's *Aeneid*: *manibus date lilia plenis/purpureos spargam*, 'Give armfuls of lilies. Let me scatter red roses.'¹⁷ The juxtaposition of white with the purple of blood was another longstanding *topos* in Latin poetry.¹⁸ Pagan gods and terms of reference had long adorned Christian humanist literature and other exiled Jesuits addressed this issue: Francisco Javier Alegre remarked that to oppose the inclusion of classical deities or the invocation of Muses in Christian poetry was a sign of excessive piety rather than good critical judgement, and Rafael Landívar explained that in his *Rusticatio Mexicana* (1782) he would be 'talking in a poetic way every time mention is made of the meaningless divine powers of Antiquity'.¹⁹ Peramás makes no apology for this practice, which he sustains throughout the *De invento novo orbe* – a poem which is profoundly theological in its conception.

The poet contrasts himself with any rival who 'would rehearse the secrets of nature, and proclaim to the winds golden metals which fertile America brings forth, drawn from her rich bosom.' Peramás may have been seeking to differentiate his project from the work of other contemporary didactic poets. The closing lines of Landívar's *Rusticatio Mexicana* would exhort the reader to 'unlock the secrets of nature', and Books 6 and 7 of the ten books in the first edition were respectively devoted to the mining of silver and gold, and to the refining of those precious metals.²⁰ As Peramás

¹⁷ *Aeneid* 6.883-4; in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* 6.492-4 lilies symbolize a *vita brevis*. Rafael Landívar's 1765 Latin funeral oration for a former bishop of Popayán (200 miles from Quito) declared the Society of Jesus 'should have followed the customs of the Greeks and Romans by constructing a burial mound out of lilies': text and translation in Andrew Laird, *The Epic of America* (97-113).

¹⁸ Julia Dyson, "Lilies and Violence".

¹⁹ Alegre, *Desiderius Antonio suo*, translated in Jeffrey Kaimowitz, "Apologetical Essay" (143); Landívar, *Rusticatio Mexicana* (v): translation in Laird, *Epic of America* (122).

lived in Faenza, less than forty miles from Landívar in Bologna, he could well have known of his *confrère's* work in progress, but he may have had other recent works in mind.²¹ The mention of gold in this Dedication also anticipates the considerable attention given to metals in the epic poem to come.²²

The self-sacrifice of Mariana de Paredes forges another link with the *De invento novo orbe inductoque illuc Christi Sacrificio* by recalling the eponymous Sacrifice of Christ. Nonetheless the choice of Mariana as a dedicatee is *prima facie* puzzling: she was relatively little known outside Quito, a city more than two thousand miles from Córdoba in Río de la Plata, where Peramás had worked.²³ The Lily of Quito was not yet canonized as a saint and paled into insignificance compared to another virgin ascetic, Saint Rosa. The 'Rose of Lima', born Isabel de Flores y de Oliva (1586-1617), had been canonized and pronounced patroness of the New World by Pope Clement X in 1671 and might have been a more obvious recipient of these commendatory verses. Peramás' stated reason for offering the *De invento novo orbe* to Mariana de Jesus is given in the lengthy footnote to his Dedication: at the very time he was finalising his poem, Pius VI determined that Mariana possessed the required 'heroic virtues', ensuring that enquiry into the case for her canonization could proceed.

The Prologue

Jesuit poets often wrote short prefaces to explain the purpose of their works, identify their sources, and to show how they differed from their predecessors – for those exiled in Italy such prefaces had the further function of anticipating or averting criticism from Italian academicians who were prone to challenge their credentials and to question (unfairly) the quality of their Latin learning.²⁴ In his Prologue, Peramás begins by saying

²⁰ Landívar, *Rusticatio Mexicana: Appendix* verse 110; metals were treated in Books 7 and 8 of the second 1782 edition.

²¹ Francisco da Silveira, *Brasilienses Aurifodinae*, 'Brazilian Gold Mines' was composed in Italy and manuscripts were circulating in the early 1760s. Alexandra de Brito Mariano "New World Ethiopians" attributes the poem to José Basílio da Gama.

²² Peramás, *De invento novo orbe* 3.11-20 shows metal-working as a civilizing process brought to the Americas – an idea conveyed in the *De administratione Guaranica* in *De vita et moribus tredecim virorum paraguaycorum* (63-9).

²³ Peramás' retort to De Pauw in *De administratione Guaranica* in *De vita et moribus tredecim virorum* (53): 'I have seen a large part of South America [*non exiguam Americae meridionalis partem vidi*]' shows it is at least possible he had visited Quito.

²⁴ Andrew Laird, "Patriotism and the Rise of Latin" (236-7).

he will follow the practice of ancient and more recent Latin poets who did not supply explanatory notes to their works. Though he lists the Roman authors Lucretius, Virgil, Horace and Ovid in chronological order, it is striking that Lucretius is named first. The reception of Lucretius among Jesuits was ambivalent: his *De rerum natura* was valued as a source for atomic theory and verse composition alike in the 1600s, but Melchior de Polignac's *Anti-Lucretius: De Deo et natura* (1747) had refuted many of the poem's arguments.²⁵ Lucretian influence was evident in the work of several prominent Jesuits exiled to Italy from New Spain, including Francisco Javier Clavigero and Diego José Abad, but it held far greater sway in peninsular Spain, and Peramás would have studied Lucretius at the University of Cervera.²⁶

The opening of Book 1 of the *De invento novo orbe* echoes Lucretius as well as the first verse of Homer's *Odyssey* (ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, 'Of a man sing to me, Muse) and of Virgil's *Aeneid* (*Arma virumque cano...*, 'I sing of arms and a man ...'):

Vir mihi magnanimus, duce quo caelestia coenae
Munera divinae vasti per murmura ponti
In Mundum transvecta Novum, Solemque cadentem
Carmen erit. Vatem pavidis **te**, Musa, **sequentem**
Passibus, ignotas da tecum excurrere in oras,
Occiduumque diem, et terrarum invisere fines...
... Orbisque sinus **lustrare** latentes.
De invento novo orbe 1.1-6, 1.12

A **man** of great soul, under whose leadership the heavenly gift of the divine feast was carried over the roaring of the vast ocean to the New World and the setting sun, he will be **my song**. Muse, allow the poet, **following you** with fearful steps, to run forth with you to unknown shores, to the setting of the day, and to visit the earth's bounds... **to illuminate** the concealed hollows of the globe.

The desire (1.4-6) to follow in Columbus' footsteps as he brought light to hidden parts of the world (1.12) recalls Lucretius' eulogy of Epicurus, the audacious *inventor*, 'discoverer', who revealed the nature of the whole universe to mankind:

E tenebris tantis tam clarum extollere lumen

²⁵ Yasmin Haskell, "Religion and Enlightenment in the Neo-Latin Reception of Lucretius".

²⁶ Angel Traver Vera, *Lucrecio en España* has a chapter on Lucretius' reception in the Spanish Enlightenment (483-625).

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qui primus potuisti **inlustrans** commoda vitae,
te sequor, o Graiae gentis decus, inque tuis nunc
ficta pedum pono pressis vestigia signis

De rerum natura 3.1-4

I follow you, who could first bring clear light out of deep darkness,
illuminating the benefits of life, glory of the Greek race, and in the traces
you imprinted I now fashion and plant my own trail.²⁷

Two of the four ‘more recent’ poets named were humanists from the Italian *cinquecento*, and two were Jesuits born in the mid-1600s. Girolamo Fracastoro (1478-1553), also an atomist, was the first Latin poet to treat Columbus in Book 3 of his *Syphilis, sive Morbi Gallici* (1530), while Jacopo Sannazaro’s Virgilian epic on the Virgin birth, *De partu Virginis* (1526) had long been emulated by subsequent Latin poets.²⁸ The *De invento novo orbe*, like those Renaissance poems, was in three books. The Jesuits were Jacques Vanière and Tommaso Ceva. Ceva published an epic on Christ’s childhood, *Puer Iesus* (1690) and *Philosophia novo-antiqua*, ‘Philosophy Ancient and Modern’ (1704), a set of verse dissertations opposing Lucretius.²⁹ Peramás’ claim that these authors did not annotate their poems is not true of Ceva or of Vanière at least: the prominence given to all four modern poets was to signal their general importance as models. Moreover, contrary to his opening avowal, Peramás did himself append some long notes to his own text at the poem’s close – for instance citing Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo’s ‘eyewitness testimony’ [*testis ejus rei oculatus*] to demonstrate the fidelity of his poetic account of hurricanes being dispelled by the introduction of the sacrament to the Americas (*De invento novo orbe* 3.644).

The Prologue also identifies prose sources for the epic – all were from the sixteenth century: Fernández de Oviedo had travelled to Hispaniola, and Pedro Cieza to South America, while the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was a *mestizo* born in Peru. Though Peter Martyr, Francisco López de Gómara and Antonio de Herrera never left Europe, they made extensive use of

²⁷ Another exile in Italy, Diego Jose Abad, in his *Dissertatio ludicro-sera* (1778) echoed Lucretius *De rerum natura* 3.1-30 in a tribute to Rafael Campoy, a progressive Jesuit philosopher in New Spain discussed in Andrew Laird, “Patriotism and the Rise of Latin”, 171-2.

²⁸ Geoffrey Eatough, *Fracastoro’s Syphilis* and Jacopo Sannazaro, *Latin Poetry* edited by Michael Putnam are texts and translations.

²⁹ On Vanière see note 1. Yasmin Haskell “Sleeping with the Enemy” examines Ceva’s *Philosophia novo-antiqua*. Verses from *Puer Iesus* (on gold from the New World adorning the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome) are quoted in Peramás’ note on *De invento novo orbe* 3.758.

testimonies of those who had been to the Americas: the first Decade of Martyr's *De orbe novo* (1511) – a title saluted in Peramás' own – drew from Columbus' letters, and Gómara knew Hernán Cortés. Peramás' evident predilection for histories based on direct observation was shared by many other exiled creole Jesuit historians, scientists and poets.³⁰

Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra has used the term 'patriotic epistemology' to describe this Americanist historiographical tendency spearheaded by Francisco Javier Clavigero: sources originating in the Americas (including chronicles by missionaries and native writers) were held up in opposition to the conjectural histories of the New World propounded by 'Enlightened' Europeans.³¹ Peramás also gave prominence to personal observation in his *Annus patiens* and *De administratione Guaranica*, and he emphasises in this Prologue that he incorporated into his actual epic things which he had seen for himself when he 'lived among the Indians for some time' – even though he concedes that he has taken poetic licence in unifying Columbus' separate voyages for aesthetic effect.

The latter admission leads Peramás to consider two Italian poets who made the achievements of Columbus the specific subject of their Latin epics: Lorenzo Gambara's *De navigatione Christophori Columbi* (1581) in four books, and Ubertino Carrara's *Columbus* (1715), in twelve books, after the template of Virgil's *Aeneid*.³² These poems did not circulate in the Americas and Peramás must have encountered them in Italy. His mention of Angelo Maria Querini's reproach of Carrara for failing to acknowledge a debt to Gambara confirms that the earlier poem was less well known.³³ Carrara had indeed drawn from Gambara, and both Carrara and Gambara knew

³⁰ See n. 22 above. Compare the Preface to Juan Molina, *Saggio sulla storia naturale del Chili* (Bologna 1782) quoted by John Browning (13) [I have seen and observed constantly the things that I state... I have consulted impartial writers...who have been [to America]'. The *Praefatio* to Landívar's *Rusticatio Mexicana* (1782), (v) states: 'I relate those things which I have seen and those that have been told to me by eyewitnesses [*testes oculati*]'.²

³¹ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World* (206-210), building on the discussion in D.A. Brading *The First America*, 447-464 and Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*.

³² Peramás did not know Giulio Cesare Stella's fictional *Columbeid* (1585), *Atlantis relecta* (1659) by the German Vincent Plack [Vincentius Placcius], or the Bohemian Alois de Mickl's *Plus ultra* (c.1730). Heinz Hofmann, "Adveniat tandem Typhis" has surveyed all the Latin epics involving Columbus except the *De invento novo orbe*.

³³ Gambara's poem had not been printed since 1586. Cardinal Querini (not the Jesuit Manuel Querini who sailed to Europe with Peramás in 1767) was head of the Vatican Library in 1730 and founded the Biblioteca Queriniana in Brescia in 1745.

Fracastoro and Peter Martyr, but the Spanish prose sources which would inform the *De invento novo orbe* were not available to them.³⁴ Peramás, though, distinguishes his own poem from those Columbus epics, not on the basis of its historical foundations, but because of its subject: '[the earlier poets] had not set themselves the purpose, which is my concern, of dealing especially with the *Introduction of Christ's Sacrifice* into the New World, a principal part of our work'.

The Jesuit's poetic project is in fact a response to what in modern times became known as the 'Black Legend': propaganda heavily critical of Spain in other European nations prompted, in part, by suspicion, envy or indignation at the Spaniards' conquest and conversion of the peoples of the Americas.³⁵ The defamation of Spain, which may well have originated in sixteenth-century Italy, was revived by Voltaire and Montesquieu and further endorsed by later Enlightenment historians.³⁶ Raynal's *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (1770) and Robertson's *History of America* (1777) questioned the value of the missionary endeavours of Spain and Portugal, as well as the colonial enterprises of those powers. The introduction to Peramás' *De administratione Guaranica* directly opposed their arguments, and many more writings by former members of the Society of Jesus in Italy would continue to do so, into the 1800s.³⁷

Thus while Peramás affects only to tell the truth in his poem, leaving specific refutations of Spain's detractors and of religion's enemies to historians and orators, he makes his own opinion very clear in this part of the Prologue: it is mean-spirited, he says, to dwell on the faults of heroes 'in order to disgrace them in the mouths of men'; and one who would do so is like the drone bee 'whose mouth and sting is... for disturbing and ruining the honeycombs, which are born of so much labour'. Thus, as well as echoing Livy, Peramás brings to mind Vanière's comparison of the

³⁴ Carrara, however, did know Fernández de Oviedo, as Heinz Hofmann shows (497).

³⁵ Julián Juderías, *La leyenda negra* (1914) gave the term currency. Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Against the Black Legend" is a stimulating discussion.

³⁶ Niccolò Guasti, *L'esilio italiano dei gesuiti spagnoli* concludes that the Inquisition, the conquest of the America and the perceived underdevelopment of the Hispanic world were the three major issues underlying that construction of the *leyenda negra* in the 1700s, arguing that European Enlightenment thought systematized prejudices inherited from previous ages (372-3).

³⁷ Guasti, *L'esilio italiano* (363-95).

Paraguayan Indians to bees on the strength of their industry and capacity to work peacefully for the common good.³⁸

An exhortation follows which turns into a more conventional *captatio benevolentiae* directed at an Italian readership: just as the widely revered historian Paolo Giovio (1483-1552) had praised the Spaniards and Columbus (who, after all, came from Liguria in Italy), so too should the 'good reader'; the same reader is also asked to pardon the inexperienced poet if he has not managed to meet the standards required for an epic.³⁹ Finally the author gives notice of two further poems he has yet to publish: a historical and theological epic on the Eucharist and a further composition on Penitence. In the 1850s the Belgian Jesuit Augustin de Backer recorded a work by Peramás that might correspond to the promised *Eucharis* (if Backer was not confusing it with the *De invento novo orbe*):

*Paratos prelo reliquit: De Eucharistia libros cum notis quod reor poema inscriptum: De Sacio in Novum Orbem inventum [sic], constans IV libris.*⁴⁰

He left ready to go to press: the annotated books of *On the Eucharist* which I think is the poem entitled: *On the Rite borne to the New World*, consisting of four books.

Whether Peramás had ever really composed these further poems or not, the mention of them, at the close of the Prologue, underlines his commitment to Christian sacramental themes.

Conclusions

José Manuel Peramás dedicated his poem on the discovery and Christianization of the entire New World to Mariana of Quito, because its completion coincided with a call for her canonization. In the Dedication the poet declares her 'kingdoms are the greatest part of the earth, and the renown of [her] City and the New World are borne above the skies.' Yet Peramás, a native Catalan, who had lived in Río de la Plata for just over a decade before he was exiled to the Papal States, had no obvious connection to Quito. While most exiled Jesuits strongly identified themselves with the particular region of the New World they had left behind, the fact that Peramás chose for his preliminary verses a location with which he was not

³⁸ Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 2.38.3: *vos... traductos per ora hominum* [you... have been disgraced in the mouths of men]. Vanière, *Praedium rusticum* (268).

³⁹ Giovio, *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium veris imaginibus supposita* (1551), Book 4: Giovio's eulogy of Columbus is given below his portrait of the Admiral.

⁴⁰ Augustin de Backer, *Ecrivains de la Compagnie de Jésus*, vol. 5 (577), cited in José Toribio Medina, *Historia y bibliografía de la imprenta en Córdoba* (1766).

personally associated could suggest he inclined towards a form of Spanish pan-Americanism.⁴¹ That is also suggested by the very choice of Columbus as the subject of his poem. Columbus' legacy has never been confined to the Caribbean – Mexico and South America are also prominent in the *De invento novo orbe*. No other Spanish American Jesuit epic had ever celebrated Columbus (or any pan-American theme).

Peramás does not quite set his own heroic poem in opposition to the two Italian epics about Columbus with which he was familiar, but he does sharply distinguish his work from them. The scientific and biblical epics of Fracastoro, Sannazaro, Vanière and Ceva were in any case the works he sought to emulate; while his prose sources show his own Columbus poem was grounded on historical testimony. The epics of Gambara and Carrara were not lacking in religious sentiment, but Peramás states that the difference between his composition and theirs lies in his own emphasis on the institution of the Eucharist in the Americas. That emphasis is doubtless connected with the poet's enthusiasm for sacramental topics signalled at the very end of the Prologue, but such an emphasis must also be *ideological*: by making the 'Introduction of Christ's Sacrifice to the New World' the focus of his poem, the Jesuit can quash the untruths and slanders of those who have opposed Spain's colonization of the Americas and suspected the pious motives of her heroes.

The *De invento novo orbe illuc inductoque Christi Sacrificio* cannot in the end be distinguished from the earlier epics about Columbus on the basis of a 'New World' provenance: it too was produced in Italy by a European. The difference was one of conception. The poems of Lorenzo Gambara and Ubertino Carrara were composed at the behest of their patrons. Gambara had dedicated his *De navigatione* to Cardinal Anthony Perrenot, Prime Minister of Charles V and Philip II – even setting the frame of his narrative in Perrenot's house. For his part, the Jesuit Carrara addressed his *Columbus* to another Cardinal, Benedetto Pamphili, the renowned Maecenas of *settecento* Rome. Those poems were formidable literary accomplishments, but such dazzling panegyrics of a new era of knowledge and European expansion were bound to be uncontroversial. Peramás had no patron. His poetic creation, drawing from modern histories as well as classical models, was driven by the need to respond at once to assumptions about the degeneracy of the nature and culture of the Americas, to the anti-religious trend in Enlightenment thought, and to the resurgence of the Black Legend.

⁴¹ Miguel Batllori, *La Cultura Hispano-Italiana* (353, 584).

Texts and Translations

(i) Verse Dedication and Note

VENERABILI VIRGINI MARIAE ANNAE A JESU FLORES ET
PAREDES QUITENSI LILIO.

Virgo dulce Novi decus & laus maxima Mundi,
Indica, quae sistit TIBI vates, carmina blando
Accipe, QUITENSI veniens è limite, vultu.
Auriferae vastas AMERICAЕ pandimus oras,
Donaque Coelicolum magni per murmura ponti 5
Herculeas ultra sequimur transvecta columnas.
Parva damus (fateor) nascentis munera vatis,
Vilis opus Musae: sed quae flavique metalli,
Argentique ferax litus, gemmasque nitentes,
Quas Novus ante pedes ultro TIBI straverat Orbis, 10
Sprevisti dudum rigidae virtutis amore;
Haud rerum jam magna petis, nec carmina tangunt
Montis Apollinei vanos jactantia fontes.
Qui sonet immensos divini pectoris ignes,
Structaque nectareis Divum convivia succis, 15
Quae miseris tandem stellati rector Olympi
Gentibus indulsit, Liber is TIBI gratior, alta
Quàm si naturae secreta revolveret, atque
Aurea, quae gignit felix AMERICA, metalla,
Divite tracta sinu, medias proferret in auras. 20
Atqui nostra novos trananti carmina JESU
Terrarum in fines, & amoeni litora QUITI,
Regna per Oceani, priscis impervia, plaudunt.
Tum patri magno, quaquà patet invia tellus,
Templa struunt, & thura novis altaribus addunt. 25
Maxima pars terrae, tua sunt hic regna, tuaeque
Urbis honos, Orbisque Novus super aethera vecti.
Hic JESUS hic ille TUUS, quem lumina velo
Tecta FIDES, totumque gerens sub pectore coelum
SPES soror, & sacrum vibrans AMOR ignifer arcum, 30
(Ex astris dulci labentes foedere Mundi
In pia regna Novi) quondam TIBI, vota precesque
Ante latens Numen fundenti, saepe dederunt.
Ardescit vivo tanti cor hospitis aestu,
Excipiuntque pio languentem vulnere summae 35
Quattuor ex arcis demissae culmine Divae.
Quae longè ventura videt PRUDENTIA centum
Praedita luminibus, mentemque per omnia versans.
Et quae JUSTA refert poenas, aut praemia; turbae
Nec lacrimas despectat, adulatorve potenti. 40
Atque adamantaeo FORTISSIMA pectore Virgo,
Fas & jura tuens medios secunda per hostes.
Quarta modum tenet, & concessis TEMPERAT uti,

22 Arbo and Laird, "Columbus, the Lily of Quito, and the Black Legend"

Blanditiis numquam, turpive cupidine victa.
 Ergo tot Divis, VIRGO, comitantibus almae 45
 Finibus è patriae tandem digressa vocantem
 Vatem audi, praesensque laboribus annue nostris.
 Laeta veni, TECUMque TUO fer LILIA JESU;
 LILIA, quae spinas inter, sparsique cruoris
 Undas, servasti niveo inviolata pudore. 50
 Europae cur nunc alacri pede regna revisas
 Causa TIBI major: quando TE Roma sacrorum
 HEROUM magnis celebrat* VIRTUTIBUS aequam.

* Cum jam vates absoluturus esset hoc opus, prodiit Alma in Urbe, Postulatore Causae Cl[erico] V[enerabili] D[octore]D[ivinitatis] Canonico JOANNE DEL CASTILLO, qui eo nomine inde usque ab Quitensi regno Romam venerat, Decretum Beatificationis, & Canonizationis Venerabilis Servae Dei MARIAE ANNAE à JESU de PAREDES, super dubio: An constet de Virtutibus Theologalibus FIDE, SPE, & CHARITATE in DEUM, & proximum, necnon de Cardinalibus PRUDENTIA, JUSTITIA, FORTITUDINE, & TEMPERANTIA, earumque adnexis in gradu Heroico, in casu, & ad effectum de quo agitur.

Declaravit autem, & decrevit P[ontifex]M[aximus] PIUS VI. die xix. Martii (an[ni] prox[imi] MDCCCLXXVI) qua D[omini] JOSEPHI Sponsi B[eaatae] MARIAE Virginis memoria ab universa Catholica Ecclesia celebratur, ac in Americanis praesertim Regionibus summa cum devotione colitur..... ita constare de Virtutibus Ven[erabilibus] Servae Dei MARIAE ANNAE à JESU de PAREDES in gradu Heroico, ut procedi possit ad ulteriora, nempe ad discussionem trium miraculorum.

Ob id adeò visum vati est Americanae huic Virgini Carmen hoc deberi DE INVENTO NOVO ORBE, INDUCTOQUE ILLUC CHRISTI SACRIFICIO.

TO THE VENERABLE VIRGIN, MARIANA DE JESÚS DE PAREDES Y FLORES, LILY OF QUITO

Virgin, the New World's sweet pride and greatest glory,
 Receive these Indian verses, which the poet renders to you,
 coming from Quito's boundary, with your pleasant demeanour
 We are throwing open the vast shores of America rich in gold, 5
 and heaven's gifts, which, borne through the great ocean's roar,
 we pursue beyond the Pillars of Hercules.
 We bear the small tokens (I admit) of a nascent poet
 the work of a cheap Muse: but whatever golden or silver metal
 the fertile shore produces and the gleaming gems
 which the New World of its own accord set at your feet 10
 you spurned some time ago, out of your desire for strict virtue
 and in no way do you seek greatness in things – nor do songs boasting
 of the vain springs of Apollo's mountain move you.
 But whoever sounds out the measureless fires of a divine breast

and of the gods banquets set out with nectared liquor, 15
 which the ruler of starry Olympus in the end granted
 to poor peoples – that free and frank poet is more welcome to you,
 than if he were to rehearse the secrets of nature,
 proclaiming to the winds the golden metals
 fortunate America brings forth, drawn from her rich bosom. 20
 Rather our songs applaud Jesus, swimming across to new
 ends of the Earth, and the shores of pleasant Quito
 over the realms of Ocean which were impassable to people of old.
 Then to the great Father, wherever pathless land lies open,
 they build temples and heap incense on new altars. 25
 Your kingdoms here are the greatest part of the earth, and the
 renown of your City and the New World are borne above the skies.
 Here Jesus, here your Jesus, whom Faith, her eyes covered by
 a veil, and —sustaining all of heaven in her breast—
 her sister Hope, and fire-bearing Love, brandishing a holy bow, 30
 (all plunging from the stars, by a sweet compact, to the pious realms
 of the New World) often once rendered to you, as you poured forth
 vows and prayers to a divine power before hidden.
 Your heart burns with the living heat of your great guest,
 and as you languish from your pious wound, you are received 35
 by four goddesses, sent down from the top of the high citadel:
 Prudence sees from afar what is to come, endowed with
 a hundred eyes, applying her consideration to all things.
 And Justice brings punishments or prizes; she neither despises
 the crowd's tears, nor shows adulation to one in power. 40
 And the Virgin of Great Courage with her adamant breast,
 regards what is right and lawful, secure amidst her enemies.
 The fourth holds the measure: Temperance uses what is granted her,
 never overwhelmed by flattery or by base desires.
 Wherefore, Virgin, accompanied by all those goddesses, 45
 as you leave the territory of your bountiful *patria*, hear
 the poet calling, and be present to assent to our labours.
 Come joyfully, bring with you the Lilies from your own Jesus,
 bring the Lilies, which between thorns and the torrents of blood shed,
 you have kept inviolate with your snow-white modesty. 50
 There is now a greater reason why you may visit
 the kingdoms of Europe with a swifter foot: since Rome
 celebrates* you as equal to the great Virtues of our saintly Heroes.

* When the poet had been about to release this work, a Decree of
 Beatification and Canonization was issued for the Venerable Servant of
 God, MARIA ANNA DE JESÚS DE PAREDES, in this bountiful City,
 proposed by the venerable cleric and Doctor of Divinity, Canon Juan del
 Castillo who with that title had come all the way to Rome from the Realm
 of Quito. The question of her Theological Virtues, namely Faith, Hope
 and Love to God and to her neighbour, as well as her Cardinal Virtues, of
 Prudence, Justice, Courage and Temperance, may be established beyond

24 Arbo and Laird, "Columbus, the Lily of Quito, and the Black Legend"

doubt: the combination of these in the Heroic Grade happening to bear on the matter concerned.

Indeed on the nineteenth day of March (of the following year 1776), on which the commemoration of Master Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is celebrated by the entire Roman Catholic Church and kept with the utmost devotion in the regions of America, the Supreme Pontiff, PIUS VI, declared and decreed that that the Virtues of the Venerable Servant of God, MARIA ANNA DE JESÚS DE PAREDES were thus established in the Heroic Grade, so that further progress can be made, assuredly leading to the examination of her three miracles.

On that account it therefore seemed right to the poet to render to this American Virgin the present composition on the *Discovery of the New World and the Introduction There of Christ's Sacrifice*.

(ii) Prologue

PROLOGUS

Quos edo libros de INVENTO NOVO ORBE, INDUCTOQUE ILLUC CHRISTI SACRIFICIO, perpetuis primum annotationibus explicueram. Mutavi deinde consilium, sequutusque exemplum veterum poetarum Lucretii, Virgilio, Horatii, Ovidiique, & recentiorum Sannazarii, Fracastorii, Vanierii, & Cevae, ceterorumque, qui nullam carminibus suis interpretationem adjecerunt, annotationes ipsas pressi, domique continui, paratus eas reddere, siquando hoc opus iterum typis committendum sit, idque aliis utile, & opportunum videatur.

Interea hoc unum profiteor, ea ferme omnia, quae versibus inclusimus, excepta esse è probatis rerum Americanarum Scriptoribus, veluti Petro Martyre, Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo, Antonio de Herrera, Inga Garcilasso, Petro Cieza, Francisco Lopez de Gomara, aliisque, quorum testimoniis, quae de Columbo dicimus, ejusque ac comitum religione in aggrediendo tanto illo facinore, atque ubi jam ejus compotes facti sunt, pietate, confirmare possumus.

At est illud inter nos, & auctores istos Indicos discrimen: illi nimirum, quippe qui Historici, res gestas Columbi, & navigationes (saepe enim ille novis comitatibus iter in Americam repetiit) ut factae sunt, assignato singularum tempore, distinxerunt: Nos, contra, quod id ad amoenitatem, & ornatum carminis commodius esset, è prima, & secunda navigatione, atque ex aliis etiam nonnulla conjunximus: ac praetera quaedam addidimus, quae ipsi in Novo Orbe, ubi diu viximus inter Indos, vidimus, & dictu digna existimavimus.

Nec verò nos latet poetis olim aliis aditum jam fuisse Novum Orbem, & Columbi, Hispanorumque Argonautarum facta heroico celebrata carmine ab Ubertino Carrara, & Laurentio Gambarà, qui ante Ubertini COLUMBUM, suum de eodem argumento poema ediderat; adeò ut Card[inale] Querino vapulet Carrara ipse, quòd nusquam meminere vetustioris Gambarae, qui ipsum in canendis NOVI ORBIS rebus occuparat.

Verùm, quod huc attinet, poetae isti rem hanc alio, quàm nos, tractarunt cum modo, tum ordine: neque id sibi proposuerant, ut de inducto in Novum Orbem Christi Sacrificio, quae operis nostri princeps pars est, praesertim agerent.

Sed illud in primis te volo, Lector, monitum, haud ea me mente Carmen istud aggressum esse, ut quae ab aliis contra Hispanorum in America novas Colonias vel nimio partium studio, vel inveterato gentis odio, vel errore quodam, aut etiam impio Religionis oppugnandae animo scripta sunt, quaesitis argumentis diluam. Quippe mihi in tenui hoc opere, quod experiundi causa in publicum do, satis est vera dicere; falsa autem aliorum confutare, & injurias calumniamque revincere, majoris res moliminis est, nec tam à poeta, quàm ab Oratore aliquo, aut Historico exigenda.

Id unum hìc dixerim, & duri, & invidi, & maligni ingenii esse, cum multa sint quae laudes in magnorum virorum factis, iis praetermissis, illa dumtaxat sectari, & prodere (ubi quid illi peccarunt) quae vitio vertas, & per ora hominum traducas; similis ignavo fuco, cui non, ut apibus, os est & aculeus sugendo melli è floribus, quod illae faciunt; sed apum ipsarum favis, tanto partis labore, exturbandis, corrumpendisque.

Tu, è contrario, bone Lector, quod olim egit Paulus Jovius (in insignium Virorum Elogiis lib. IV.) illustres illos Hispanos, & Ligurem Columbum lauda. Tum, siquid meretur veniae, nascenti poetae fave, eidemque benignè condona, si minus ad perfectae Epopoejæ leges breve hoc poema suum redegerit. Cujus rei causae fuerunt duae: altera, ipsa argumenti difficilis natura, quae id vix patitur; altera, exiguae vatis ad difficultatem istam superandam vires.

Quod si ii nostri libri steterint, probatique fuerint Musarum amatoribus, id nobis incitamento erit, ut, quod sub manu habemus, limamusque Carmen EUCHARIS, octo distinctum libris, quibus quae ad Eucharistiam institutam, & per Asiam, Europam, Africamque propagatam spectant, explicamus, unà cum iis, quae de sacris Panis, & Vini exuviis disserunt Philosophi, in lucem emittamus; nec non breve aliud poema, cui titulus erit METANOEA, id est, de Sacramento Poenitentiae, typis item publicis mandemus. Vale.

PROLOGUE

The books I am publishing on the *Discovery of the New World and the Introduction There of Christ's Sacrifice* I had first set forth with running notes. I then changed my plan – following the example of ancient poets like Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, and of more modern ones, Sannazaro, Fracastoro, Vanière, Ceva and others, who added no explanation to their own verses – and I removed those notes and kept them to myself, but I am ready to restore them if this work is ever to be put in print again and if it would seem useful or advantageous to others.

Be that as it may, I freely avow this one point: that almost everything which we have set in verse has been taken from tried and tested writers on American subjects, like Peter Martyr, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, Antonio de Herrera, Inca Garcilaso, Pedro Cieza, Francisco López de

Gómara, and others, from whose testimonies, and where they have already become authorities on Columbus, we can confirm in piety what we say about him, his religious faith and that of his companions in embarking on such a great venture.

But there is this difference between us and those authors of the Indies: simply because they were Historians, they naturally distinguished Columbus' achievements and his voyages (for he often repeated his journey to America with fresh fleets) as they were made, after reckoning the time of each one. In contrast, we have conjoined several details from from the first and the second voyage, as well as from the others, because it is more suitable for the charm and adornment of a poem. What is more, we have added some things which we ourselves saw in the New World, where we lived among the Indians for some time, and which we consider worth mentioning.

Nor does it escape our notice that the New World had already been approached by other poets a long time ago, and the feats of Columbus and the Spanish Argonauts were celebrated in heroic verse by Ubertino Carrara and by Lorenzo Gambara, who had published his own poem with the same plot, prior to Ubertino's *Columbus*, so that Carrara himself is even chastized by Cardinal Querino, because he nowhere mentioned the earlier Gambara, who had anticipated him in putting New World subjects into verse.

In fact those poets treated this subject differently from us, in both manner and arrangement, and they had not set themselves the purpose, which is my concern, of dealing especially with the *Introduction of Christ's Sacrifice* into the New World, a principal part of our work.

But I want you to be warned at the outset, Reader, that in no way did I set about this poem with the intention of finding arguments to wash away things which have been written by others, against the Spaniards' new colonies in America, whether motivated by too great an attachment to those regions, by inveterate hatred for our people, or by some error, or even out of an impious urge to attack our Religion. Rather in this slight work of my own, which I offer the public to try out, it is enough for me to tell the truth. Confuting the falsehoods of others and redressing injury and slander is a matter for a greater endeavour, and it is not to be demanded of a poet, but of a statesman or historian.

I should say this one thing here, that it is characteristic of a harsh, envious and malevolent nature, when there is much you may praise in the deeds of great heroes, to overlook all of that, only to track down and reveal other things (when the heroes did do something wrong) in order to turn it into a reproach and to disgrace them in the mouths of men; like the idle drone whose mouth and sting is not for sucking honey from flowers, as bees do, but for disturbing and ruining their honeycombs, which are born of so much labour.

On the contrary, good Reader, praise those noble Spaniards and Ligurian Columbus, as Paolo Giovio once did (in the four books of his *Eulogies of Glorious Men*). Then if any indulgence is merited, be well disposed to this infant poet and kindly pardon him, if he has done too little to govern his own short poem by the laws of refined epic poesy.

There have been two reasons for this: the difficult nature of the argument, which can hardly cope with this regulation; and the scantiness of the poet's strength for overcoming this difficulty.

If these books of ours should endure, and be approved by lovers of the Muses, it will be a spur to us to bring to light a work we have in hand and which we are refining: in the *Eucharis*, divided into eight books, we set out matters regarding the institution and propagation of the Eucharist through Asia, Europe and Africa, and together with these, the discourses of Philosophers about the sacred prizes of Bread and Wine. There is another quite lengthy poem, with the title of *Metanoia* (that is, *On the Sacrament of Repentance*) which we may also commend to print. Farewell.

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FAVENTIÆ MDCCLXXVII.

Ex CHALCOGRAPHIA JOSEPHI ANTONII ARCHII.
SUPERIORIBUS ANNUENTIBUS.

