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The Hybrid City Newspaper Representations of Manila during the Cholera Epidemic of 1882

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Abstract

Die Transformationen des philippinischen Archipels, insbesondere Modernisierungsprojekte, haben jüngst an Bedeutung gewonnen in der spanischen und philippinischen Historiographie des 19. Jahrhunderts. Globalhistoriker*innen zielen durch die Erforschung von Epidemien, Modernisierung und Öffentlichkeiten auf eine Integration der Städtegeschichte ins Feld der Globalgeschichte ab. Diese Masterarbeit behandelt die koloniale Hafenstadt von Manila während des Cholera-Ausbruchs von 1882 und fragt nach dem Einfluss von Manilas Position als asiatische koloniale Hafenstadt in den Repräsentationen der Tageszeitung *La Oceanía Española*. Manila wurde als eine hybride Stadt zwischen Tradition und Modernität dargestellt. Dadurch wurde die koloniale Präsenz Spaniens legitimiert. Während moderne Ideale hervorgehoben wurden, verschleierte die Zeitung Akteur*innen und Praktiken, die mit diesen Idealen nicht zusammenpassten. Manilas dezentrale Perspektive trägt zu einem besseren Verständnis von imperialer Lokalität.

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I. Introduction

“An epidemic weighs on the spirits of this city that we gallantly call to be civilized or even to be the *Pearl* of the Orient [...] Is it not true that the term pearl would imply a polished and treasured shine? Well, this is exactly what Manila has always lacked.”¹ In August of 1882, Manila was hit by an outbreak of cholera as the disease had been spreading in the entire region. The epidemic in Manila would last until December 1882. On the third of September 1882, the Manila-based daily newspaper, *La Oceanía Española*, opened one of its frontpage articles with the cited words. “Is it easy to transform one of these *defective* pearls to increase the wealth of its owner? It is only possible through patient, constant, and intelligent work, and even then, it will be a forgery. This is because what nature does not do itself cannot be changed by man in a moment through sheer power of will.”² Projecting this on Manila, with the hygienic situation of the city especially in mind, the author of the article stated that modernizing the city in a short period would be impossible because of the prevalence of tradition and bad habits within the city’s populace, and saw the need for constant action over generations, a proactive administration, and a group of “illustrated” people to guide the masses to transform Manila into an equal of Paris or London.³

In the middle of the epidemic, *La Oceanía Española* shows key aspects of how Manila was imagined by the colonial elites. It was a place between the tradition of its native population and the modernity of the colonizers who identified the ideal city in London and Paris. These representations of Manila reflected long-term processes taking place in the city and showed how these were perceived and reproduced by certain groups. As an Asian colonial port city, how was the city represented and set in relation to the world by its colonial press? What were

¹ “Lo Ideal y lo Real,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 3, 1882. Translations from Spanish to English were done by the author.

² “Lo Ideal y lo Real.”

³ *Ibid.*

the ideals projected on it and how did these representations deal with contradictions regarding their ideal imaginations and with anxieties of the colonial elites regarding the city that were exacerbated by the cholera epidemic of 1882?

In recent years, and in relation to these questions, scholarship on the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire and Philippine history has illuminated the political, social, and economic changes that took place in the Philippine Archipelago after the end of the Manila galleon in 1815, with recent studies focusing on the modernization projects implemented in the late nineteenth century. From the field of Global History and Urban History, studies on epidemics, modernisation, and publics have been recently aimed at integrating perspectives from urban history.

Global historians have argued for reconsidering how connections and mobilities are approached in the field. Regarding connection, Sujit Sivasundaram historicizes the notion, looking at different practices of representation in the nineteenth-century British Empire that took an important role in intellectual discourses, the development of infrastructure, such as ports, and medial representations.⁴ Further historians have argued for approaching connection in its dialectic relation to disconnection, aiming through this to include marginalized actors, spaces, and processes in the narratives of Global History.⁵ Regarding mobilities, Valeska Huber discusses the coexistence of different forms of mobility as well as the hierarchies and marginalization of certain actors in function to categories such as empire, modernity, and race.⁶ Building on these trends and making an extensive review of recent scholarship on port cities,

⁴ Sujit Sivasundaram, "Towards a Critical History of Connection: The Port of Colombo, the Geographical 'Circuit,' and the Visual Politics of New Imperialism, ca. 1880–1914," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 59, no. 2 (2017): 346–384.

⁵ Roland Wenzlhuemer *et al.*, "Forum Global Dis:connections," *Journal of Modern European History* 21, no. 1 (2023): 2–33.

⁶ Valeska Huber, *Channeling Mobilities. Migration and Globalisation in the Suez Canal Region and Beyond, 1869–1914* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Valeska Huber, "Multiple Mobilities. Über den Umgang mit verschiedenen Mobilitätsformen um 1900," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft: Zeitschrift für Historische Sozialwissenschaft* 36, no. 2 (2010): 317–341.

Lasse Heerten argues for approaching these cities not as points of seamless connection, but rather as complex urban spaces where mobilities slowed down and stopped, considering also what lay beyond the port, such as the thousands of immobile people that lived in these cities.⁷

A further integration of Urban History perspectives into Global History has been proposed by scholars.⁸ Several approaches to the concept of the modern city as a global phenomenon have been posited. Authors have approached this question in an Asian context, following the emergence of the notion of the modern city in the last decades of the nineteenth century through colonial empires, highlighting however its appropriation by Asian peoples and its importance in different social movements.⁹ Lila Caimari further exposes how the development of communication and travel technologies allowed the urban periodical press to reshape the way in which the modern city was imagined.¹⁰ In the context of the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire, historians have pointed to the importance of colonial cities in the stabilization and representation of imperial power as well as to the efforts to modernize these cities.¹¹

Reproduction of inequalities and difference has been a common theme in approaching urban spaces. Discussing urban disasters, Cindy Ermus stresses the importance of considering hierarchies when approaching urban spaces in times of crisis, especially how marginalization is reproduced by the unequal social logics of the city.¹² Epidemic crises were often moments

⁷ Lasse Heerten, “Mooring Mobilities, Fixing Flows: Towards a Global Urban History of Port Cities in the Age of Steam,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 34, no. 2 (2021): 350-374; For further insights into the complexities of mobility see Stefanie Gänger, “Circulation: reflections on circularity, entity, and liquidity in the language of global history,” *Journal of Global History* 12, no. 3 (2017): 303-318.

⁸ E.g., Alistair Kefford, “Global Urban History Project and Centre for Urban History Joint Conference, ‘The pursuit of global urban history,’ Leicester, 11–12 July 2019,” *Urban History* 47 (2020): 170-172.

⁹ Su Lin Lewis, *Cities in Motion. Urban Life and Cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asia, 1920–1940* (Cambridge University Press, 201); Kristin Stapleton, *The Modern City in Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

¹⁰ Lila Caimari, *Cities and News* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

¹¹ María Dolores Elizalde, “Presentación: Ciencia e ingeniería en Filipinas a fines del siglo XIX,” *Illes i Imperis* 22 (2020): 9-14; Guadalupe García, *Beyond the Walled City. Colonial Exclusion in Havana* (University of California Press, 2016).

¹² Cindy Ermus, *Urban Disasters* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).

in which the marginalization of groups was reinforced,¹³ and they have often been the frame of works approaching urban spaces. Antonio Carbone argues that these phenomena exacerbate social tensions present in cities beyond epidemic events,¹⁴ such as processes of “otherization” that have been identified by authors in urban contexts.¹⁵

Regarding Manila, works focusing on long-term social developments as well as the city’s modernization have been published in recent decades. Daniel Doeppers approaches the question of supplying food to the city between 1850 and 1945, considering the intense social changes and crises that erupted over this period.¹⁶ Richard Chu and Jely Galang have respectively dealt with different questions surrounding the Chinese communities of Manila during the Spanish and American periods.¹⁷ Works on the city’s colonial press have focused on the development of national identities,¹⁸ while approaches to representations of the city have focused on American and British representations.¹⁹

Doing a synthesis of these different scholarly currents and analysing issues of *La Oceanía Española* published between June and September of 1882, I will argue that Manila was represented as a hybrid space between idealized European modernity and Asian tradition.

¹³ Stephanie Anne Boyle, “Cholera, Colonialism, and Pilgrimage: Exploring Global/Local Exchange in the Central Egyptian Delta, 1848–1907,” *Journal of World History* 26, no. 3 (2015): 581-604; Valeska Huber, “Pandemics and the politics of difference: rewriting the history of internationalism through nineteenth-century cholera,” *Journal of Global History* 15, no. 3 (2020): 394-407.

¹⁴ Antonio Carbone, *Epidemic Cities* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

¹⁵ Lucia Carminati, “An Unhappy Happy Port: Fin-de-siècle Port Said and Its Connections and Disconnections of Water and Iron,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 54, no. 4 (2022): 731-739; Lucia Carminati, “Dividing and Ruling a Mediterranean Port-City The Many Boundaries Within Late 19th century Port Said,” in *Controversial Heritage and Divided Memories from the Nineteenth Through the Twentieth Centuries*, eds. Marco Folin, Heleni Porfyriou (Routledge, 2020); Maurizio Marinelli, “Making concessions in Tianjin: heterotopia and Italian colonialism in mainland China,” *Urban History* 36, no. 3 (2009): 399-425.

¹⁶ Daniel F. Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2016).

¹⁷ Genevieve Alva Clutario, *Beauty Regimes A History of Power and Modern Empire in the Philippines, 1898–1941* (Duke University Press, 2023); Richard Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila. Family, Identity, and Culture, 1860s-1930s* (Brill, 2010); Nicole CuUnjieng Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation, A Global Intellectual History of the Philippine Revolution, 1887–1912* (Columbia University Press, 2020); Jely A. Galang, “Living Carriers in the East: Chinese *Cargadores* in Nineteenth-Century Manila,” *Philippine Studies* 69, no. 1 (2021): 71-108; Jely A. Galang, “Los Chinos *Macanistas*: The Cantonese Chinese in the Spanish Philippines, 1778–1898,” *Chinese Studies Journal* 16 (2022): 40-70.

¹⁸ Greg Bankoff, “Letters to the editor: reporting disasters and creating identity in the late nineteenth century Philippines,” *South East Asia Research* 31, no. 3 (2023): 450-466.

¹⁹ Tom Sykes, *Imagining Manila: Literature, Empire, and Orientalism* (Bloomsbury, 2021).

Determined by notions of cultural superiority, the hybrid character of the city in these representations legitimized the Spanish colonial presence and the order imposed by it while marginalizing and concealing actors and practices that did not fit into the essentialised and dichotomic imagination of the city. Following imperial logics, the modern ideal was highlighted through representations of steam mobility, effective sanitary policy, and imperial hierarchies governing the city. Looking at the margins and considering what was concealed in these representations helps us further understand the complex logics and the granularity of Manila as an Asian colonial port city.

The thesis offers a focused urban perspective on the historiography of the Spanish Empire and the Philippines on the one hand and offers a view into the world of nineteenth-century urban (colonial) modernity in Asia. In doing this, it will provide a new perspective into Manila's history by focusing on the city's representations by the colonial press. Furthermore, this study will contribute to broader global and urban historiography by approaching a decentral space within a peripheral empire. Through this, the thesis aims to address the neglect of decentrality, highlighting the consequences of nineteenth-century globalization in Manila. Considering Spain, a minor imperial actor, and its imperial representations and ideologies will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of modernization discourses as complex imperial tools built on the premise of cultural superiority, as well as to an understanding of empire as a localized phenomenon manifesting itself through an interplay between local context and global points of reference.

The following chapter consists of a methodological reflection that defines the spatial and temporal delimitations of the thesis while considering the question of the digital archive as a base of this work's analysis. Chapter III provides further contextualization for the thesis, discussing transformations of the Spanish Empire and the Spanish Philippines through the nineteenth century as the stage in which the cholera outbreak of 1882 took place. Chapters IV

to VI deal with the central questions of this thesis. Chapter IV zooms into Manila as a port city, showing the discourses of connection that the colonial elite developed around it while highlighting the complexities of mobility around the city's port. Chapter V discusses Manila as a hybrid city, showing the coexistence of modernizing and orientalisng discourses and how contradictions were integrated into urban representations. Chapter VI approaches Manila as a place of hierarchy, showing how colonial elites reproduced hierarchical idealizations of the city while concealing transgressions to these ideals on representations. In the conclusion, the main arguments of the thesis are brought together and reflected on in relation to this work's methodology and their relevance to broader scholarship.

II. Cityscapes. The Epidemic City and Digitized Newspapers

This chapter touches on methodological concerns. On the one hand, it will address the framing and approach of the source analysis, considering the spatial and temporal delimitations of the thesis through the epidemic city, as well as the relationship between the periodical press and the imaginations of the city. Secondly, the following will also discuss the question of the digital archive, its relevance for this work, and the implications of its use on the development of arguments and drawing of conclusions, keeping in mind the different contexts of the sources' creation, preservation, and digitization. Thinking these questions in relation to *La Oceanía Española* will be the base for the next chapters.

La Oceanía Española was a Spanish daily newspaper published in Manila between 1877 and 1898. The newspaper was started by José Felipe del Pan. Of Galician origin, del Pan arrived in the Philippines around 1850 to work as a civil officer of the colonial administration and stayed in the archipelago until his death in 1891. In his later years, he worked as an editor in two of Manila's newspapers, the *Diario de Manila* and the *Revista de Filipinas*, before he started *La Oceanía Española* in 1877.²⁰ The newspaper's tone was generally supportive and uncritical of the colonial administration and rather conservative, immersed often in polemics with the liberal newspaper *El Comercio*.²¹ As María Dolores Elizalde argues regarding the colonial administration in the Philippines, usual divisions along ideological lines such as conservative and liberal are often ineffective in the understanding of colonial policy in the Philippines during the nineteenth century, with conservative officials and governors often supporting reform and modernization policies in the archipelago.²² As this work will show, this

²⁰ See María Dolores Elizalde, "Beyond Racial Divisions: Bridges and Intersections in the Spanish Colonial Philippines," *Philippine Studies* 67, no. 3-4 (2019): 366; Bankoff, "Letters to the editor," 452.

²¹ See Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*, 75-90.

²² María Dolores Elizalde, "Filipinas en el marco del Imperio Español en el siglo XIX," *Estudis. Revista de Historia Moderna* 45 (2019): 103.

was also the case for the periodical press, as the conservative *La Oceanía Española* proved to be a strong proponent of reform policies for the perpetuation of the colonial state.

The daily issues of the newspaper measured 66 cm times 50 cm and consisted of four pages. The front page was headed by the newspaper's title, followed by a short section of notices and publicity for steamship and post services. In the main section of the front page, information provided by different offices of Manila's administration was printed and then followed by the main articles of the day, which varied from opinions, to reprints of messages from the colonial administration, or on some occasions reprints from European newspapers. The articles on the second page were similar in their content to those on the first page, while the third page consisted of shorter notes and articles touching on various topics. The fourth and last page was always reserved for advertisements of commodities and services offered in Manila and the Philippines at large.

The daily publications of *La Oceanía Española* included representations of Manila that (re)produced specific imaginations of the city. Lila Caimari points to the central role of the modern press in the city as a medium to "produce hierarchical and complex senses of place," developing specific urban identities, cityscapes, and ways of imagining the city, through this process. Caimari argues that nineteenth-century newspapers helped to develop these cityscapes through the information they printed, considering how the curating, reproduction, and consumption of information influenced the imagination of the city's positionality.²³ Building on this, *La Oceanía Española* may be considered to highlight key themes and narratives reproduced by the newspaper that contributed in this way to the development of a colonial cityscape of Manila.

²³ Caimari, *Cities and News*, 2-6.

The city and the epidemic represent, as Antonio Carbone argues, a fruitful tempo-spatial object of analysis. Elaborating on this, Carbone approaches the epidemic as an open-ended moment that causes political stress and causes different, and possibly at first sight unrelated, long-term phenomena to become visible. In this way, epidemics, as moments of social crisis, may reveal the social mechanisms existing in a society, as well as the frictions that may exist within them. Due to this, Carbone points to Charles Rosenberg's characterization of the epidemic as "an extraordinarily fruitful sampling device." The city, as a space of dense social interaction, of political and economic power concentration and decision-making, as well as a place in which global entanglements can be observed on a limited and manageable special scale, together with the friction and problems that existed in them, is thus defined by Carbone as optimal space in which the epidemic can be used as a 'sampling device' to analyse a wide range of social phenomena taking place.²⁴

Looking at the cityscape reproduced by *La Oceanía Española* during the cholera epidemic of 1882 can highlight anxieties, themes, and processes that, while expressed more intensely during the epidemic, transcended this phenomenon. Ann Laura Stoler argues that the colonial archive is insightful not only when read against the grain, but also along it to understand the logics prevalent in colonial administrations.²⁵ *La Oceanía Española* counted with a team of around sixteen writers.²⁶ The articles they wrote were opinions, reports, reprints, and included letters remitted by their readership. Furthermore, when writing about the provinces, the newspaper counted on a network of people who lived in the different parts of the archipelago and worked with the newspaper as a sideline activity, sending letters to the editors when relevant.²⁷ While Elizalde points to the fact that the composition of editorials

²⁴ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 1-3.

²⁵ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain. Epistemic Anxiety and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton University Press, 2008) 1-3.

²⁶ "Tolerancia," *La Oceanía Española*, September 12, 1882.

²⁷ Bankoff, "Letters to the editor," 455-458.

might not have been ethnically homogenous,²⁸ these were without a doubt composed by male members of literate social and cultural elites of the capital.²⁹ Considering Stoler's arguments and the positionality of the newspaper's writers, it is possible to read *La Oceanía Española* along the colonial grain, understanding how and why the Manila was imagined, as well as understanding the logics behind the marginalization and concealment of certain aspects in the representations of the city.

When thinking about marginalization in these representations, it is important to acknowledge and reflect on the question of source availability, and in this case, on the digital archive. Heidi Tworek writes that digital archives are "trapped in a double politics of past and present."³⁰ The issues of *La Oceanía Española* analysed in this work were accessed through the Digital Newspaper Library of the Hispanic Digital Library, a digitization project of the National Library of Spain that started in 2008 and was cofounded by the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Tourism, and by Telefónica, a Spanish telecommunications company with a strong presence in Latin America.³¹ Within its mission, the Digital Library presents four points. First, the preservation of Spanish cultural heritage; second, the contribution to a European digital library; third, the fomentation of research on Spanish culture on a global level; fourth, the fomentation of cooperation with Latin American Countries.³²

²⁸ Elizalde, "Beyond Racial Divisions," 452.

²⁹ For works highlighting diverse modern urban experiences and gender in Asia see Clutario, *Beauty Regimes*; Lewis, *Cities in Motion*.

³⁰ Heidi J. S. Tworek, "Digital History and Global Publics," in *Global Publics. Their Power and Their Limits, 1870 – 1900*, ed. Valeska Huber and Jürgen Osterhammel (Oxford University Press, 2020), 113-114; For other reflections on digital archives see Itza A. Carbajal, Michelle Caswell, "Critical Digital Archives: A Review from Archival Studies," *American Historical Review* 126, no. 3 (2021): 1102-1120; Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," *American Historical Review* 121, no. 2 (2016): 377-402.

³¹ "Biblioteca Digital Hispánica. Proceso de Digitalización en la Biblioteca Nacional de España," Web Archive, accessed October 24, 2024, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150513111711/http://www.bne.es/webdocs/-Catalogos/ProcesoDigitalizacionBNE.pdf>.

³² "Biblioteca Digital Hispánica," Biblioteca Nacional de España, accessed October 24, 2024, <https://www.bne.es/es/catalogos/biblioteca-digital-hispanica>.

The highlight of Spanish language cultural heritage in this digital archive as a sole point of identification with the former colonies points to the double politics discussed by Tworek, helping understand and further contextualize *La Oceanía Española* as a newspaper aligned with the positions of the colonial administration, while other newspapers, such as the *Diario de Manila* or *El Comercio*, were preserved less thoroughly, as well as the complete marginalization of non-Spanish newspapers, such as the *Diario Tagalo*, a Spanish-Tagalog bilingual newspaper. Thus, the use of digitized sources must be accompanied by a consciousness of the silences that were created through their preservation and digitization to avoid a reproduction of this.

La Oceanía Española offers a perspective into the colonial elite's imaginaries of Manila, while the newspaper's issues published during the cholera outbreak of 1882 may be approached to place the fear, anxieties, and developments included in the representations of the city within a broader colonial context. Reflecting on Manila's cityscapes may help understand the logics of the colonial elites in the city as well as to challenge the journal's hegemonic representations of Manila in relation to visibility, marginalization, and concealment.

III. Manila and its Nineteenth-Century Context

The history of the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire is often opaqued by the losses of the American colonies in the beginning of the century and the defeat in the Spanish-American War of 1898 that saw an end of the Spanish presence in Asia and the Caribbean. As a result, the narratives of this period often reproduce images of decline or failure to develop a proper imperial policy. Already in the 1990s, authors were revising such teleological narratives of “End of Empire,” looking at the economic continuities and transformations that took place in the remaining colonies of the empire as strategies of adaptation to the new circumstances the empire found itself in,³³ as well as looking at imperial transformation through the nineteenth century and beyond, considering the often overlooked Spanish presence in Africa that lasted well into the twentieth century.³⁴ For specialists of the Spanish Empire, the nineteenth century is a period of transformation that did not inevitably lead to the defeat of 1898.

Despite this, nineteenth century Spain and its global presence remain absent or take only a marginal position in the field of Global History. Recently, scholars have called for a further incorporation of this topic into the field. Jorge Luengo and Pol Dalmau, considering the scholarship that has been developed from national and regional perspectives, argue for further incorporating Spain’s nineteenth-century history into Global History by pointing at the connections and entanglements that resulted from two central phenomena of the nineteenth century, liberalism and empire. Considering the question of empire, these authors argue that three points facilitate the globality of empire in the Spanish case. First, the remaining colonial possessions represented a new form of the empire, but not an end. Second, the Spanish participation in processes of imperial expansion and consolidation, especially in the second

³³ E.g., Russel K. Skowronek, “End of Empire. The Spanish Philippines and Puerto Rico in the Nineteenth Centur,” *Itinerario* 21, no. 2 (1992): 33-50.

³⁴ E.g., W. G. Clarence Smith, “The Economic Dynamics of Spanish Colonialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” *Itinerario* 15, no. 1 (1991): 71-90.

half of the century, as did other European empires. Last, the complex and nuanced perspectives that may result from shining light on peripheral empires and their transformations during the nineteenth century.³⁵

In the East Asian theatre, the Spanish Empire developed a policy that had two main goals, namely the perpetuation of the colonial presence in the Philippines, and the establishment of a treaty with China to secure trading rights, as the one the British imposed on the Qing Empire after the Opium Wars, the latter goal being achieved in 1864 through the signing of the Sino-Spanish Treaty.³⁶ In the Philippines, the nineteenth century saw a period of structural transformation. Already in the late eighteenth century, the Galleon Trade was in a state of crisis. This crown monopoly had dominated the colony's economy since its establishment in the sixteenth century and focused on the exchange of American silver brought from New Spain against Asian commodities, such as silk, porcelain, and spices.

With the loss of the American possessions and the eventual end of the Galleon Trade in 1815, the colony's economy was recalibrated. Instead of an emporium for Asian goods embodied by Manila, the colonial government aimed to transform the archipelago into a cash-crop economy, starting the development of plantations of sugar, tobacco, coffee, and indigo.³⁷ In the years following, a policy of liberalization of movement was implemented. Manila, and progressively the other Philippine ports, were opened for international shipping. The intensification of commercial agriculture furthermore increased the need for workers. This too, was one of the reasons for an increase of internal and external immigration, with the number

³⁵ Jorge Luengo, and Pol Dalmau, "Writing Spanish history in the global age: connections and entanglements in the nineteenth century," *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 3 (2018): 434-437.

³⁶ David Martínez-Robles, "Los 'desheredados' de la empresa imperial: La implantación diplomática de España como potencia colonial periférica en China," *Historia Contemporánea* 57 (2018): 453-489.

³⁷ Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*, 62.

of Chinese migrants increasing especially after the signing of the Sino-Spanish Treaty in 1864.³⁸

The transformations in the Philippines were accompanied by a policy of modernization. Especially in the second half of the century, measures were implemented to improve the archipelago's infrastructure. The possibilities of transport to and within the colony were strongly supported by the government in Madrid, facilitating and financing the establishment of liners between Spain and the Philippines. The opening and modernization of Philippine ports caused shipping transports within the archipelago to increase. Furthermore, communication infrastructure was also expanded through the building of railways and the establishment of trams. Communication infrastructure also improved as a telegraphic network was established and expanded in the last decades of the century.³⁹

The modernizing reforms also touched the colony's administration. This included processes such as the establishment of professional cores in the colony, such as engineers, medics, lawyers, and teachers, the expansion of governmental responsibilities to include matters such as hygiene and sanitation in a more direct way, the reform of fiscal policy that cemented the legal racialization of the colony's population by imposing different tax rates on groups based on their racial status, as well as the civil administration. Through the implementation of these reforms, a balance had to be found between the different groups present in the colony, especially considering the Spanish elites, the Church, and the native elites. Spaniards in the Philippines attempted to protect their privileges and economic interests in the face of the reforms, while the government saw a gradual and limited inclusion of the native elites in the administration as a potential way of preventing the development of independence

³⁸ Mònica Ginés-Blasi, "A Philippine 'coolie trade': Trade and exploitation of Chinese labour in Spanish colonial Philippines, 1850–98," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51, no. 3 (2020): 457-483.

³⁹ Elizalde, "Filipinas en el marco del Imperio Español," 99-106.

sentiments, increasingly opening positions in local administration to non-Spaniards while excluding them from the higher offices. Lastly, this administrative modernization caused certain tensions between the church and the religious orders on the one side, and the colonial government on the other, as the former played an important role in the colony's history in aspects such as local governance, especially in rural areas, and education.⁴⁰

In these processes, Manila remained the economic and political centre of the Philippines, as well as its most populous city. The development of the colonial cash-crop economy led to the transformation of Manila into a manufacturing centre, as many of these crops, such as tobacco, needed to be processed before their final export. Urbanization came hand in hand with this, with the city's *arrabales*, or suburbs, seeing especially higher growth rates in their populations through immigration, with the city's population reaching over a hundred thousand inhabitants in the last decades of the century. The growth was especially intense in the *arrabales* on the right side of the Pasig River such as Binondo, while population growth in the suburbs on the South bank and of Intramuros was slower.⁴¹

It was in this context that the cholera outbreak this work focuses on took place. Cholera is a bacterial disease that may be contracted orally through contact with faecal matter, this happening often through mediums such as contaminated water and food. Endemic in Bengal, the disease caused seven pandemics since the nineteenth century, with the first one taking place between 1817 and 1824, and the seventh one beginning in 1961 and continuing until today. Cholera represented a considerable threat in the nineteenth-century imaginary not only because of the high mortality rates it had on the infected, but also because of the cultural and economic aspects associated with it. The disease was perceived as an Oriental threat to Europeans, linking

⁴⁰ Elizalde, "Filipinas en el marco del Imperio Español," 105-114; Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*, 68-73.

⁴¹ Francis A. Gealogo, "People Nineteenth-Century Population History of Four Manila 'Arrabales' Using the 'Planes de Almas,'" *Philippine Studies* 59, no. 3 (2011): 400-407; Daniel F. Doeppers, "The Development of Philippine Cities Before 1900," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 4 (1972): 404-410.

it often to racialized populations in the colonized Spaces of the East. Furthermore, the diarrhoea caused by cholera, along with debilitating effects on the body, were seen by European elites as “utterly shameful, dehumanizing, and indecent,” as Carbone writes.⁴²

Secondly, cholera represented an obstacle to the imperialist and liberal order of movement and commerce imposed by the European powers, as the quick spread of the disease was facilitated by the regimes of trade and movement imposed by them in the nineteenth century and was furthermore exacerbated by the introduction of steam technology in the latter half of the century. In their anxiety to address this question, the European powers, through mechanisms of international cooperation such as the International Sanitary Conferences, implemented regimes of immobilization for stigmatized groups while allowing the movement of commercial goods and imperial agents to continue.⁴³ In the development of these mechanisms and discourses, the two leading aetiological discourses of the nineteenth century, miasmatic and bacteriological schools, played a central role, even after the isolation of the *vibrio cholerae* by Robert Koch in 1883. Thus, notions of cholera originating in bad air and filth continued to be influential until the turn of the century.⁴⁴

The disease hit the Philippines two times during the fifth cholera pandemic (1882-1896). First in the years 1882/1883 and then again in 1888/1889. In 1882, the disease first appeared in the South of the archipelago in early July and continued to spread from there to the rest of the colony, raging until January of 1883.⁴⁵ In Manila, the first cases of cholera were recognised in the middle of August, leading the governor-general and the city’s government to impose measures to stop the spread of the disease. The epidemic reached its height in early and mid-September, with cholera cases going down in the last days of that month and continuing to be

⁴² Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 23.

⁴³ Huber, “Pandemics and the Politics of Difference,” 2020; Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 25.

⁴⁴ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 16.

⁴⁵ Xavier, Huetz de Lemp, “Les Philippines face au ‘Fantôme du Gange’: Le choléra dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle,” *Annales de démographie historique* 1990, no. 1 (1990): 310-311.

low until December, when the city was declared to be free of cholera. Around five thousand people died of cholera at this time, amounting to almost five per cent of the city's population.⁴⁶ How this phenomenon was portrayed in the city's periodical press and how it affected representations of the city and highlighted processes and tensions that transcended the epidemic outbreak, will be the content of the following pages.

⁴⁶ Huetz de Lemp, "Les Philippines face au 'Fantôme du Gange,'" 317.

IV. The Port City

In the second half of the nineteenth century, various media were used in the Spanish Philippines to reproduce an imagination of Manila that legitimized the colonial project, framing the city within a context of imperial modernization. In 1887, the Spanish government organised the *Exposición de Filipinas* to showcase the progress achieved in previous decades in the colony and attract further investors.⁴⁷ The Committee for the Port of Manila presented a photograph album at the Exposition. In it, visitors saw pictures of the port-expansion project that had begun in the previous decade. These images showed heavy machinery and steam technology at work. Steamboats carrying cranes and great iron dredges working on the expansion of the piers into the ocean.⁴⁸ Marcey Kewalewski argues that media representations of port cities in which images of the waterfront, technology, power and romantic maritime culture are cultural images with an important political dimension.⁴⁹ The images show the power of steam and mechanization in service of empire at the colonies, concealing workers or leaving them on marginal positions of the imagery.

This points to themes relevant to scholarship on the history of port cities, as well as to concepts that allow a critical reflection on the representation of urban spaces and phenomena linked to it, such as critical approaches to the notion of connection as a tool of empire,⁵⁰ and as a complex dialectic phenomenon.⁵¹ Considering this, the port city may be further thought of not as a place of abstract connection, but also as a place of “mooring and slowing down,”

⁴⁷ Elizalde, “Filipinas en el marco del Imperio Español,” 100.

⁴⁸ See Junta de obras del puerto de Manila, *Exposición de Filipinas. 1887. Obras del Puerto de Manila* (1887), Biblioteca Nacional de España. <http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000099634>; For works on the development of photography in the colonial Philippines see Osa Blas Sierra de la Calle, “La fotografía en Filipinas 1845-1898,” *Archivo Agustiniiano* 106, no. 224 (2022): 247-440; Juan Guardiola, *El imaginario colonial. Fotografía en Filipinas durante el periodo español 1860-1898* (National Museum of Filipino People, 2006).

⁴⁹ Maciej Kewalewski, “Images and Spaces of Port cities in Transition,” *Space and Culture* 24, no. 1 (2021): 54-56.

⁵⁰ Sujit Sivasundaram, “Towards a Critical History of Connection,” 347-352.

⁵¹ Wenzlhuemer *et al.*, “Forum Global Dis:connections,” 4.

pointing to the complexity that encompasses the port city as an urban space,⁵² as well as to the different forms of mobility that coexisted in one space and the logics that ruled them.⁵³

It was not only through photography that such narratives were reproduced, but also through the city's periodical press and their text representations, which took a more constant role in the day-to-day life of certain groups in Manila and contributed to the development of cityscapes. This chapter will show that *La Oceanía Española* represented Manila as a place of global connection, trade, and communication facilitated by steam technology, highlighting the appropriation and reproduction of imperial narratives in the periodical press. Having first shown this and considering the effects of the cholera outbreak on the representations of *La Oceanía Española*, the chapter will further provide a more nuanced understanding of the port city. First, showing how technology and empire caused dynamics that facilitated not only connection, but also disconnection. Second, showing the port city as a place of complex mobilities, slow down, and stop, not necessarily characterized by mechanization and technology, but also by human agency, confusion, and anxiety. And third, pointing to the role of global hierarchies and imperial ideologies in the marginalization and concealment of specific mobile actors and forms of mobility, while the epidemic crisis, the reaction to it, and the anxieties awakened by it placed some of these marginalized mobilities closer to the centre of the newspaper's representation.

Colonial Narratives of Connection

Media representations were part of empire's toolbox for the reproduction of imperial narratives. Discussing the production of images of colonial Colombo, Sujit Sivasundaram argues that the imaginary of this port city was produced within the context of imperial politics in interplay with the interests of capitalists and the development of new technologies. The port was

⁵² Heerten, "Mooring Mobilities, Fixing Flows," 353-362.

⁵³ Huber, *Channeling Mobilities*, 3-7; Huber, "Multiple Mobilities," 763-764.

represented as a site of empire, pushing the idea of a global empire made possible through technological connection and reflecting an imperial order.⁵⁴ While Sivasundaram discusses the case of the British Empire, his arguments encourage us to reflect on the narratives created by other imperial powers to highlight and problematize how imperial actors imagined connected global empires and problematize their representations of them, as well as other forms of media used for this, such as text in the periodical press.

In the case of Spanish Manila and its newspapers, the city was represented as a place of connection, following trends within imperial discourse and addressing anxieties that resulted from Manila's decentral position and concerned the city's colonial elites. The representations produced by *La Oceanía Española* included information provided by different colonial authorities. This information was in turn published in a way that served the interest of the newspaper that aimed to maintain a steady readership by providing relevant information, and at the same time reproduced an imaginary of connection and modernization. This representation of Manila as a connected port city ultimately shows the interplay between the colonial state and non-state actors in the promotion of imperial ideologies and imaginaries.

The editors of *La Oceanía Española* placed notions of connection and mobility at the centre of their representations of Manila. Every issue of the newspaper would be headlined with notices of steamships scheduled to depart the port and included information regarding their itineraries, available space in the ships, and contact persons to arrange travel or transport. These notices of ships were made not only prominent by being located on the headline of the daily issues, but they were further highlighted using small images and a bigger font for the names of the ships. Considering the physical size of the issues, as well as the small font which

⁵⁴ Sivasundaram, "Towards a Critical History of Connection," 347-352.

was used to fill its pages one might assume that the eyes of a reader would automatically jump to this section of the first page when picking up the newspaper



Figure 1. Frontpage of *La Oceanía Española*. (*La Oceanía Española*, June 24, 1882, Biblioteca Nacional de España, <https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/hd/es/viewer?id=dd14ce6f-07f7-4ec5-aae1-55ddc5f9058c>).

Communication with the rest of the world was not only represented through depictions of ships, but also through the notions of moving information. Notices and news surrounding postal communication accompanied the information about ships at the top of the newspaper's first page. Looking further down to the information the newspaper presented before the headline article, more detailed information was provided by the colony's General Communications Inspection (*Inspección general de Comunicaciones*) regarding post

shipments. For example, on the twentieth of June 1882, *La Ocenía Española* informed that the steamship Magallanes would be leaving Manila on the morning of July the first, further announcing that it would be possible for “certified correspondence” (meaning officially registered correspondence) to be processed at the Postal Service until midnight of June the thirtieth, and that the city’s post boxes for normal correspondence would be collected at that time as well, while the personal hand-off of uncertified correspondence would be available between six and seven on the morning the Magallanes was scheduled to depart.⁵⁵

While also serving a practical purpose, this information was prioritized over other publicity done for services and goods provided in Manila. Caíta Miriam Costa and Olivia Pestana point to the tension between the need of the periodical press to be profitable while maintaining the attention of their readership and argue that the economic logics particular to port cities were essential in the development of the press in port cities such as Lisbon and Porto.⁵⁶ The readership of *La Oceanía Española*, members of the colonial elites, would be interested in the steamship itineraries and possibilities for postal communication. The newspaper’s editors could attract a stable readership by readily providing information regarding this. One can still point to the influence of broader imperial and colonial trends in the decision to place this information at the headline of the newspaper, as notices for most professional services and goods, such as medicines, that would also be of interest to the readership were placed in the newspaper’s last page. The first-page position of the port’s information may be then understood in part as following the colonial trend and goal to modernize, setting themes of communication and mobility as a priority.

⁵⁵ “Agenda,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 20, 1882.

⁵⁶ Cátia Miriam Costa, Olivia Pestana, “Periodical press and port cities: Creation of knowledge, representations and networks,” *Portuguese Journal of social Sciences* 19, no. 1 (2020): 4-5.

Information printed on the front page of the journal further shows how the editors imagined Manila in relation to the world. For this, both the telegraph and steam mobility were crucial.⁵⁷ On irregular intervals, steamships arriving at Manila would bring European newspapers with them. In these cases, the first two pages of *La Oceanía Española* would be dedicated to the news brought by these ships, selecting “the most interesting national and international news” to be presented.⁵⁸ The main section here would be dedicated to the Iberian Peninsula and a second section would deal with the “rest” of the world, namely the Great Powers of Europe and the United States. In her work on the press and the port city of Buenos Aires, Caimari points to the focus of the city’s press on Europe and the developments there as a continuity of imperial practices of communication which led to a long-term orientation towards Western Europe in the way the city imagined itself in relation to the world.⁵⁹ The case of Manila shows that imperial power and global logic influenced the reference points that Manila’s inhabitants had regarding their position in the world. It was the Iberian Peninsula and the great empires of the late nineteenth century which were discussed in *La Oceanía Española* and considered newsworthy.

An exception regarding this is the coverage of the Anglo-Egyptian War which took place parallel to the spread of cholera in Southeast Asia and was incorporated by *La Oceanía Española* through telegraphic news from the Reuters agency in its issues.⁶⁰ In these cases, similarly to the publication of European news, reports received through the telegraph were placed on the newspaper’s front page. The frontpages of June 6 and 10 show the Reuters’ telegrams reporting on the heating of the situation around Egypt and the role played by the

⁵⁷ See On Barak, *Powering Empire: how coal made the Middle East and sparked global carbonization* (University of California Press, 2020); James L. Gelvin, Nile Greene, eds., *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (University of California Press, 2014).

⁵⁸ “Correo Exterior,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 20, 1882.

⁵⁹ Caimari, *Cities and News*, 9.

⁶⁰ On the development of international news agencies see: Caimari, *Cities and News*, 1-14.

European powers in this situation.⁶¹ This focus on the developments of a theatre outside Europe might be understood by highlighting not only the importance of Egypt, but of the Suez Canal for the European imagination in the late nineteenth century. As Huber writes, the Canal was seen as a space not only connecting shipping lanes, but also as a barrier between the East and the West, being an important filter to protect Europe as well as a tool used by empires for the maintenance of their colonial possessions.⁶² Thus contextualizing the interest of the Manila press in this conflict, and considering the attention given to further news coming from Europe, highlights how the Manila press located the city in a global imaginary which revolved around the Spain and the Western empires.

The stressing of connection and technology can be situated within an imperial push to strengthen its position in colonial contexts and further promote a specific imaginary of global empire, as Sivasundaram has argued.⁶³ Within imperial discourses, as Kewalewski posits, the port city may also be seen as a “symbol of ruling over land and sea” as much as a symbol of economic prosperity and exchanges.⁶⁴ This may be further considered with Eric Tagliacozzo’s arguments regarding the transformation of the South China Sea region in the late nineteenth century through the introduction of monsoon-independent mobility and the increasing push by colonial empires for the politization of this sea as imperial space.⁶⁵ Thus, representations of Manila as a place of connection may be located within a global, regional and local context of attempts at imperial consolidation.

⁶¹ “Telegramas de Reuter,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 6, 1882; “Telegramas de Reuter,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 10, 1882.

⁶² Huber, *Channeling Mobilities*, 15-20.

⁶³ Sivasundaram, “Towards a Critical History of Connection,” 351-352.

⁶⁴ Kewalewski, “Images and Spaces of Port cities in Transition,” 55.

⁶⁵ Eric Tagliacozzo, “The South China Sea,” in *Oceanic Histories*, eds. David Armitage, Alison Bashford and Sujit Sivasundaram (Cambridge University Press, 2017), 113-115.

Dis:connecting Manila

The connective elements that the editors of *La Oceanía Española* placed on prominent spaces of the journal contributed also to more complex phenomena at the city's port. Global historians have recently argued for a broadening of perspectives by thinking about *dis:connection*, aiming to understand the "mutual constitution of connective and disconnective elements" without privileging either of them, but rather focusing "on their turbulent interplay, which becomes the decisive factor in grasping the social force of globalization."⁶⁶ Despite their often romanticised representations, the nineteenth-century port city also confronted contemporaries with dangers such as disease,⁶⁷ and Manila was no exception to this.

The spread of cholera during the summer of 1882 made the *dis:connective* nature of nineteenth-century globalization palpable in the representations of *La Oceanía Española*. The communication technologies that allowed the city to be represented as part of global or imperial imaginaries informed now of danger and shut down. The image of the city's port as a place that facilitated the movement of people, goods and information received a dent of anxiety and fear, while the *dis:connective* effects of empire and its agents became more visible.

The experience of negative aspects of globalization was a constant of life in port cities of the late nineteenth century.⁶⁸ Even if this did not take a prominent position in representations produced in "normal" times, anxieties and fears potentially related to the port were still peripherally present in the representations of the city. The pages of *La Oceanía Española* often contained reports from other regions of the Philippines. These reports contained information

⁶⁶ Wenzlhuemer *et al.*, "Forum Global Dis:connections," 4.

⁶⁷ Myron Echenberg, *Plague Ports. The Global Urban Impact of Bubonic Plague, 1894–1901* (New York University Press, 2007), xii.

⁶⁸ Echenberg, *Plague Ports*, xii.

regarding military and political developments in the provinces or at the frontier, such as Jolo.⁶⁹ The articles also constantly informed about the sanitary situation in these regions, reporting, e.g., on the twenty-second of June about the establishment of a military hospital in Jolo after the sanitary deterioration on the island.⁷⁰ This shows how the newspaper set Manila in relation to smaller ports in the archipelago, highlighting the commercial, political, and military relation to these places while considering the potential dangers that resulted from this, and addressing anxieties linked to ports and mobilities through regular monitoring.

These anxieties took a more prominent position in the newspaper as news of cholera outbreaks in Southeast Asia arrived in Manila. On the thirteenth of June 1882, the first report of cholera appeared in *La Oceanía Española*. In a reprint from the *Gaceta Oficial*, a daily publication of the colonial administration, it was informed about the outbreak of cholera in Batavia. This report caused concerns regarding maritime mobility in the South China Sea area.⁷¹ In the following weeks, reports about the spread of cholera in the region continued to appear in the newspaper. These reports gave the impression of the cholera island hopping from Java to Luzon, with the disease being documented in the Southern ports of the Philippines and moving North along shipping routes, from Jolo to Zamboanga and approaching Manila.⁷² In this way, news arriving via telegraph and through steamships helped shift the newspaper's focus on modernity and technology to one of potential sanitary crisis.

On the twenty-first of August, over two months after the initial cholera reports, Manila was declared a "dirty port." This brought a new dynamic to the news presented by *La Oceanía Española*. From this date on, reports about the closing of Philippine and foreign ports to ships

⁶⁹ Jolo was part of the Sultanate of Sulu and was claimed by the Spanish Empire in the late-nineteenth century. See James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State, 1768-1898* (Singapore University Press, 1981).

⁷⁰ "Ecos de Joló," *La Oceanía Española*, June 22, 1882.

⁷¹ "(Gaceta de ayer) Gobierno general de Filipinas," *La Oceanía Española*, June 13, 1882.

⁷² See "Ecos de Joló," *La Oceanía Española*, June 20, 1882.

coming from Manila appeared along news of further spread of the disease.⁷³ On the thirty-first of August, it was reported that Pangasinan, a region in the northwest of Luzon, would close its ports and waters to ships from Manila. On the same day, it was reported that the colonial administration of Macao would also restrict the movement to all ships arriving from Manila.⁷⁴ These examples point to the effects increased communication had on the region's ports.

The introduction of telegraphic and steam technologies intensified communication in the region and facilitated *dis:connective* phenomena. Tworek discusses the nuance of *dis:connection* by reflecting on the epidemic crisis and the relevance of communication technologies in these situations as *dis:connectors*.⁷⁵ The reports provided by *La Oceanía Española* can be observed so, as back-and-forth communication between different cities becomes more visible during the epidemic. The newspaper's readership was aware of the disease's spread through the quick travelling news made available by telegraphs and steamships, awakening anxieties regarding the possibility of moving within the region. On the other hand, these readers also received news of their own mobility being limited by authorities in other port cities, as news of the outbreak in Manila spread. The acceleration and transformation of news described by Caimari as a result of the telegraph's introduction, as well as the use of these news as a tool of state power,⁷⁶ proves to also be a factor of insecurity and disconnection in the regional context of the South China Sea.

In this context, the journal's editors portrayed the port not only as a space of positive connection, but through which cholera could enter the city, as much of the attention of the newspaper's treating of cholera's spread focused on the port and seabound mobility.⁷⁷ On the tenth of September, during the height of the outbreak in Manila, an article discussing the

⁷³ "Gaceta de Ayer," *La Oceanía Española*, August 23, 1882.

⁷⁴ "Cuarentena," *La Oceanía Española*, August 31, 1882.

⁷⁵ Wenzlhuemer *et al.*, "Forum Global Dis:connections," 13.

⁷⁶ Caimari, *Cities and News*, 13-14.

⁷⁷ See "(Gaceta de ayer) Gobierno general de Filipinas," *La Oceanía Española*, June 13, 1882.

geographic origins of cholera and its spread trajectory was published. The article described the origins of the disease around the Ganges, the article describes its spread along seafaring routes to China and Southeast Asia, pointing directly at the route the disease had taken in previous outbreaks during the 1860's and 1870's, through Sumatra, Java, the Moluccas, and Jolo into the Philippine archipelago.⁷⁸ In the colonial imaginary of Manila, cholera showed two geographic characteristics, first, an intrinsic link to Asia, which will be further discussed in the next chapter, and second a direct relation to the sea and a perpetuation of anxieties regarding seabound mobilities.⁷⁹ Steam-powered travel not only brought independence from the monsoon to the South China Sea, but also brought intensified risks and fears of contagion between the region's ports.

Both the port and the ocean represented two porous boundaries for Manila, imbued with positive and negative meanings. Joshua Ehrlich approaches the question of the boundary of the colonial port city, pointing to the importance of symbolic meanings given to them as well as the power these symbols could have in the development of the port city.⁸⁰ As the usual focus on the connective character of the city's maritime boundary was displaced by the cholera epidemic, the colonial state applied mechanisms to address the porous nature of this boundary. Already on the thirteenth of June, as news of cholera came from Batavia, the colonial administration reacting by imposing quarantines on ships coming from South China and from ports South of the Philippines.⁸¹ On the twenty-second of June, a cordon sanitaire was established around Jolo on the South of the archipelago, and later on, on the fourteenth of July,

⁷⁸ "La marcha del cólera," *La Oceanía Española*, September 10, 1882.

⁷⁹ Huber, "Pandemics and the politics of difference," 397-398.

⁸⁰ Joshua Ehrlich, "The Meanings of a Port City Boundary: Calcutta's Maratha Ditch, c.1700–1950," *Past & Present* 257, no1 (2022): 19.

⁸¹ "(Gaceta de ayer) Gobierno general de Filipinas," *La Oceanía Española*, June 13, 1882.

a further cordon sanitaire was established around Manila.⁸² These immobilizing measures were the first reaction of the colonial administration in addressing the city's maritime boundary.

While addressing fears of epidemic spread, contemporaries saw quarantines and the cordon sanitaire negatively, as they impeded mobility and could work against the interest of empire and capital. As Huber argues, the sanitary conferences of the nineteenth century aimed to address this topic through the prioritization of certain forms of mobility and the marginalization of specific groups of people.⁸³ These logics were followed by the colonial administration in the Philippines as well. The articles published by *La Oceanía Española* concerning the imposition of quarantines also stated that ships counting with certificates of hygiene provided by accredited Spanish consuls would be exempt from these measures.⁸⁴ This shows the intention of the colonial administration to maintain commercial traffic towards Manila, making imperial officers responsible for the provision of documentation that would facilitate mobility. The global imperial network of which Manila was a part of, served thus to facilitate and impede mobilities along the lines of political and economic interests, this being highlighted during the cholera epidemic.

Mobilities around the Port

The introduction of measures to prevent the spread of cholera to and from the port of Manila highlight the complex processes that went hand in hand with seabound mobilities during the late-nineteenth century and beyond. Heerten argues for an approach to port cities not as places of seamless mobility but rather of mooring and slow down, while stating the importance of considering the labour without which the port city would not exist, taking into account the tension between connection and disconnection discussed in the previous section, and zooming

⁸² "Ecos de Joló," *La Oceanía Española*, June 22, 1882; "Disposiciones sanitarias," *La Oceanía Española*, July 14, 1882.

⁸³ Huber, "Pandemics and the politics of difference," 397-400.

⁸⁴ "(Gaceta de ayer) Gobierno general de Filipinas," *La Oceanía Española*, June 13, 1882.

into the process that resulted from it.⁸⁵ While the representations of *La Oceanía Española* prioritize an image of connection, looking thoroughly into the journal reveals a picture of stopping mobilities and mooring. This also shows the way in which human agency played a determining role in shaping these processes, considering the question of decision making, physical capability, error, and confusion, thus helping to develop a nuanced understanding of life surrounding port cities.

As cholera spread in the Southeast Asian region and then raged in the Philippines in the period of June to October of 1882, *La Oceanía Española* continued to print information regarding movements around the city's port. The newspaper provided lists with the arriving and departing ships and information about their origin and destination, as well as regarding the type of ship, e.g., steamships, and a wide arrange of sailing ships, such as the *lorchas* that were characteristic to the region and to the Western imaginary of Asia, *casco* barges (characteristic of the Philippine archipelago), or brigantines. Information about the departure of sailing ships was not provided. This was usually followed by a section listing reports of the Customs Office about imported and exported goods, providing information about the type of goods and quantities (usually in kilograms). This provided the readers with daily insights into the movements around the city's port.

Observing this information over said period and considering the possible effects of the epidemic on mobilities around Manila's port provides insights into the city's positionality and invites further reflection on the prominent position of this information on the newspaper. The considered period is further divided into three stages. First, the time before the cholera outbreak in the city on the twenty-first of August. Second, the height of the epidemic from its beginning until the twentieth of September. And third, the time from late September until the end of

⁸⁵ Heerten, "Mooring Mobilities," 352-353, 362.

October 1882, allowing an observation of possible changes during this time. Furthermore, average and median values will be considered for each of the periods. The average will allow consideration of the daily distribution of values through each period on total numbers, while median values provide further nuance by highlighting the uneven distribution of values through each period, showing typical values for each of these, and giving balance to the effect that outlying data have on the average. The analysis of these values over the mentioned months of 1882 will allow an understanding of trends that developed around Manila's port at the time.

Incoming Ships, June - October 1882				
Category	Total	June – Aug.	Aug. – Sept.	Sept. – Oct.
Total Median	2	2	2	1
Total Average	2,048544	2,415094	1,913043	1,444444
Overseas Median	1	1	0	0
Overseas Average	0,932039	1,056604	0,826087	0,777778
Local Steamship Median	1	1	1	1
Local Steamship Average	1,262136	1,528302	1,173913	0,814815
Sailing Ship Median	2	4	2	1
Sailing Ship Average	3,553398	4,811321	3,043478	1,518519

Table 1. Incoming Ships, June - October 1882. By author.

Sources, *La Oceanía Española*, June 1882-October 1882, Hemeroteca Digital, National Library of Spain.

Over the observed months, the number of steamships arriving in the city decreased marginally while the number of sailing ships decreased more noticeably (Table 1). The average and median value of steamships arriving at Manila slowly declined from two to one over the observed time. Observed separately, steamships arriving from outside the Philippines declined in average and median values from one during the period before the outbreak to average values below one and a median of zero during the following two periods while, the number of Philippine steamships was not much higher, the decline of their arrivals was however weaker, as the median value of these steamships remains on one over the three periods and the average only dropped below one during the last one. On the other hand, sailing ships saw a stronger decline in their arriving numbers, starting with an average of almost five and a median of four and dropping to a value of one after the height of the outbreak in Manila. While the epidemic's

effects on the steamship movement were marginal, the stronger effects of the epidemic were seen on the movement of sailing ships.

As in the case of arrivals, changes in the small number of steamships leaving the city were marginal. (Table 2). The median and average values before the outbreak in Manila are of two and around two steamships respectively and decline to one in the following stages. Steamships departing for Philippine ports decline from one to a median of zero and an average under one during the height of the outbreak before returning to one in both values from late September on, while the number of steamships departing for overseas ports remains steadily in a median of zero and an average under one over the three stages, showing a discrepancy with the number of arriving overseas steamships that might be explained by the fragmentary nature of the datasets or a possible hesitation to depart due to the situation that reigned in the region.

Outgoing Ships, June - October 1882				
Category	Total	June – Aug.	Aug. – Sept.	Sept. – Oct.
Total Median	1	2	1	1
Total average	1,669903	1,924528	1,173913	1,592593
Overseas Median	0	0	0	0
Overseas Average	0,398058	0,415094	0,347826	0,407407
Local Steam Median	1	1	0	1
Local Steam Average	1,271845	1,509434	0,826087	1,185185

Table 2. Outgoing Ships, June - October 1882. By author.

Sources, *La Oceanía Española*, June 1882-October 1882, Hemeroteca Digital, National Library of Spain.

While steam mobility occupied a prominent position in the daily issues of *La Oceanía Española*, the observed data shows that steamship transit around Manila was low. This points to Manila's decentral position withing global and regional shipping routes, as well as to the limits in the introduction of steam technology by the colonial state despite its interest and efforts to do so. The cholera epidemic and the introduction of quarantine measures had only a marginal effect on this already low transit. While sailing ships arrived at the city in higher numbers, these were not represented as prominently, being also excluded from the departure statistics. The discrepancy between the attention given to steamships and the actual movements

of these at Manila's port points to the interest of the colonial elite in introducing this technology while sailing ships that did not fit into their notion of modernity continued to play a crucial role in the colony.

Regarding the movement of goods at the city's port provided by the customs authority and published daily by *La Oceanía Española*, the effects of the epidemic are noticeable in the exports. The mass of exported goods declined during the five months observed, falling to around half of its average value in September and October compared to the value from before the start of the epidemic in Manila (Table 3). Concerning the mass of imported goods, the amount of it decreased slightly after the appearance of cholera in Manila and saw an increase in the period after the height of the epidemic to amounts higher than those from before the twenty-first of August.

Exports, June-October 1882 (kg)				
Category	Total	June – Aug.	Aug. – Sept.	Sept. – Oct.
Export Median	210426	384939	233137	113383
Export Average	622585,6	770488,1	464239,1	359845,7
Tobacco Export Median	1187,375	402,5	1882,895	2054,36
Tobacco Export Average	1425,253	1055,853	1566,53	2371,99

Table 3. Exports from Manila, June-October 1882. By author.

Sources, *La Oceanía Española*, June 1882-October 1882, Hemeroteca Digital, National Library of Spain.

The decrease in the exports from the city might be related to the interruption of mobilities from the rest of the colony to Manila. Even after the liberalization of movement in the archipelago and the progressive opening of its ports to international ships, Manila continued to be the main point of entry and exit for goods into the Philippines.⁸⁶ Interestingly, the amount of tobacco being exported did not follow the downward trend of exports (Table 3). The tobacco planted in the Philippines was mainly processed in Manila, with this being an important part of the city's economy,⁸⁷ supporting the notion that the slowdown of exports was linked to the

⁸⁶ Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War*, 786-788.

⁸⁷ Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War*, 786-788.

slowdown of movement from the rest of the archipelago and into Manila, while commodities produced in Manila continued to be exported. The position of Manila as a bottleneck-like in-between place⁸⁸ for the Philippines is clear when considering the slow down and disconnection caused by cholera.

The mass of imported goods decreased slightly after the appearance of cholera in Manila and saw an increase in the period after the height of the epidemic to amounts higher than those from before the twenty-first of August (Table 4). The slowdown and following increase of registered goods may point to the stress caused by measures taken against the epidemic on the city's port, such as quarantines and controls of ships and cargoes, highlighting the central role of human action in this phenomenon and how the slowdown of mobility is intrinsically linked to this. In this case, Manila's Customs Office played a key role in filtering the city's port mobility. All goods and pieces of luggage that passed through the port had to be inspected by this authority. Already before the outbreak of cholera in the city, *La Oceanía Española* commented on the precarious situation of the Customs Office, pointing out that the office was under pressure of the commercial elites of the city and authorities, and that workers used to work extra hours every day to keep up with the material that needed to be processed.⁸⁹

Imports, June-October 1882(kg)				
Category	Mass	June – Aug.	Aug. – Sept.	Sept. – Oct.
Export Median	21466	20822	6552	39614
Export Average	39338,73	37865,58	34379,63	46919,31

Table 4. Imports to Manila, June-October 1882. By author.

Sources, *La Oceanía Española*, June 1882-October 1882, Hemeroteca Digital, National Library of Spain.

After the introduction of measures to prevent the spread of cholera into the city, the situation at the port became more hectic, as quarantined ships were unable to unload their cargoes, which could have caused an accumulation of work for the customs officials. On the

⁸⁸ See Elizabeth Sinn, "Hong Kong As an In-Between Place In The Chinese Diaspora, 1849–1939," in *Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims*, eds. Donna R. Gabaccia and Dirk Hoerder (Brill, 2011).

⁸⁹ "Dos Ramos de la administración," *La Oceanía Española*, June 28, 1882.

eighth of August, the newspaper informed that the Customs Office was authorizing the manifestoes of quarantined ships to be handed over during the quarantine, while having to wait until Customs gave the nod for the unloading to begin.⁹⁰ Furthermore, on the twenty-fifth of August, it was reported that the accumulation of steamships at the port was such that the number of smaller boats available for the unloading of cargoes was not enough to keep up with the work.⁹¹ A good illustration of the chaotic situation that developed at port and customs authorities was a further short article published on the sixth of September, describing the enormous accumulation of loading boats that crowded at the pier closest to the customs office, impeding further access to this authority and worsening the situation at the port.⁹² These developments may illustrate the slight decrease of registered imported goods presented by *La Oceanía Española* while highlighting that these developments took place because port movement depended on human interaction and was the complex result of the work of ship crews, dock workers that carried these goods,⁹³ and officials from the customs office.

On top of this came other sanitary measures introduced by the colonial administration, such as the fumigation of ships and cargoes, as well as the medical inspection of vessels and crews. On the twenty-fourth of August, *La Oceanía Española* intervened with its headline article in a polemic in which the *Diario Tagalo* accused the Port Authority of not properly conducting the fumigation of postal transports and other cargo coming to the city via ship, as had been ordered by the Governor General. This article shows the great faith that was placed on chemical fumigation for the maintenance of maritime mobility while at the same time alluding at the logistical problems this process presented for port authorities, as the author of the article points out. This would especially refer to available workers who were needed and

⁹⁰ “Buques en cuarentena,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 3, 1882.

⁹¹ “Embarcaciones menores,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 25, 1882.

⁹² Siempre lo mismo,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 6, 1882.

⁹³ Galang, “Living Carriers in the East,” 71-108.

for whom there was no ordinary budget available. The author discusses another problem related to the application of measures at the port, namely the taking of bribes by port medics.

“This is the reason why it is impossible to effectively apply the sanitation measures at the port, namely because instead of providing a public service that is paid by the state, they are making a profitable business. One that is severely disapproved of by the sanitation laws, and it may be this business serves the port medics’ pocket, but it comes at the cost of the public health interests.”⁹⁴

Quarantine and fumigation measures did not result in a hermetic and completely sanitized city, but were rather porous measures dependent on human work and vulnerable to either error or malpractice, making space for human agency in developments taking place within global contexts, such as the logics behind quarantine measures and the hopes that were put on fumigation processes to transcend the need for quarantines in the late nineteenth century, as Alan Mayne argues.⁹⁵

It was not only from the city’s perspective that the epidemic and the measures taken against it worked in complex ways. The ships and their crews experienced firsthand the slow down, disconnection, confusion, and mooring brought by cholera. This is exemplified by an article published on the fifth of September. It was reportedly written by a friend of the newspaper’s editors and consisted of a short account of a trip made by this friend on the steamship *Camiguin* to Dagupan in Northwestern Luzon. The two-day travel to the port of Sual ended with the imposition of fifteen days of quarantine. The author of the account describes the complicated communication with the port authority through a boat that approached the

⁹⁴ Francisco Capelo y Juan, *Ensayo de un libro ó Manila, la higiene y el cólera [Texto impreso]: colección de artículos publicados en el Periódico "La Oceanía Española" con el seudónimo Rui Barbo* (Tipography of the Colegio de Santo Tomas, 1883), 30-31.

⁹⁵ Alan Mayne, “Guardians at the gate: quarantine and racialism in two Pacific Rim port cities, 1870- 1914,” *Urban History* 35, no. 2 (2008): 9-14.

Camiguin after the ship had shown a white flag as a sign. The communication with the port authority and the mayor of the town was slow and confusing.

After the death of one of the ship's sailors, due to unknown reasons, the quarantine was increased to twenty days. Following this, the mayor sent a message suggesting that the *Camiguin* left for the lazaretto at Mariveles, on the Northern side of the mouth of Manila Bay, as the city did not have the means to maintain the ship through the quarantine. After that, the port captain communicated a message from the mayor ordering the ship to return to Manila. The ship's captain tried to ask permission to unload the merchandise the ship was carrying and to complete the quarantine in Sual. The captain's letters were not received at the port, as they had orders not to receive anything, not even correspondence. After asking the port captain the next day to allow them to complete the quarantine there and receiving a negative answer "it was necessary for us to turn back to the sea and return to Manila. In any case: eleven days on the sea with personal losses of considerable size."⁹⁶

People travelling to port cities in the late nineteenth century were confronted with situations that in no way reflected the narratives of connection and swift movement reproduced by empires, their agents, and their elites. These people rather encountered places of congestion and lacking communication that in times of crisis could lead to total stops, round trips, confusion, economic loss, and frustration, placing an emphasis on the role of interaction between crews, officials, and workers in mobility processes around the port city.

Highlighting and Concealing. Mobile people and ships in Manila

At Manila's port, a wide array of mobile actors and types of ships were present. The editors and writers of *La Oceanía Española* did not represent all these categories in an equal way. Valeska Huber argues that in the second half of the nineteenth century, notions of steam

⁹⁶ "Viaje redondo," *La Oceanía Española*, September 5, 1882.

mobility became integral parts of Western discourses of modernity, while older forms of mobility were stigmatized, integrated into the idea of the “traditional” that contrasted the modern.⁹⁷ Furthermore, Huber shows how these marginalized forms of mobility were also discursively linked to geographic space, such as the colonized Orient, resulting in hierarchizations of mobility manifested not only discursively, but also in how different mobilities were regulated.⁹⁸ The notion of multiple mobilities offers space to understand how different interests, ideologies, and hierarchies affected people and things on the move and the representations of these phenomena.⁹⁹

As exemplified by journal representations, the colonial elites of Manila imagined different forms of mobility, including the actors and means of transportation involved in these processes, in a hierarchical manner. *La Oceanía Española* represented mobilities that did not fit into the already discussed images of modernity only marginally and were imbued with negative characteristics. Furthermore, global and imperial hierarchies helped determine how the newspaper portrayed mobile people, as the extent to which these actors were represented, marginalized, or concealed, depended on questions such as their ethnicity and how these discourses understood them.

The sailing ships anchored at Manila’s port were characterized as dirty and unhygienic, describing the behaviour of their crews as a problematic aspect of these vessels, pointing for example to the fact that many of these ships lacked sleeping quarters and that the crews often slept on the ships’ decks.¹⁰⁰ It was not only this view of the sailing ships as unsatisfactory on the hygienic sense that contributed to them being portrayed in a negative manner by *La Oceanía Española*. The Port Authority also had more difficulties in coping with the number of the ships

⁹⁷ Huber, *Channeling Mobilities*, 3-7.

⁹⁸ Huber, “Multiple Mobilities,” 763; Huber, “Pandemics and the politics of difference,” 397-402.

⁹⁹ Huber, “Multiple Mobilities,” 763-764.

¹⁰⁰ “El cabotaje,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 21, 1882

arriving to Manila and dealing with the hygienic control of them after the outbreak of cholera. As late as the twentieth and twenty-first of September of 1882, both the Governor General and the city's administration were pushing the port authority to deal more thoroughly with the sailing ships arriving at the city, with the Governor General ordering for daily controls of all ships anchored at Manila to take place and ordering the *Corregidor* of Manila, the highest authority of the city, to impose fines of 500-pesos to all port officers and ship captains to be found to properly adhere to the measures ordered by the government.¹⁰¹ On the following day, the newspaper published another article communicating the orders of the *Corregidor* to follow strictly through with the orders of the Governor General.¹⁰²

In contrast to these pushes to double down on the control and immobilization of sailing ships, *La Oceanía Española* published a series of articles arguing for the reintroduction of regular steamship traffic between Manila and other Philippine ports, reflecting the link between the more positive characterization of steam mobility with the interests of groups belonging to the political and economic elites of the city.¹⁰³ Thus, the newspaper published an article directed at the city's administration that called for "the free entry, without controls at lazarettos or imposition of quarantine, to cabotage ships in order to reinvigorate the market."¹⁰⁴ On the seventeenth of September, the newspaper happily commented about the governor general's positive answer to Manila's city-council petition to allow steamships to travel between Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga, Laguna, and Batangas "because these provinces are in similar sanitary conditions as Manila. Furthermore, after the rest they have had, these ships are fixed and newly painted so that they look as good as new."¹⁰⁵ The interests of the economic and political elites,

¹⁰¹ "Los Buques," *La Oceanía Española*, September 20, 1882.

¹⁰² "El cabotaje," *La Oceanía Española*, September 21, 1882.

¹⁰³ Fabricio Prado discusses interests of different groups and the pressure on the forming of the port city's policy, Fabricio Prado, "The emergence of Montevideo as an Atlantic port: the political economy of a trans-imperial hub," *Urban History* 48, no. 3 (2021): 518-531.

¹⁰⁴ "Cuarentena," *La Oceanía Española*, September 12, 1882.

¹⁰⁵ "Medida acertada," *La Oceanía Española*, September 17, 1882.

as is noticed through the allusions to the commercial impact of steamships in Manila and the city-council's pushes to reintroduce ship traffic, pushed the representations of steamship mobility as central and positive to Manila.

This discussion around cabotage steam mobility further points to aspects of the spatial imagination of Manila, its boundaries, and other forms of mobility taking place there. In his work on food provision to Manila during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Daniel Doeppers discusses the intricate relationship between the city and its surroundings for the development and growth of Manila's population.¹⁰⁶ On the fifteenth of September, an article was published questioning the interruption of steamship mobility between the different ports of Manila Bay. Specifically, the author of this article argued that it was irrational to impose controls on seabound mobility in the bay while allowing river transit and especially land travel to continue unhindered. "Where communication is quick and possible through sea as well as on land, some precaution measures should not be applied."¹⁰⁷ It is not only the push to resume the movement of steamships on the bay that is clear here, but also the close relationship between Manila and the entire bay area, the intense land and river mobility that took place here, as well as the impossibility or unwillingness to limit this mobility. This last point might also show the dependent relation between the different localities of Manila Bay and the blurred boundaries between the port city and the area surrounding it.

A hierarchization of mobilities was also developed when considering which actors were on the move. On the level of international cooperation between European empires, the question of containing the spread of cholera during the second half of the nineteenth century, as seen in the context of the international sanitary conferences, aimed to maintain European mobility and to secure Europe from cholera, focusing on the previously mentioned marginalization of

¹⁰⁶ Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War*, 5.

¹⁰⁷ "Cuantos puertos hay en esta bahía," *La Oceanía Española*, September 15, 1882.

“traditional” mobilities, as well as of specific groups of people.¹⁰⁸ These logics of European mobility were also present in colonial Manila. *La Oceanía Española* printed parts of a speech given by the governor general on the twenty-first of August after declaring Manila a dirty port. In his speech, governor-general Primo de Rivera considered the negative effects the declaration would have on the city’s trade and stated:

“It is our conscience and honour that impede us to say that our goods are clean if we knew with certainty that we would bring a danger and thousands of deaths to foreign countries that trust our honesty and our word.”¹⁰⁹

Considering the focus on Europe that *La Oceanía Española* displayed whilst writing about the rest of the world, the governor general’s words might refer mainly to the protection of Europe, showing the expression of global discourse through empire on local colonial contexts.

Furthermore, the mobility of Europeans was prioritized both in the representations of *La Oceanía Española* and in the actions of the colonial government in the Philippines. On the twenty-seventh of August, it was announced that despite the epidemic outbreak, some Europeans would be allowed to embark on the steamship *Asia* that would depart Manila for Spain on the first of September.¹¹⁰ On the day of departure, the newspaper reported on the measures that had been taken to secure hygienic standards on the *Asia*. It was written that the passengers “embarked yesterday afternoon [thirty-first of August] after they and their luggage were fumigated, and after they had changed the clothes they wore, leaving the worn clothes on land.”¹¹¹ Avoiding bringing cholera close to Europe was a point of concern for Manila’s

¹⁰⁸ Huber, “Pandemics and the politics of difference,” 400.

¹⁰⁹ “Sanidad,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 22, 1882.

¹¹⁰ “Embarque,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 27, 1882.

¹¹¹ “Fumigación,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 1, 1882.

colonial elite, while sanitation technology, such as fumigation, was applied to maintain and facilitate European mobility.

Hierarchies also determined how *La Oceanía Española* represented or concealed Europeans, Chinese, and Philippine natives. In contrast to Europeans, who were constantly portrayed as mobile individuals in the newspaper, for example with the printing of passenger lists of the arriving ships, non-European actors were mentioned either marginally or not at all. The case of Chinese migrants arriving to the city exemplifies this, as some reports of arriving ships included mentions of groups of Chinese migrants, including how many of them there were, right next to the names of European passengers arriving.¹¹² While Europeans were mentioned by name and even profession, the Chinese arriving at the city were only mentioned as a number, even if their personal information was collected by the port authority before disembarking.¹¹³ Furthermore, forced punitive mobilities imposed on natives and Chinese remain absent from these narratives.¹¹⁴ For the editors of the journal, ethnicity played a central role in the form they represented or concealed mobile actors.

While the hegemonic representations of Manila's port highlighted notions of technology and connection, zooming into *La Oceanía Española* gives more complexity and nuance to Manila as a port city. The journal's representations show that imperial narratives were also reproduced through text representations and may have addressed anxieties of imperial elites in colonial contexts, as the highlighting of connection and technology addressed both the modernizing aspirations of the Spanish elites in Manila and the limitations of the administration there. Bringing the concept of *dis:connection* into this context allows a more differentiated understanding of the city's port, steam and telegraphic technology, and imperial

¹¹² "Pasajeros," *La Oceanía Española*, June 6, 1882.

¹¹³ See Galang, "Los Chinos *Macanistas*," 108-139; Ginés-Blasi, "A Philippine 'coolie trade'," 457-483.

¹¹⁴ Juan Luis Bachero Bachero, "Política colonial y deportación de filipinos en tiempos de guerra (1896-1898)," *Illes i Imperis* 23 (2021): 267-293; Jely A. Galang, "Expulsion of 'Undesirable' Chinese from the Philippines, 1883-1898," *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 17 (2021): 267-293.

networks on the imagination of the colonial elites, as it points to the fears, dangers, and disruptive processes that were associated with them, as highlighted by the spread of cholera. Furthermore, a closer look at these representations not only shows the port city as a place of slow down and mooring, as Lase Heerten writes, but also points to the crucial role of human agency, error, and confusion in mobilities around the port, as well as bringing to attention the marginalization and concealment of actors and mobilities that did not fit into the hegemonic narratives of the journal. These representations show the relevance of modern technology and discourse for the colonial elite while pointing to Manila's decentral position in the late nineteenth century.

V. Modernization and Sanitation in the Colonial City

In July of 1882, the Manila Waterworks were inaugurated. Inspired by similar projects in France and Spain, this was the result of yearlong work directed by the colony's Engineer Core and addressed the question of clean water scarcity in Manila that had caused increasing anxiety for the city's population following the cholera outbreaks of the nineteenth century. Powered by steam pumps to deal with the city's low topography, the waterworks brought water to fountains spread across Manila. The first one was opened in the Sampaloc suburb with others following and having a highest concentration in the wealthy areas of Intramuros, Binondo, and Santacruz, while poorer areas such as Tondo had a lower concentration of hydrants. This project was seen by the administration as a success in its quest to modernize Manila and transform it into a sanitized space.¹¹⁵

La Oceanía Española closely followed the celebrations surrounding the inauguration of the first fountain in Sampaloc on the twenty-fifth of July 1882. These would last from the twenty-first until the twenty-fifth of July and included a procession from the cathedral in Intramuros to Sampaloc, concerts, theatre productions, a ball, and gifts for couples getting married and children being born on the day of the inauguration.¹¹⁶ The journal characterized this development as a crucial point in the modernization of the city, writing that "we [the writers] observe with pleasure and gratitude, just as all residents, this new understanding the municipal government has of its mission. And we indicate sincerely in these lines the favourable opinion that is developing among the city's residents regarding the potential for future conquests of the administration that are so badly needed by this population."¹¹⁷ The modernization and

¹¹⁵ Ros Costelo, "The Manila Waterworks System: Water distribution, Access, and Control in the Second Half off the Nineteenth Century," *Illes I Imperis* 22 (2020): 192-193.

¹¹⁶ "Inauguración de las aguas," *La Oceanía Española*, July 1, 1882; "Modificación," *La Oceanía Española*, July 7, 1882.

¹¹⁷ "¡Adelante!" *La Oceanía Española*, June 29, 1882.

sanitation of the city were of great interest not only to the colonial administration, but also to the city's elite who called for the continuation of this course and participated in the discourse around it.

This touched on themes that were further highlighted by the city's representation and discourse in relation to the cholera epidemic, including orientalist representation of the city's geography and population, setting them in relation to the epidemic event, representations of global sanitary discourses and their local significance, the relevance of urban modernization as an imperial strategy that legitimized the colonial approach to the colonized and as a way to consolidate the Spanish colonial presence, as well as the contradictions that existed around the notion of the modern city in an Oriental and colonial context. With the focus lying often on the histories of hegemonic empires at the time, the decentral case of Spanish Manila has the potential to give further insights into the logics of modernization and sanitation discourses in colonial contexts.

Considering this, the chapter argues that Manila was imagined as a hybrid city, characterized by its "Oriental" geography and population, as well as by the modernizing effect the Spanish colonial administration and other colonial institutions had on the city. The outbreak of cholera highlighted the expression of global sanitary discourses and how these were set in relation to Manila's urban space alongside paternalist discourses of the colonial elite in the representations of *La Oceanía Española*. The space given to Catholic practices within these representations encourages a deeper reflection on modernizing discourses as colonial tools not necessarily based on objectivity as claimed by contemporaries and as understood by many today, but rather on cultural difference.

Orientalizing Manila

In colonial Manila, the aura of authority surrounding medical science and sanitation policy was crucial in *La Oceanía Española*'s representations of the colonial elites as benevolent and legitimate and in the development of modern orientalist representations of the city's geography and population.¹¹⁸ Manila's elites tried to closely follow the new medical developments taking place in Europe and discussed such matters frequently in the issues of *La Oceanía Española*. The nineteenth century saw revolutionary developments on the field of medicine as well as in the way in which empires and states adapted medical science to protect and further their interests. This process took place on the one hand through the sanitary conferences that took place in the second half of the century as a reaction to cholera outbreaks, leading to the internationalization of sanitation policies that aimed to protect imperial interests,¹¹⁹ as well as through the introduction of local sanitation policies that, following Haussmann's policies in Paris, identified marginalized classes as a sanitary problem to be tackled, legitimizing the civilizing effect of the colonial powers in doing so.¹²⁰ These discourses were expressed by Manila's colonial elite through the periodical press.

La Oceanía Española was a radical proponent of these discourses and of the effectiveness of the methods provided by science for the sanitation of the city and presented them as legitimizing aspects of the Spanish colonial presence. In late July, as quarantines had already been imposed on ships from certain origins, the editors criticized the lack of faith that other newspapers had in the fumigation practised on arriving ships, pointing specifically at the *Diario de Manila* that had recently argued for the sinking of a ship on which there had been cases of cholera. Pointing to the effectiveness of chlorine as a means for fumigation, the authors

¹¹⁸ E.g., "La cuabilidad de la tisis pulmonar," *La Oceanía Española*, June 10, 1882.

¹¹⁹ Valeska Huber, "The Unification of the Globe by Disease? The International Sanitary Conferences on Cholera, 1851 – 1894," *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 2 (2006): 458-459; Huber, "Pandemics and the Politics of Difference," 398-399.

¹²⁰ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 14-25.

of *La Oceanía Española* argued that “science always solves these questions in a satisfying manner.”¹²¹ After news of the cholera outbreak in Batavia reached Manila, a series of articles under the title “Hygienic Advice” were published by *La Oceanía Española*. In these articles, themes such as the administration’s epidemic response, cholera, its prevention, treatment, and diagnosis, were discussed. For the newspaper, it was essential that the administration’s response to the spread of cholera was guided by science. The author called for “men of science” to be called to make hard decisions that were necessary in such times.¹²² The author represented himself and medical experts as the “vanguard of civilization.”¹²³ Western medical and scientific discourses were aligned with imperial interests and used to legitimize the Spanish colonial presence as a factor of health and hygiene in times of crisis and beyond.

For the newspaper’s authors, Europe remained a main point of reference and source of authority. Information about the reaction to cholera outbreaks in Western European cities, usually Paris, London, or Madrid, was often published by the newspaper, even including translations of communications of governments and medical institutions originally published decades earlier. An example of this were the instructions given by the medical service of the French interior ministry during the cholera outbreak of 1865 in Paris.¹²⁴ These instructions, which focused on imposing of an ideal lifestyle, thematizing things such as daily routines, as well as on preventive measures, such as the consumption of wines or the application of enemas, showed the uncertainty with which cholera was observed, as disparate arrays of preventive measures and treatments were communicated. In this situation, it was the authority linked to European medical discourses that allowed *La Oceanía Española* to imbue the advice given by its writers and the actions of the colonial elite with legitimacy and authority.

¹²¹ “Exceso de precaución,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 28, 1882.

¹²² “Consejos Higiénicos. Manila Ante el Peligro,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 14, 1882.

¹²³ “Consejos higiénicos. Higiene y Sanidad III,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 20, 1882.

¹²⁴ “Consejos publicados en Paris 1865,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 14, 1882.

The uncertainty surrounding specific treatments of cholera and the exact logics behind the disease's epidemiology gave space for the continuation of old medical practices and reproduced moralizing elements of medical discourses. *La Oceanía Española*, discussing the difficulty of diagnosing “cholera morbus” or “fulminant cholera, which was understood to be different from less dangerous diseases such as “cholerine” in medical discourses before the isolation of cholera in 1883,¹²⁵ continued to argue that bleedings and the use of leeches on different parts of the body was an effective way of dealing with the deadly disease.¹²⁶ As described by several scholars, continuities from Premodern and Early Modern discourses and thought included the concept of the miasma, which continued to play a role even after germ theory became more established in the 1880s and helped perpetuate moralizing characteristics within medical and sanitary discourses,¹²⁷ as seen in the response to cholera outbreaks in the Philippines in the early years of the American administration.¹²⁸ In 1882, *La Oceanía Española* continued to place miasmas on the centre of its representations. These notions played a central role in the development of orientalist sanitary representations of Manila and its population.

In the nineteenth century, European elites developed an imagination of the “Orient” characterized by racial prejudice.¹²⁹ Nükhet Varlık defines “epidemiological Orientalism” as “the spatial association” between the Orient and Oriental populations with disease, deformity, and death in the European epidemiological episteme” and which Erik Blackthorne-O’Barr in turn applies to understand the discourse of the international press in late nineteenth century Istanbul, highlighting the local implication of epidemiological Orientalism.¹³⁰ In Manila, the colonial elite used the scientific discourses at its disposition to express its legitimacy and

¹²⁵ Erik Blackthorne-O’Barr, “Journals of the Plague Year: The Ottoman Press and the Istanbul Cholera Outbreak of 1871.” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 9, no. 1 (2022): 213-214.

¹²⁶ “Consejos Higienicos. Higiene y Sanidad VII,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 1, 1882.

¹²⁷ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 14-25.

¹²⁸ Peter Xenos, “Parish Records and the History of Philippine Epidemics,” *Philippine Studies* 68, no. 3-4 (2020): 317-322.

¹²⁹ See Huber, “Pandemics and the Politics of Difference,” 396-398.

¹³⁰ Blackthorne-O’Barr, “Journals of the Plague Year,” 205-207.

authority, as previously shown, as well as to cement an image of Manila and its population as Oriental and non-sanitized.

The representations of *La Oceanía Española* located Manila within the Asian world. Imagining the Philippines separately from Asia would have become impossible considering the transformations the colony went through in the nineteenth century, including the end of the connection between the Spanish colonies in America and the Philippines through the Manila-Acapulco route and the end of the jurisdictional dependence on the Viceroyalty of New Spain. In 1882, Manila was represented as being in the contact zone of China as well as other Asian places such as Japan, the Southeast Asian Archipelago, and India.¹³¹ The city was historically represented as having been the “Emporium of the Orient” in the times of the Manila Galleon, as the title “The Pearl of the Orient” was used by contemporaries to refer to it.¹³²

Through this identification of Manila as an Asian place, a link to cholera was also established, as *La Oceanía Española* portrayed cholera as something belonging to Asia. This was done through representations of past epidemics, in which the Ganges was identified as its origin and the surrounding Asian regions as a space through which it could reach European settlements.¹³³ Furthermore, the newspaper used epithets such as *El Fantasma del Ganges* (The Phantom of the Ganges) or Asian cholera morbus to refer to the disease.¹³⁴ Thus, both Manila and cholera were represented by *La Oceanía Española* as being part of an orientalist Asia.

In the late nineteenth century, Manila was represented as an unideal place. Guadalupe García argues that hierarchical imaginations of geography were a direct result of colonial rule.¹³⁵ In the case of Manila, the colonial city’s Asian geography was contrasted to the ideal

¹³¹ “Gaceta de Ayer,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 13, 1882.

¹³² “Higiene Pública” *La Oceanía Española*, June 22, 1882.

¹³³ “La marcha del cólera.”

¹³⁴ “(Gaceta de ayer) Gobierno general de Filipinas,” *La Oceanía Española* June 13, 1882; “Consejos Higienicos. Higiene y Sanidad VII.”

¹³⁵ García, *Beyond the Walled City*, 167.

of the healthy city that facilitated flows of air through broad streets devoid of crowded spaces.¹³⁶ Manila was described as existing on an unideal location and it was stated that in the early stages of its development, the colonial authorities could not have known about the future needs of the city, for which reason the city developed without hygienic or sanitary considerations. Added to this were the various natural disasters that were associated with life in Manila and the city's history, such as earthquakes, the heavy monsoon rains, and floods.¹³⁷ The journal's writers saw the city's location and the region's natural phenomena as negative aspects.

Concentrations of water and a lacking flow of air in Manila were presented as the two main problems of the city's geography in the summer of 1882. These were considered dangers in the city as authors of *La Oceanía Española* believed they resulted in the development of miasmas. The river Pasig and the high tides in the estuary, were responsible for the building of pools, pointing too to the relation between sea and port city, which went beyond the port and influenced the representations and imaginations of the city in various ways.¹³⁸ Different articles of *La Oceanía Española* saw a danger in these as they thought diseases would spread from them when water evaporated from them during hot days. It was especially the bad smells that emanated from these pools that were feared by the authors of these articles.¹³⁹

Another source of anxiety in the city's geography was the cemeteries. Up until 1882, several cemeteries were administered by parishes across the city. This was seen as a risk for the city's population as it was thought that miasmas also originated in cemeteries and the bad air circulation of the city would cause these to be directly blown against the residential spaces

¹³⁶ "Un concejo por día," *La Oceanía Española*, August 15, 1882.

¹³⁷ "Ideología Loca II," *La Oceanía Española*, September 19, 1882.

¹³⁸ For deeper reflections on oceanic histories, considering the role of the sea, waves, tides, and how they influenced human activity and life see Sujit Sivasundaram, Alison Bashford, David Armitage, "Introduction Writing World Oceanic Histories," in *Oceanic Histories*, eds. David Armitage, Alison Bashford and Sujit Sivasundaram (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

¹³⁹ "Ahora hace falta," *La Oceanía Española*, September 19, 1882.

that existed next to them.¹⁴⁰ The problems caused by heavy rains, especially during the monsoon, were a further cause of anxiety in relation to the city's cemeteries and the detrimental effect of this on the city's hygiene and sanitation. During the epidemic of 1882, as mortality rose in Manila because of cholera, these concerns regarding cemeteries were often discussed by the newspaper's writers and even by readers who sent letters to be published.¹⁴¹

Through the nineteenth century, orientalist representations of the city's population legitimized segregation of space, integrating civilizing and sanitizing discourses in the orientalist representations of Manila's non-European population. Maurizio Marinelli discusses the way in which juxtaposition with the orientalist and "uncivilized" was used in urban colonial contexts to develop representations of colonial powers as examples of progress and civilization. This served the reproduction and legitimation of spatial organization and social order, stabilizing the position of colonial elites.¹⁴² In Manila, until the late eighteenth century, the colonial spatial order had been regulated through juridical means. Even if the legal regulation of space ended in the 1790s, the logics that guided them continued to exist, with the legal segregation of the population being modernized in the nineteenth century, as racial aspects came to play a role in this process. The Chinese community of the city was represented as the stereotypic Oriental other. An Asian culture characterized by negative traits in the eyes of the European observer. The Philippine natives, despite being at times represented with a certain closeness to the Chinese, were generally represented in an infantilized fashion. Both groups were represented as a problem for the city's proper sanitation.

The Chinese of the city were characterized by *La Oceanía Española* as being related to bad odours. These bad odours were represented as dangerous for public hygiene.¹⁴³ This not

¹⁴⁰ "Cementerios," *La Oceanía Española*, August 26, 1882.

¹⁴¹ "Los cementerios (remitido)," *La Oceanía Española*, September 3, 1882; "Nuevo cementerio de Dilao" *La Oceanía Española*, September 5, 1882.

¹⁴² Marinelli, "Making concessions in Tianjin," 402-410.

¹⁴³ "Mal olor," *La Oceanía Española*, August 30, 1882.

only points to projection of miasma-theory thought on the Chinese population of Manila, but also to long trend processes of colonial othering. Andrew J. Rotter discusses how the American and British colonial enterprises in Asia and the Philippines focused on the sense of smell in their characterization of the uncivilized and the legitimation of their colonial presence as a civilizing mission. The phenomenon described by Rotter was intrinsically linked to colonial sanitation policy.¹⁴⁴ The Spanish focus on the development of miasma and the ascribing of bad odours to the Chinese in Manila as well as the further implications of this for the colonial sanitary discourse show the relevance of Rotter's thoughts on the role of sensory perception for the development of colonial discourses beyond the American and British imperial spheres and the fruitfulness of this for the understanding and problematizing of the colonial representation of colonized groups and the development of colonial policies.

In their reporting on the measures implemented by the city's administration to prevent the spread of cholera to Manila, *La Oceanía Española* referred to the Chinese and their living quarters as being especially unsanitary places of filth.¹⁴⁵ It was also reported on the unsanitary conditions of Chinese shops, with a focus on the ones that distributed food, as shown through the report of the fines imposed on a Chinese Merchant that sold "adulterated" pig fat.¹⁴⁶ In Binondo, the economic heart of the city as well as the suburb where the majority of the Chinese population lived, *La Oceanía Española* identified the Chinese presence as a contaminating factor. "At Escolta Street [The main business street of Binondo], which is today so elegantly adorned with establishments, one still struggles anxiously without being able to expel the Chinese Cancer that continues to devour this street [...] considering the were these dirty pigsties removed, we would take away these people and their nakedness from the view of our

¹⁴⁴ Andrew J. Rotter, *Empires of the Senses Bodily Encounters in Imperial India and the Philippines* (Oxford University Press, 2019), 160-178.

¹⁴⁵ "Medidas Sanitarias," *La Oceanía Española*, June 13, 1882.

¹⁴⁶ "Multazo," *La Oceanía Española*, July 13, 1882.

ladies and we would wash this ridiculous stain from our illustrious capital, asides from the improvements regarding the cleanliness and sanitation.”¹⁴⁷ The representation of the Chinese as a problematic other characterized as a danger to the city in times of epidemic crisis not only played an important role in the city’s representations, but also in what the proper response to cholera was thought to be.

The Chinese were also negatively characterized through their beliefs and religious practices during the epidemic in the city. Belief in ghosts and evil spirits related to the spread of cholera was represented by *La Oceanía Española* as a characteristic of the Chinese and of the Muslim population of the Southern Philippines, against whom the Spanish led military campaigns in the late nineteenth century.¹⁴⁸ Once the disease had reached Manila, the newspaper reported on how the Chinese tried to avoid contracting it. It was reported that “the Chinese give away small papers with script on them, saying these will protect the bearer from cholera. It is a kind of *anjing-anling*, an amulet as the ones worn by *tulisanes* [road bandits] to protect themselves from bullets, even as they continue to be killed by them. These practices come from a lack of education.”¹⁴⁹ The actions of the Chinese contrasted with the ideals brought forward by the newspaper, which, as its authors argued, were guided by science.

The newspaper further reported on actions such as the building of a paper ship and the burning of it as a ceremony to expel the disease from the city, the painting of protective characters on homes, the construction of altars, as well as the visiting of the resting places of ancestors to appease the situation the city was going through. Also important in these representations was the attention given to spirits that communicated with Chinese elders of the city to inform them of what they had to do, such as Confucius or Siongco.¹⁵⁰ Unknown

¹⁴⁷ “Es necesario. Remitido,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 26, 1882.

¹⁴⁸ “Ecos de Joló,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 20, 1882.

¹⁴⁹ “Anjing anjing” *La Oceanía Española*, August 30, 1882.

¹⁵⁰ “Fiestas,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 31, 1882; “Los Chinos” *La Oceanía Española*, September 20, 1882.

religious practices, a writing system that could not be read by the Spanish, and spirits and ancestors, which played a considerable role in the Western understanding of the Chinese, were given especial attention by *La Oceanía Española*. These representations show the exotic space the Chinese community occupied in the colonial elite's imaginary of Manila, highlighting this community's practices in a way that should contrast the modern ideals of the elite. These representations further show the specific local expression of global discourses that racialized and orientalist Chinese communities and aimed to limit their mobility and exert control over them on colonial and metropolitan contexts.¹⁵¹

La Oceanía Española represented the natives in an infantilised essentialized manner, highlighting their habits when discussing them in relation to the cholera outbreak. In contrast to the Chinese, the infantilizing aspects of these representations communicated the notion that it was possible to change them through Spanish influence. They were referred to by the colonial elites as *naturales*, a word that at the time connoted an inherent relation between a person, or a group of persons and a specific land or country.¹⁵² It cannot be ignored that the Spanish approach to the Philippine natives had been influenced by their experience in the Americas, where natives had been also characterized through infantilizing discourses that set them in relation to nature as an uncivilized state.¹⁵³ Even if the categorization as *naturales* was not understood in exactly this fashion in the nineteenth-century Philippines, the representations of Manila's native community characterized them as lacking in education and civilization.

When discussing the native family during the cholera outbreak, the newspaper focused on their everyday eating and working habits and to explain why the epidemic was a major

¹⁵¹ See Mayne, "Guardians at the gate," 257; Galang, "Los Chinos Macanistas. 42-46.

¹⁵² Roque Barcia, *Primer diccionario general etimológico de la lengua española. Tomo III* (Seix editores, 1880), 885.

¹⁵³ See Astrid Windus, "Das Fremde im Blick. Früher Kulturkontakt und gegenseitige Wahrnehmung von Europäern und Indigenen in den Amerikas," in *Europas maritime Expansion. Ideen und Innovationen Entdeckungen und Eroberungen vom 9. Bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* ed. Andreas Obenaus (Mandelbaum Verlag, 2021).

threat for them. It was stated that the native men worked without properly eating, beginning their day without having a proper breakfast and only having one warm meal bought from the Chinese during their lunch time at work. The women and children were described as spending the whole day at home, eating only small portions of rice and taking a bigger meal on the evening consisting of seafood and acid condiments and fruits, such as tamarind. This was considered to be very detrimental to their health, as “cholera attacks at the hour of the assassins and thieves, this being at midnight, and it searches for its victims among those that do not know well enough to take a frugal and easily digestible dinner.”¹⁵⁴

The natives were further related to notions of tradition and the domestic on representations of *La Oceanía Española*. Medicine used by the people of Manila was called domestic medicine, separating it from remedies recommended by European actors or institutions, even if these consisted of household products, such as spirits or coffee, as was described earlier in this chapter. The compartmentalization of this knowledge in the sphere of the domestic showed the colonial view of the natives, away from the public sphere of decision-making.¹⁵⁵ As the native population was also hit harder by the epidemic, the newspaper also identified the root of this on the behaviour of this group. “Because of their ignorance or their traditional customs, they reject the advice of science.”¹⁵⁶ Through such arguments it was explained that cholera killed more natives, as they ignored the symptoms of the sickness and ignored the orders of the administration to seek medical help when hit by the disease. The Chinese were thus represented as a group that had to be controlled to properly sanitize Manila while the natives were shown as an ignorant group that due to their lack of knowledge

¹⁵⁴ “La alimentación del indígena,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 22, 1882.

¹⁵⁵ “Medicina doméstica,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 14, 1882.

¹⁵⁶ “Sanidad,” August 22, 1882.

endangered itself and the city, thus opening a space for the colonial elites and administration to civilize them.

Modernization and Sanitation

In the context of orientalist conceptions of space and people, notions of civilization and superiority played an important role in defining the position of Europeans in non-European spaces, contributing to the development of discourses of the European civilizing mission on international and colonial contexts.¹⁵⁷ In Spanish Manila, the representations of the city as an unsanitary space and the infantilization of the majority of the city's population played into paternalist representations of the colonial administration and of the colonial elites. The effects of the colonial presence in Manila were shown to have a modernizing and civilizing effect, highlighting the progress of the city on infrastructural questions, as well as through representations of the administration's response to the cholera epidemic in the Summer of 1882.

The colonial authorities, such as the governor general and the city's *Corregidor*, were represented as father figures to Manila's population. The measures imposed by the governor general on the city after the official declaration of cholera's presence in the city was described by *La Oceanía Española* as being guided "by a paternal care and interest towards his subjects, be they wearing the honourable soldier's uniform [alluding to the governor general's military background], or a, in its majority, ragged and forsaken people, as he must do now."¹⁵⁸ Moreover, the newspaper's reports on the actions of the city's government showed that the authorities themselves framed their actions in these paternalistic tones. Thus, a letter from the *corregidor* to the city's population was reprinted. Here, addressing the precepts of the administration regarding ways to avoid contracting cholera, the *Corregidor*, "moved by the best motives and

¹⁵⁷ Huber, "The Unification of the World by Disease?" 459; Carminati, *Cities and News*, 31.

¹⁵⁸ "Consejos Higiénicos. Higiene y Sanidad XIV," *La Oceanía Española*, August 24, 1882.

trusting that you will head my voice calling as a father advises his children” called for Manila’s population to adhere more strictly to the measures imposed by the administration.¹⁵⁹

The discourse presented by the journal defined not only the colonial authorities, but rather the broader colonial elites, as having a paternal duty to civilize the masses of Manila. As Carbone points out while discussing sanitation policy in colonial Mumbai, civilizing missions were often aimed at the working classes when articulated in colonial urban contexts.¹⁶⁰ An article published on September 1882, during the height of the epidemic, stated that it was the duty of all heads of family to be informed about the proper behaviour and reactions during epidemic crises so that, together with the administration, they would contribute to the success of the tackling of said crises. “Our position and name compel us to this. Such is the role of the illustrated and rich in these circumstances.”¹⁶¹ The colonial elites of Manila, both within and outside the administration, were represented as having an important role in the fulfilment of the civilizing mission, having to take responsibility for the betterment of the colonized.

Contrary to common representations in some scholarship, the question of urban modernization and the modern city was of relevance for Manila’s elites. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the notion of the modern city began to establish itself in Asian contexts and was “fixated on technologically advanced, firmly regulated cities as centres of change and progress.” In Asia, this phenomenon was closely tied to colonial powers and local elites, the modernization of urban spaces, including administrations and infrastructure, and the development of national identities. While scholars have often highlighted these processes in British, French, or American colonial contexts, the case of peripheral empires continues to be misrepresented. Manila’s slow and limited modernization is often attributed to a lack of interest

¹⁵⁹ “Gobierno Civil y Corregimiento,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 13, 1882.

¹⁶⁰ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 64-65.

¹⁶¹ “Cambian las circunstancias,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 14, 1882.

from the administration in modernizing the colony.¹⁶² Such arguments miss the granularity of European colonialism, ignoring complex processes within non hegemonic empires. Zooming in into these colonial powers may help highlight intricacies of imperial projects, their limits, and their imaginaries. Garcia argues that for the Spanish empire, the maintenance of colonial cities as administrative and legitimacy centres was of crucial importance, with the colonial elites aiming to form these urban spaces along the lines of imperial ideology.¹⁶³ Elizalde and Costelo both show the interest of the colonial administration in modernizing Manila and the Philippines at large.¹⁶⁴ As previously shown, *La Oceanía Española* conceived the colonial elites of the city as invested actors in the city's modernization. The newspaper further represented Manila as a city as a civilized space in relation to the projects that had been implemented,¹⁶⁵ as well as through the administration's reaction to the cholera epidemic.

Manila was continuously represented as a modern city, highlighting its industry and commerce, administration, and infrastructure. The progress of the administration in the city was discussed in relation to the establishment of industries in Manila. It was stated that "Without a doubt, Manila is an industrial city that can reach a greater level of progress. The city counts with stonemasons, silversmiths, advanced coach manufacturing, metalworkers, machine workshops, and manufactories of soap, alcohol, leather and even ceramics."¹⁶⁶ Progress regarding the city's hygienic and sanitary state was also a common theme. The efforts of the city administration to regulate the flow of the Pasig through the construction of streets along the river's course as well as through the building of the Queen's Channel in the Santa Cruz suburb were directly linked by the newspaper to the dwindling cases of dysentery in the

¹⁶² Stapleton, *The Modern City in Asia*, 1-15

¹⁶³ García, *Beyond the Walled City*, 4-11.

¹⁶⁴ Elizalde, "Presentación: Ciencia e ingeniería," 9-10; Costelo, "The Manila Waterworks System," 172-175.

¹⁶⁵ Caimari points to the relation between urban representations and notions of civilization in the periodical press in Caimari, *Cities and News*, 24- 25.

¹⁶⁶ "La Industria," *La Oceanía Española*, June 7, 1882.

city.¹⁶⁷ The inauguration of the new waterworks was also a dominant theme in the months of June and July of 1882. The tones of these representations show not only the image of a civilizing process taking place in Manila, but also the central place of sanitation and hygiene in it. An article published shortly before the waterworks inauguration that praised the efforts of the colonial government in the betterment of the city discussed the importance of proper water supply in the whole city for the prevention of epidemics in big population centres, pointing at its importance by writing that “not the public electric lighting, nor the railways, bridges, street pavement, urban expansion, or any of the other projects in progress can be compared in importance to the providing of potable water to this population centre.”¹⁶⁸ The modern aspects of the city were highlighted while stressing the importance of sanitation in the development of a modern city in a colonial context.

Creating an image of Manila as a modern sanitized space included also the development of a sense of control in the city. As Arjun Appadurai demonstrates through the case of British India, counting practices of the state and their representations in colonial contexts played a crucial role in the colonial imaginary, arguing that “countable abstractions, both of people and of resources, at every imaginable level and for every conceivable purpose, created the sense of a controllable indigenous reality.”¹⁶⁹ Numbers provided by different organs of the administration and printed by *La Oceanía Española* helped develop such an imagination of Manila. The newspaper regularly published statistics provided by the hospital San Juan de Dios in Intramuros, vaccination statistics, as well as regular reports of the city’s sub-delegation of medicine that were made out by the head doctors of the city’s hospitals.¹⁷⁰ These reports

¹⁶⁷ “Higiene Publica III,” *La Oceanía Española*, June 24, 1882.

¹⁶⁸ “Ayer y Hoy,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 23, 1882.

¹⁶⁹ Arjun Appadurai, “Number in the Colonial Imagination,” in: *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament. Perspectives on South Asia*, eds. Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 317.

¹⁷⁰ E.g., “Subdelegación de medicina y cirugía de la Prvincia de Manila,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 2, 1882; “Hospital San Juan de Dios,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 10, 1882.

included ethnically segregated information regarding the number of sick people in hospitals, the number of diseased persons, the number of administered vaccines, as well as descriptions of health developments in Manila, such as information about certain diseases, including measles and pox. The constant representation of these statistics in the newspaper would have contributed to a sense of hygienic and sanitary control over the colonial city, addressing the anxiety with which the colonial elite approached these topics.

The administration's reaction to the cholera epidemic was represented as a step towards modernization. Scholars point to the catalysing effect of epidemics in mobilizing administrations to develop sanitary mechanisms and implement reforms.¹⁷¹ As cholera approached and eventually reached the city, the reaction of the administration and of the colonial elites were described as efficient and effective, falling into the ideal of a modern administration by addressing the central question of the city's health. *La Oceanía Española* praised the centralized reaction of the administration to the spread of cholera in the region, as the Central Sanitation Council was established and placed under the direction of medical experts, such as the veterinarian Dr Rioja who was a member of Manila's sub-delegation of medicine.¹⁷² During the days following the declaration of Manila as a dirty port, *La Oceanía Española* published several articles on which, aside from communicating the measures implemented by the administration, such as controls over public spaces and crowded houses, the city's administration, the *Corregidor*, and the governor-general were commended for their swift and effective response.¹⁷³

The city's government further established local sanitary councils in each suburb to help implement the dispositions of the Central Sanitary Council. These counted with inspectors

¹⁷¹ See Ermus, *Urban Disasters*, 39-42.

¹⁷² "Junta Central de Sanidad," *La Oceanía Española*, August 10, 1882.

¹⁷³ E.g., "Gaceta de Ayer," *La Oceanía Española*, August 23, 1882.

supported by military officials that would ensure each district stayed the course chosen by the administration. Aside from the district inspectors, who were mainly tasked to control public spaces and homes, an inspector was also chosen for the control of public institutions, such as colleges, asylums, barracks, hospitals, and prisons.¹⁷⁴ The control and maintenance of these spaces, where the administration could more effectively access, were represented as a success of the administration, as, e.g., the tight controls and hygienic regimes imposed over the city's jails, garrisons, and beneficence institutions were reported on, stating that these followed all norms of hygiene and further imposed a "good alimentation regime" to maintain a proper sanitary state.¹⁷⁵ The quick establishment of new hospitals to cope with the number of sick people during this time as well as the establishment of a central cemetery for the city in La Loma on the Northern outskirts of the city, were also topics brought up by *La Oceanía Española* constantly.¹⁷⁶

The effective sanitary response of the city to cholera was also represented as a sensory experience. In line with the prominent position of miasma theory in the city's medical discourse, as well as with Engelmann's thoughts on the hopes placed on fumigation processes during the late nineteenth century,¹⁷⁷ The Central Sanitary Council of Manila ordered several fires to be lit across the city with the purpose of fumigating and disinfecting the air. These fires were lit on streets and even inside some buildings, such as government buildings and schools, and contained aromatic plants, tar, resin, and sulphur.¹⁷⁸ The newspaper pointed to the great amount of smoke that could be seen on Paco Street in the Dilao suburb, as well as the great noise that accompanied this, as fireworks were also used to create smoke and help with the fumigation.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ "Gaceta de Ayer," August 23, 1882.

¹⁷⁵ "Buenas noticias sanitarias," *La Oceanía Española*, August 24, 1882.

¹⁷⁶ "Los cementerios (remitido)," September 3, 1882.

¹⁷⁷ Lukas Engelmann, Christos Lynteris, *Sulphuric Utopias. A History of Maritime Fumigation* (MIT Press, 2020), 12-14.

¹⁷⁸ "Desinfección," *La Oceanía Española*, September 5, 1882; "Hogueras," *La Oceanía Española*, September 16, 1882.

¹⁷⁹ "Humo y Ruido," *La Oceanía Española*, August 27, 1882.

When crossing the *Puente de España*, a modern bridge connecting Intramuros to Binondo, a writer described a scene as if one were looking at an erupting volcano because of the many fires on the side of Intramuros,¹⁸⁰ while another note described the zeal with which the Chinese of Binondo followed this precept of the administration, lighting the streets of the suburb with fires.¹⁸¹ Such representations were an important aspects of the sanitation policy, aiming to present the city as active in the crisis reaction, even calling to mind images of the Covid Pandemic in which whole streets were sprayed with disinfectants.¹⁸² It points not only to the existing interest of the colonial administration in addressing the city's modernization, sanitation, and the presence of cholera, but also the complexity of this phenomenon that encompassed the administrations, different groups of the city's elite, as well as various sensorial approaches.

The Hybrid City

As processes of urban modernization took place in colonial East Asia and the notion of the modern city took root there, Europeans, agents and subjects of colonial empires that reproduced orientalist imaginaries of Asian territories and its peoples while helping develop representations of modernization in their colonies, also expressed notions that reflected the contradictions that resulted from intersection of imaginaries of orientalism and modernity. Modern colonial cities were seen and experienced as different from their Early Modern counterparts yet still not in the same way as Western modern cities.¹⁸³ Social scientists such as Max Webber continued to characterize Asian cities as lacking the organisation and dynamism of Western cities. European observers continued to highlight the “stress, disorder, lethargy and squalor” as characteristic of Asian cities.¹⁸⁴ Colonial cities in which the contradictions of

¹⁸⁰ “Hogueras,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 7, 1882.

¹⁸¹ “En Binondo,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 10, 1882.

¹⁸² See Holly Secon, “Photos show how people around the world are disinfecting schools, mosques, and streets to stop the coronavirus from spreading,” *Business Insider*, March 7, 2020. <https://www.businessinsider.com/coronavirus-sanitation-disinfection-around-the-world-in-photos-2020-3>.

¹⁸³ Ewen, *What is Urban History?* 107.

¹⁸⁴ Stapleton, *The Modern City in Asia*, 1-2

orientalism and modernity clashed were often imagined as enclaves, gateways or crossing points.¹⁸⁵ In a similar way, Manila was represented as a hybrid place, with representations highlighting on the one hand the civilising effects of the Spanish presence, as was previously discussed, and on the other trying to come to terms with the shortcomings of the administration and the contradictions caused by the reproduction of orientalist discourses.

It was thus that despite praising the administration for its efforts in combating the spread of cholera, *La Oceanía Española* continued to see an inherent danger in the city, especially in relation to its population and the belief in the presence of miasmas that were thought to emanate from “most portions of the population,”¹⁸⁶ most plausibly referring to the non-European majority of the city’s population. The limits of modernization were also related to the limits of administrative agency. Hints of this are noticeable through small complaints regarding the ineffective trash collection service of the city, the existence of which shows the willingness of the city’s government to develop such services that coincided with ideals of urban sanitation, while at the same time reaching the limits of what it could effectively coordinate on a regular basis.¹⁸⁷

La Oceanía Española’s representations show the interest of the Spanish administration in modernizing its colony while reaching the limits of its agency. A series of articles published in mid-September under the title of “Local Ideology” discussed Manila’s potential to become a fully modernized city. The articles compared the state of Manila with other colonial cities in Asia, such as Calcutta and Batavia, identifying the first one as an example of successful modernization considering the city’s water and transportation infrastructure. The author of these articles saw the key to this in developing a long-term strategy to modernize the city,

¹⁸⁵ Carminati, *Cities and News*, 736-739; Huber, *Channelling Mobilities*, 37-71; Marinelli, “Making concessions in Tianjin,” 402-410.

¹⁸⁶ “Consejos Higiénicos. Manila Ante el Peligro.”

¹⁸⁷ E.g., “Quejas,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 4, 1882; “Razón tiene,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 13, 1882.

tackling small problems in an immediate manner, while in the long run implementing infrastructural and educational projects that would change the city's geography as well as the practices of the colonial subjects, which were identified as a prime obstacle in the modernization of the city.¹⁸⁸ While continuing to blame the city's colonial subjects for the slow modernization of the city, the subsequent articles also addressed the need to develop crucial projects, such as a sewer system and barriers to control more tightly the flows of water around the city, as well as the lack of funds available for the timely implementation of all such projects.¹⁸⁹ This points to the eagerness of the colonial elite to modernize the city while dealing with the Spanish Empire's relative weakness at the time, as it did not count with the same resources as the British Empire and later the USA did. To conciliate this weakness in its imperial representations and discourse, the orientalist geography and population of the city were presented as the main reasons for the slowness of Manila's modernization, as well as the setbacks presented by phenomena such as cholera.

Until this point, it has been made clear not only that modernizing discourses and practices were of interest to the colonial administration of elites of Manila and were indeed implemented, albeit with the logical limitations a weaker colonial state would have, but also that these elites closely followed European scientific discourses and utilized these to legitimize their actions in Manila. Regarding the Spanish Empire, it had been a common theme not only to disregard many of the empire's transformations and strategies during the nineteenth century, but also to misrepresent such processes based partly on the Catholic characteristics of the empire. Christian George F. Acevedo, discussing the various cholera outbreaks that took place in the Philippines during the nineteenth century, argues that the shortcomings of the Spanish administration in countering them were the result of the focus on religious practices instead of

¹⁸⁸ "Ideología Local I," *La Oceanía Española*, September 16, 1882.

¹⁸⁹ "Ideología Local II," *La Oceanía Española*, September 19, 1882.

sanitation and health policy to protect the population.¹⁹⁰ This plays into previously discussed arguments that ignore the granularity of modernization processes in Spanish Manila.¹⁹¹ Understanding the space available for religious practices and discourses alongside scientific and modernizing discourses helps destabilize the idea of modernity as a uniform process that moved towards science and rationality, as expressed by contemporaries and continues to be understood by some today, but rather as a complex phenomenon with diverse local consequences and implications. In the colonial context of Manila, discourses of modernity and modernization were used as a tool to legitimize the colonial order based not only on the precepts of modernization, but also on notions of cultural difference.

The pages of *La Oceanía Española* offered space for clerics to address its readers. So it was, as a letter from Manila's archbishop, Pedro Payo, was published on the newspaper's front page in early September 1882. In it, Archbishop Payo called for the city's population to turn away from sinful vices, such as dancing and celebrating at parties, and instead attend church and pray to the Virgin Mary for intercession.¹⁹² A couple of days earlier, the newspaper had also published a letter written by Father Huerce of neighbouring Polo. In it, the priest stated that the epidemic had taken place as god's punishment to humanity for its pride.¹⁹³ While such notions would at first seem incompatible with the scientific discourses pushed by the newspaper, Carbone argues that the religious and magical aspects that had existed hand in hand with miasma-thought since antiquity continued to be present in different ways until the twentieth century, with some forms of stigmatization of disease related to this even surviving until present times. The question of moral behaviour and its relation to disease was one such

¹⁹⁰ Christian George F Acevedo, "Propaganda, Folk Beliefs, and Health Information: Insights from the Cholera Outbreaks in the Philippines," *Philippine Journal of Librarianship and Information Studies* 41, no. 2 (2021): 17-22.

¹⁹¹ See Stapleton, *The Modern City in Asia*, 15-16; Acevedo, "Propaganda, Folk Beliefs, and Health Information," 18-19.

¹⁹² "Pastoral," *La Oceanía Española*, September 1, 1882.

¹⁹³ "Enfermedad Reynante," *La Oceanía Española*, August 29, 1882.

characteristic.¹⁹⁴ For *La Oceanía Española*, as for other European institutions, this was the case as well.¹⁹⁵ The close link between religious and moral thought in this context explains the space available for such religious arguments in a newspaper that aimed to represent a modernized colonial city.

Catholic practices were represented within the newspaper as legitimate actions to combat the epidemic in the city. At the beginning of the epidemic in Manila, the newspaper reported on the increased sales of Saint Zachary Crosses, also called Plague Cross, in the city. These crosses were said to protect their bearers from disease as they had protected Saint Zachary of the plague during the Council of Trient in the sixteenth century.¹⁹⁶ It also reported on the common sight of crosses painted on the doors of houses across Manila.¹⁹⁷ Public prayer and processions were also a common occurrence. On the third of September, *La Oceanía Española* announced on its first page that Archbishop Payo had called for a religious procession to take place on the following Sunday from the churches of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis. The newspaper informed that the miraculous Lady of the Rosary would be carried during the processions.¹⁹⁸ The acceptance of such practices while religious practices of other groups, such as of the Chinese community which were described earlier in this chapter, point to one crucial characteristic of modernization discourses being the identification and marginalization of the cultural other. The practices of the Chinese community were identified as being rooted in a lack of education and superstition. Such notions were extended to the other non-European groups in the Philippines. Qualifying the practices of the Oriental other as uncivilized and uneducated legitimized the actions taken by the colonial administration to strengthen the position of the elites and further marginalize specific groups.

¹⁹⁴ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 14-19.

¹⁹⁵ "Consejos Higienicos. Higiene y Sanidad XVI," *La Oceanía Española*, August 27, 1882.

¹⁹⁶ "Cruz contra la peste," *Oceanía Española*, August 23, 1882.

¹⁹⁷ "Lo que se ve," *La Oceanía Española*, August 31, 1882.

¹⁹⁸ "Anuncio al pueblo Cristiano de Manila," *La Oceanía Española*, September 3, 1882.

The relationship between the colonial administration and the portions of the colonial elite that supported the modernization of the city on the one hand and the Catholic Church and religious orders on the other was not completely frictionless, as the administrations and modernizers supported certain processes of secularization. The anxieties and ensuing conflict regarding the city's cemeteries during the cholera epidemic are proof of this. As mentioned earlier, during the epidemic of 1882, the colonial administration decided to centralize the administration of the city's cemeteries. Parish cemeteries that dotted the city would be closed and a central cemetery was opened at La Loma.¹⁹⁹ Xavier Huetz de Lempis argues that this process represented a power struggle between the administration and the Church authorities.²⁰⁰ The reporting of *La Oceanía Española* shows that secularization of cemeteries as well as of burial practices in general found support among a portion of the city's elite, as this was a common topic on which the newspaper wrote. However, while Huetz de Lempis writes that the administration and some members of the elite were moved by anticlerical sentiments, *La Oceanía Española* took a rather conciliatory tone, trying to find a middle ground between the administration and the Church. An author proposed, for example, that the administration should oversee the cemetery while local parishes would be allotted certain spaces within it in which the priests would continue to play a role. The proposal would allow the imposition of hygiene standards at cemeteries and burial practices while avoiding a complete sidelining of the Church.²⁰¹ The colonial project in the Spanish Philippines continued to be a complex interplay between civil, military, and religious authorities, with the church and religious orders continuing to play a significant role in the colony, not necessarily because of "backwardness" but rather general convenience.

¹⁹⁹ "Cementerios," *La Oceanía Española*, September 17, 1882.

²⁰⁰ Xavier Huetz de Lempis, "A Matter of Grave Concern: Burial Sites and Funeral Rites in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines," *Philippine Studies* 69, no. 2 (2021): 178-179.

²⁰¹ "La Necrópolis de Manila," *La Oceanía Española*, September 1, 1882.

La Oceanía Española reproduced a cityscape of Manila as a hybrid city between orientalist aspects and European modernization. Through the nineteenth century, notions of sanitation, hygiene and modernization were used by European powers to stigmatise non-European populations, as seen through the results of the International Sanitary Conferences or application of Haussmann-style policies in colonial contexts. The case of Manila shows the effects of such discourses in interplay with the specifics of locality. During the cholera epidemic of 1882, this resulted in the intersection of sanitation discourses with orientalist and marginalisation of Manila's geography, Chinese community, and native population. In contrast to this, the actions of the colonial administration and elites were presented as driven by paternalist duty and aiming to the betterment of the city. The notion of the modern city was introduced in Asia in the late-nineteenth century and scholars have approached it through different processes that developed in tandem to it, such as urban modernization processes and nationalist movements. The case of Spanish Manila shows that the idea of the modern city and modernity could be used to reproduce notions of difference based on cultural difference and articulated through modernist ideologies. Manila's colonial elite legitimised their presence through the modernization of an Oriental city.

VI. Hierarchy and the Colonial City

The relationship between the government in Madrid and the colonial administration in the Philippines was continuously portrayed as having an unflexible dependence on the projects and policies implemented by the colonial government. The new telegraphic technology facilitated constant communications between the peninsular government and the Philippine Archipelago. Daily cable reports were sent by the governor general in Manila to the central government in Madrid.²⁰² The governor general often reported on the communication exchanges between himself and the office of the Minister for Colonial Affairs through channels such as the periodical press.²⁰³ In mid-September a message from the minister praising the governor general for his response to the epidemic as well as stating “how satisfied I [the minister] am by the behaviour of all classes and corporations that dependant on his authority [the governor general’s]”.²⁰⁴ The report on these communications reproduced the image of a tight and hierarchical chain of command running from the government in Madrid to the governor in Manila and lastly to the corporations of the colony.

This rigid line of action did not necessarily correspond with the day-to-day decisions that had to be made by the administration in Manila. It was almost ten days after the epidemic was officially declared in Manila, not to consider the time that cholera had already been hitting the Southern islands of the Philippines, that a message from the minister of colonial affairs was published in the city’s periodical press. In it, the minister communicated the anxious way in which he and the king were following the developments in the colony.²⁰⁵ Days later, a further communication from the Ministry for Colonies was printed in which the government in Madrid ordered the implementation of certain measures to prevent and mitigate the spread of cholera,

²⁰² Huetz de Lempis, “Les Philippines face au ‘Fantôme du Gange’,” 310.

²⁰³ See “Cementerio,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 10, 1882.

²⁰⁴ “Ministerio de Ultramar,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 15, 1882.

²⁰⁵ “Gaceta de Ayer,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 1, 1882.

as well as informing about recommendations issued by the Royal Medical Academy of Madrid during the cholera outbreak in Spain in 1865.²⁰⁶ This order had, however, no effect, as they were similar to the ones already implemented by the colonial administration around two weeks before the ministry's message's arrival.²⁰⁷ This shows that, even if the peninsular government remained a source of authority, legitimacy, and control regarding long term decisions, the day to day of the colony as well as the reaction to crisis situations was beyond its reach.

This touches on themes that are shared by many other developments within Manila as well as with the broader scholarship. It touches on the question of hierarchy, its ideal representations and the logics behind this, as well as the strategies taken to stabilize and reproduce these hierarchies. Taking a broader look at Manila, this can be thought in relation to processes of space production, marginalization, and hazard exposure in relation to phenomena discussed in the previous chapter, such as orientalising images of people and space. Lastly this phenomenon alludes to the blurred nature of hierarchies when focusing on the granularity and margins of representations, as well as on what they sometimes conceal.

This chapter argues that Manila was represented as a place of intersecting global, imperial, and local hierarchies that legitimised the colonial order and the actions of the colonial administration. As such, these hierarchical representations concealed and marginalized certain groups of people and contributed to the (re)production of essentialized racial differences and a hierarchical imagination of the city's space. Reflecting on these representations and considering intersectionality, especially class and gender, within each represented group, and looking at the margins of the periodical representations, reveals that the lines separating groups in the colonial imagination were often crossed in the day-to-day of the colonial city, animating to reflect on the granularity of colonial societies.

²⁰⁶ "Consejos Higienicos. Higiene y Sanidad XVII," *La Oceanía Española*, September 9, 1882.

²⁰⁷ See "Sanidad," August 22, 1882.

Global and Imperial Hierarchies in Manila

The Spanish Philippines were a place in which hierarchies established on global contexts intersected with imperial hierarchies. Mechanisms such as the international sanitary conferences of the nineteenth century helped develop notions of global and imperial hierarchy and served as arenas for empires to impose their interests on the international stage and marginalise groups of actors such as colonised peoples or Muslim pilgrims. European actors were placed on top of a global hierarchy that dictated how policies, such as epidemic mitigation, were implemented.²⁰⁸ In the Philippines, the nineteenth century also saw the introduction of the modern notion of race for the colony's governance that determined the legal racialization of the colony's population.²⁰⁹ Such categorizations allowed the Spanish to integrate Philippine natives in certain areas of the administration while reserving specific positions for Spaniards, aiming to vent in this way dissatisfaction and nationalist feelings among the native elites.²¹⁰ The legal system of the colony presented an image of inflexible hierarchies that aimed to maintain the colonial order.²¹¹ Following these logics, *La Oceanía Española* represented Manila as a place of stiff hierarchies on intersecting global and imperial lines. Hierarchies that resulted from international mechanisms were a point of reference for the newspaper and influenced how different actors and groups were represented in the newspaper, while the hierarchical representation of Manila's society at large aimed at creating a stable imaginary of the colonial city in line with imperial ideology.

References to international discourses were used by *La Oceanía Española* to legitimize colonial hierarchies and the different treatment of actors in Manila. In the middle of the epidemic outbreak, the newspaper published a summary of the conclusions adopted by the

²⁰⁸ Huber, "Pandemics and the Politics of Difference," 401-402; Boyle, "Cholera, Colonialism, and Pilgrimage," 583-589.

²⁰⁹ Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*, 68-73.

²¹⁰ Elizalde, "Filipinas en el marco del Imperio Español," 106.

²¹¹ Elizalde, "Beyond Racial Divisions," 344.

Vienna Sanitary Conference of 1874. While mainly presenting information that was often discussed in other articles, such as the ascribed Asiatic character of the disease, the summary also stressed the role of non-European actors in the transmission of cholera as well as the unanimity regarding this. The article showed the presence of discerning opinions in some questions, such as the possible contagion through the transport of merchandise, as such a point concerned the commercial interest of the imperial powers.²¹² On another note, the article reproduces the marginalisation of non-Europeans by highlighting caravans in Egypt and the Levant as agents that caused the spread of the disease.²¹³ Following Caimari's argumentation regarding the way the periodical press framed international information for its readership to make local sense of it,²¹⁴ such representations helped legitimize colonial difference.

Such hierarchies materialized in the privileged treatment and representation of European actors. On the one hand, the Chinese community of the city was represented as the Oriental other, uncivilised and threatening to the city's hygiene, as was described in the previous chapter. The opposite case is shown by the case of Robers William Twis, a young Dutchman who arrived at Manila around the time that the epidemic began in the city. A short article under the title "Distinguished Traveller" was published on the twenty-ninth of August. In it, Twis was described as "a young man travelling for instructive and recreational purposes." The article further informs that Twis had become greatly concerned about the situation of the poor people of Manila during the cholera epidemic, for which reason he would organize a charity concert in which he would play the violin. It was further written that "We [the author] had the pleasure personally greet Mr. Twis, whom we now know is a highly polite and educated person," later stating that his arrival was of benefit to the city.²¹⁵ In contrast to the Chinese, the

²¹² Huber, "Pandemics and the Politics of Difference," 399-401.

²¹³ "Resumen de las conclusiones adoptadas por la conferencia sanitaria internacional de Viena," *La Oceanía Española*, September 13, 1882.

²¹⁴ Caimari, *Cities and News*, 4.

²¹⁵ "Viajero distinguido," *La Oceanía Española*, August 29, 1882.

presence of Twis, even during a cholera epidemic, was represented as something positive, highlighting the Dutchman's education and desire to help the colonised, pointing at the notion of civilisation mission not as a phenomenon specific to a specific empire, but one that was imagined as a shared mission for Europeans.

The journal's representations of Manila as a space of imperial hierarchies were also supported through allusions to the city as a militarized place. The issues of *La Oceanía Española* contained every day, on the front page, information about the daily military order in the city, including the commanding officer on duty for the day and any special movements that would take place in the city on the day in question. The presence of the military in the city and the representation of this in the periodical press highlight the nature of the Spanish colonial presence in the Philippines. This was often legitimized through various discourses and ideologies as already discussed, but the main facilitator of the Spanish colonial project was the constant threat and use of military force, seen in the nineteenth century through the military campaigns across the archipelago that aimed to consolidate Spanish rule,²¹⁶ as well as in the constant presence of troops within Manila.

As Manila was hit with cholera, the reaction of the colonial administration was one that, at least formally, followed the hierarchical ideals of the colonial order. On the twenty-first of August, the first cases of cholera were recognised in the city. The government reacted by calling for a meeting of all relevant authorities and corporations at the residence of the governor-general, the palace of Malacañang. *La Oceanía Española* reported on it, stating that the meeting was attended by the "top military and civil officials of the city, including the sanitary chiefs of the army and navy, the colony's Sanitary Council, all officers responsible for military institutes, representatives of religious orders, Manila's city council, all of the city's parish priests, the

²¹⁶ Elizalde, "Beyond Racial Divisions," 355

gobernadorcillos of the suburbs, and the *gobernadorcillo de chinos*.”²¹⁷ The “proper” way to react to the crisis was to call on the military and religious groups that helped perpetuate Spanish authority in the colony, as well as on the civil authorities responsible for the different demographic groups that lived in Manila, pointing to the government’s segregated approach to government. The offices of the *gobernadorcillos* were not responsible for the entirety of the populations of their respective suburbs, but rather for a portion of it that fell into the racial categorization of their office. As such, each suburb counted with a *gobernadorcillo de naturales* and a *gobernadorcillo de mestizos*. Furthermore, the *gobernadorcillo de chinos* was responsible for all Chinese in the city. This approach to managing the city’s population had a practical purpose, making the implementation of laws and regulations in the different communities of the city less difficult for the administration.²¹⁸ However, this segregation of the administration also reproduced the ideal hierarchies formulated through global and imperial ideologies, especially when considering the segregation of the *mestizo* community from rest of the population on the basis of this groups being closer to the Spaniards.

This also applied to the main mechanism through which the administration implemented measures against the epidemic, the parish committees. As their name suggests, these councils were under the supervision of a parish priest were in charge of specific neighbourhoods of the city and counted with the support of one official of the *Guardia Veterana*, the city’s police force, the local *gobernadorcillos*, five local, wealthy neighbours with good reputation and knowledge of the neighbourhood, as well as other priests sent by the archbishop to support these councils. The parish councils were in charge of implementing the inspections of the city’s streets and markets, making home visits to inspect the sanitary state of the neighbourhood’s homes, sending reports to the Sanitary Council, establishing centres were

²¹⁷ “Sanidad,” August 22, 1882.

²¹⁸ Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*, 68-81; “Comunicado,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 15, 1882.

local people could ask for assistance and receive some medicines, as well as sending sick people to the emergency hospitals that were established in each of the city's suburbs.²¹⁹ These organs were seen as so indispensable that the governor general disposed an increase to their budget on the first week of September, and later wrote a letter to be published in the city's newspapers praising their effective work in fighting the epidemic, as well as announcing his plan to reproduce such structures on an even more localized way.²²⁰ The reporting on the Parish Councils shows the intense and dependent collaboration between the colonial state and church institutions. Zooming into the streets of the city, the colonial state's physical power in the form of the officers of the *Guardia Veterana*, accompanied by priests reaching into intimate spaces attempting to impose the colonial sanitary order set up by the governor-general.

This order ideally foresaw a complete segregation of the Chinese from the rest of Manila's population. Global as well as local trends identified the Chinese as a threat in a political, cultural or medical sense.²²¹ Despite the establishment of the parish councils, the *gobernadorcillo de chinos* was responsible for inspecting the living quarters of the Chinese in the city.²²² After the twenty-first of August, it was also decided that the Chinese community would "organise its own council and will, independently and out of its own pocket, establish a Chinese hospital for the treatment of individuals of said nationality under the care of Spanish doctors."²²³ Contrary to the many negative representations of the Chinese community in Manila, one article published in late August praised their communal reaction to the epidemic, as well as the relatively low numbers of infections and deaths among them, pointing to the good organisation of the Chinese community to explain this.²²⁴ The ideal representation of the

²¹⁹ "Sanidad," August 22, 1882; "Juntas Parroquiales," *La Oceanía Española*, September 12, 1882.

²²⁰ "Mas dinero," *La Oceanía Española*, September 7, 1882; "Juntas Parroquiales."

²²¹ Galang, "Los Chinos Macanistas," 42-53.

²²² "Sanidad," *La Oceanía Española*, July 19, 1882.

²²³ "Sanidad," August 22, 1882.

²²⁴ "Importancia de la Higiene en las grandes poblaciones," *La Oceanía Española*, August 31, 1882.

Chinese community imagined them separated from the rest of the city, even presenting the community in a positive light at the moment it was perceived to be isolated by colonial institutions.

(Re)Producing Difference and Marginalization

Hierarchic ideals in urban colonial contexts were also expressed in the (re)production of urban space. Scholars have discussed the role of imperial ideologies in these processes. Marinelli points to colonial urban space as an “ideologically constructed universe,” in which the hierarchic relations between different actors helped to give meaning to this space and the delimitations within it, considering questions such as “ethnicity, morality, and hygienic modernity.”²²⁵ On a similar line, Carminati, discussing the difference that existed between different groups within colonial cities, argues that this spatial arrangements imposed by dominant powers over time.²²⁶ As García shows, urban centres were of prime importance for Spanish colonialism, being centres of power concentration important for the perpetuation and legitimization of colonial presence. Within these spaces, García argues, physical spatial relations and exclusion were key in the exercise of imperial power.²²⁷ The colonial city as an imperial centre was imagined along the lines of power relations and ideology.

Manila’s colonial administration and elites used sanitation policy and the epidemic crisis to reproduce hierarchic imaginations of the city and reshape Manila along these lines. Several authors point to the sometimes brutal and marginalizing ways in which colonial authorities reacted to such situations, mainly through the targeting and scapegoating of the poorer portions of urban populations.²²⁸ In her work on cities and disasters, Cindy Ermus

²²⁵ Marinelli, “Making concessions in Tianjin,” 406-409.

²²⁶ Carminati, “Dividing and Ruling a Mediterranean Port-City,” 38.

²²⁷ García, *Beyond the Walled City*, 7-11.

²²⁸ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 64-65; Prashant Kidambi, “‘An infection of locality’: plague, pythogenesis and the poor in Bombay, c. 1896–1905,” *Urban History* 31, no. 2 (2004): 249-252.

applies the concepts of hazard, vulnerability and resilience to understand how phenomena such as epidemics affect different groups within a city in function of how elites (re)produced unequal spaces within the city.²²⁹ Michael D. Pante points to the marginalization of the working classes in Manila through the American colonial period and setting a continuity that can be observed as recently as 2020 during the Coronavirus pandemic, describing the ways in which the city's working classes have been scapegoated, pushed to the city's margins and further marginalized there.²³⁰ This phenomenon, however, goes beyond the American period and into the Spanish policies of the late nineteenth century. The hierarchization of the city was legitimized through a variety of discourses, as was shown previously, but the differences between these groups were constructed and reproduced by the policies of the colonial administration and the representations of this in the periodical press, resulting in hierarchic notions of space within Manila and a reaction to crisis, such as the cholera epidemic in 1882, in which colonial elites pushed to strengthen and reproduce this space.

The colonial administration and elites imagined the city as a segregated space and reproduced such imaginations through representations of the population as such. The various statistics that were published by *La Oceanía Española* regarding the population's health, including vaccinations, deaths, or the number of sick people in the city's hospitals, were discussed in the previous chapter. These statistics not only helped create a representation of the city as a manageable place but also represented the population as segregated. All the statistical reports published in the newspaper divided the information along ethnic lines, mentioning the number of hospitalized Chinese in hospital reports or segregation vaccination and inhumation

²²⁹ Ermus, *Urban Disasters*, 1-7.

²³⁰ Michael D. Pante, "The Penalty of Mobility in Manila during Periods of Public Health Crises," *Philippine Studies* 68, no. 3-4 (2020): 484-487; Michael D. Pante, "Urban Mobility and a Healthy City: Intertwined Transport and Public Health Policies in American-Colonial Manila," *Philippine Studies* 64, no. 1 (2016): 74-97.

numbers along ethnic lines.²³¹ As Appadurai argues, these colonial statistical practices were intrinsically different from metropolitan practices, as they helped create a hierarchical society based on differences that followed colonial logics.²³² The health statistics of the city stabilized the hierarchical imagination of the city while highlighting the relevance of this hierarchization for the health and sanitary situation of the city, linking it especially with the ethnic divisions within it in a seemingly objective manner and reproducing the anxieties of the colonial elite's regarding the Chinese in Manila.

The reproduction of difference within the city's population was furthered through the projects implemented by the administration to modernize the city. As Huetz de Lempis shows, the waterworks inaugurated in Manila in July 1882 did not supply the city in an equal way because the concentration of fountains was higher in the wealthy districts of the city, especially in Intramuros and the wealthier parts of Binondo.²³³ Furthermore, the waterworks aimed to diminish the city's dependence on Chinese *cargadores*, who, as Jely Galang discusses, played a crucial role in providing clean drinking water to Manila's population.²³⁴ However, an article published by *La Oceanía Española* in August pointed to the continued dependence on these *cargadores* in the city and the continuing problem of providing clean water to certain areas of the city due to the limited amount of water fountains.²³⁵ This example shows the marginalizing effect that modernizing projects could have on the city, as it not only prioritized certain areas and groups, but through this, it also increased the vulnerability of peripheral spaces and their inhabitants to phenomena such as epidemics.

²³¹ "Hospital San Juan de Dios," *La Oceanía Española*, June 15, 1882; "Casa central de vacuna," *La Oceanía Española*, July 6, 1882; Inhumaciones," *La Oceanía Española*, September 7, 1882.

²³² Appadurai, "Number in the Colonial Imagination," 315-319.

²³³ Costelo, "The Manila Waterworks System," 184-185.

²³⁴ Galang, "Living Carriers in the East," 71-108.

²³⁵ "Chinos cargadores," *La Oceanía Española*, August 6, 1882.

Spaces inhabited by the urban poor were made vulnerable through a diverse array of practices. The inhabitants of these neighbourhoods and districts were also marginalized by the administration and elites, creating a cycle of vulnerability, marginalization, and stigmatization. The case of the San Nicolás neighbourhood of Binondo shows this clearly. Binondo was where most of Manila's Chinese population lived, and the city's elite characterized it and its inhabitants as dirty and dangerous to the city's health.²³⁶ San Nicolás was one of the poorer areas in Binondo, and throughout the epidemic of 1882, a series of articles were published in *La Oceanía Española* describing its bad sanitary state that resulted from the disposal of waste at the San Nicolás Estuary. A letter sent by inhabitants of Binondo to the regidor of the district. In it, they reported of the disposal of organic waste by the city's waste disposal charts, reporting on the bad smells that resulted from this and asking the *regidor* to intervene in the situation.²³⁷ Some days later, an article was published informing about the persistence of this practice and the danger it constituted to the neighbourhood's health as miasmas emanated from the decomposing organic matter that was deposited at the estuary, and pointing out that San Nicolás was already being badly hit by the epidemic.²³⁸ The miasma question was often discussed in relation to Binondo, as it housed a community represented as unsanitary.²³⁹ But the question of waste disposal in San Nicolás shows that the complaints and anxieties of the colonial elite regarding this neighbourhood did not exist in a vacuum, but were (re)produced by practices of the colonial administration that caused bad smells related to miasma and indeed made the area more vulnerable to cholera, as the contamination of water became a serious danger.

This focus on the Chinese and on the poorer areas of the city was also expressed in the newspaper by calls to increase controls over the living and working spaces of these groups as

²³⁶ See Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*, 75-77; "Es necesario. Remitido."

²³⁷ "Queja justísima," *La Oceanía Española*, September 5, 1882.

²³⁸ "Los vecinos de San Nicolás," *La Oceanía Española*, September 10, 1882.

²³⁹ "En Binondo"; See also Kidambi, "An infection of locality," 249-252.

parts of narratives that scapegoated specific groups during epidemic outbreaks.²⁴⁰ Marketplaces were a place that *La Oceanía Española* identified as potential dangers to the city.²⁴¹ The newspaper further called for its readers to be on the lookout for unsanitary behaviours or places and to report these to the authorities when seen.²⁴² This need for increased controls was not deemed necessary by the colonial elite when concerning places of work owned by Europeans. On early-September, *La Oceanía Española* printed a message from the governor general in which he admonished the importance of maintaining a usual working schedule to stay healthy and cholera free. Discussing the cigar fabrics of the city, the governor announced that they could stay open even though the workers there laboured on crowded rooms, something that was prohibited by the measures implemented by his government in August. However, he stated that “it has been scientifically demonstrated that tobacco is a powerful disinfectant, and this is further proved by the experience in the cigar fabric in *Arroceros*, in which no cases of cholera have been reported.”²⁴³ The invocation of science was used again to legitimize the exemption of regulations within an industry that continued to be a monopoly of the colonial state.²⁴⁴

On the other hand, businesses that were in the hand of non-Europeans stood under heavy scrutiny during the epidemic. On the nineteenth of August, before the first cases of cholera were announced in Manila, *La Oceanía Española* published an article calling for the closing of the tanneries, an industry not dominated by Spaniards. The article attacked the owners of the tanneries for arguing that they did not present a risk to the city. The author stated that their processes included the use of organic materials that “decomposed and exuded

²⁴⁰ For similar arguments regarding scapegoating of marginalised peoples during epidemics see Boyle, “Cholera, Colonialism, and Pilgrimage,” 581-604; Kidambi, “‘An infection of locality’,” 249-267.

²⁴¹ “Vigilancia en los mercados,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 24, 1882.

²⁴² “Queja,” *La Oceanía Española*, July 2, 1882.

²⁴³ “Alocución de la autoridad superior,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 6, 1882.

²⁴⁴ Elizalde, “Filipinas en el contexto del Imperio Española,” 99.

emanations that are of prejudice to the health.”²⁴⁵ Tanneries were a common source of anxiety in epidemic situations, as they worked with vegetable and animal organic materials and intense odours indeed came out of these workshops, as Carbone exposes in the case of late-nineteenth-century Buenos Aires and the intense debates that exploded during cholera epidemics regarding the city’s tanning industry.²⁴⁶ The fact remains that the tobacco industry also worked with organic materials. Thus, the lack of regulations for cigar manufacturers in Manila in 1882 may be ascribed on the one hand to the lack of intense odours but also to the fact that it was the Spaniards that profited from this industry.

The intense control of living quarters led to the reproduction of hierarchic spaces in the city. The problem of crowded houses was a great source of anxiety for *La Oceanía Española*, as it often published articles to call the attention of the authorities to specific buildings or neighbourhoods where the authors thought too many people were living and could be more prone to cholera.²⁴⁷ The newspaper reported especially frequently from the controls conducted in *Intramuros*, as they were found to be living in insalubrious conditions.²⁴⁸ One article also points to the fact that the people evicted from houses in *Intramuros* were mainly natives.²⁴⁹ The newspaper also informed that two makeshift barracks had been built by the administration in La Loma and at the beach of Santa Lucía to quarter the evicted Chinese and natives respectively.²⁵⁰ The sanitary measures implemented by the administration reinforced an imagination of Manila *Intramuros* as a space reserved for Europeans, as it had legally been until the late eighteenth century, through the forced moving of natives and Chinese to peripheral areas of the city.

²⁴⁵ “Las Tenerías,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 19, 1882.

²⁴⁶ Carbone, *Epidemic Cities*, 32-40.

²⁴⁷ See “Como lo piden,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 23, 1882.

²⁴⁸ “Precauciones,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 20, 1882.

²⁴⁹ “Importancia de la Higiene en las grandes poblaciones.”

²⁵⁰ “Camarines,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 29, 1882.

It was not only through the expulsion of non-Europeans from Intramuros that imagination of this space as exclusive was reproduced, but also through calls to maintain the signs and effects of cholera away from it. Such was the case as the residents of the walled city protested plans to build a makeshift hospital in La Luneta, a park adjacent to Intramuros in the South.²⁵¹ Thinking of this together with the evictions taking place in the district points to the representation of Intramuros as a European space that should be free from the dangers associated with other demographic groups of Manila and their relation to cholera.

The residents of the city's poorer suburbs complained on the other hand about the lack of medical attention their residents could receive due to the lack of doctors and places to receive this help in their districts, pointing to the lack of attention by the city's administration in addressing these areas of the city as a systemic problem and not specific to the epidemic. This problem becomes clear as, after the outbreak of cholera, reports about the lack of doctors in the poor districts and of overworked doctors working over long shifts to provide care in such areas, appeared in *La Oceanía Española*.²⁵² The *gobernadorcillos* of these districts, such as Santa Cruz, also sent messages to the newspaper to highlight the complicated situation of the suburbs because of the lack of doctors there.²⁵³ The population of these areas was more vulnerable to the epidemic as hospitals and doctors were concentrated in the wealthier areas of the city.

Beyond the Ideal Representation

Colonial port cities are often approached as places of intersecting networks.²⁵⁴ John Griffiths considers the diverse networks present at the colonial port city, including political, economic, and ethnic networks, arguing that all of them played a considerable role in the social and

²⁵¹ "La mejor situación para un hospital," *La Oceanía Española*, August 27, 1882.

²⁵² "Consejos Higiénicos. Higiene y Sanidad XIV."

²⁵³ "Comunicado."

²⁵⁴ See Bernard Z. Keo, "Colonial City, Global Entanglements: Intra-and Trans-Imperial Networks in George Town, 1786–1937," *Journal of World History* 35, no. 1 (2024): 1–32.

political development of such cities.²⁵⁵ Antonio Ibarra and Fernando Jumar also argue for an approach to imperial cities and their inhabitants through the consideration of the diverse networks that existed in them and the way these determined how individuals interacted with each other.²⁵⁶ Brad Beaven, Karl Bell, and Robert James propose an approach to these cities that focuses on the “shared maritime traditions that linked port town cultures.”²⁵⁷ These approaches to the colonial port city highlight an aspect that, as was discussed in Chapter IV, was prioritized by the colonial elites, and while they offer insightful perspectives, may also neglect phenomena that cannot be encapsulated within the concept of the network, such as the granularity of marginalized groups and even of colonial societies in general.

The (re)production of urban space as one of hierarchy, segregation or marginalization was a process that took place both through ideology and representation, as well as through diverse political and social practices. This space, however, remains complex and full of contradictions. Ewen highlights the ideological reproduction of urban spaces as male-dominated, with women being pushed to the margins through the appearance of the modern city, while Su Lin Lewis provides a perspective that shows how these urban spaces also provided women with more room for expression and freedom in colonial contexts.²⁵⁸ In the colonial context of the Philippines, Elizalde points to the porousness of many of the imperial hierarchies that, through colonial law, appeared to dominate life in the archipelago, including spaces such as politics, education, or business.²⁵⁹ While *La Oceanía Española*’s representations of Manila followed the dominant tones of imperial and elite ideology, looking closely at them,

²⁵⁵ John Griffiths, “On the Margins of Empire: Antipodean Port Cities and Imperial Culture c 1880-1939,” in *Port Towns and Urban Cultures. International Histories of the Waterfront, c. 1700-2000*, eds. Brad Beaven, Karl Bell, Robert James (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 107.

²⁵⁶ Antonio Ibarra, Fernando Jumar, “Introducción: Imperio poroso y redes sociales: del espacio local al mundo global,” *Illes i Imperis* 18 (2016): 10.

²⁵⁷ Brad Beaven, Karl Bell, Robert James, “Introduction,” in *Port Towns and Urban Cultures: International Histories of the Waterfront, c. 1700–2000*, eds. Brad Beaven, Karl Bell and Robert James (Cambridge University Press, 2017), 2.

²⁵⁸ Lewis, *Cities in Motion*, 15-16.

²⁵⁹ Elizalde, “Beyond Racial Divisions,” 349-361.

at their margins, and at what they conceal, points to the granularity of Manila's colonial society, in which difference was not necessarily produced along ethnic lines, but rather by class, and in which interactions between different individuals and groups, as well as the marginalization of others, may be explained by the considering of intersection, giving a depth to the colonial port city that could not be encompassed by only considering it as a place of crossing networks.

Following the dominant gender discourses of nineteenth-century Spain, *La Oceanía Española* represented Manila as a male dominated space. As Nerea Aresti argues, in the second half of the century, ideal images of women's role in society were developed under the influence of traditionalist Christian thought, liberalism, and modern scientific discourses. While discerning about specifics, the ideals created by these hegemonic discourses had the commonality that women's place was not in the public sphere, while at the same time struggled to define a common notion of the domestic.²⁶⁰ Considering this, it is possible to understand the marginal representation of women in the newspaper, and furthermore, to understand why they were represented in specific occasions, considering as well that the limited invisibility in the newspaper would not necessarily coincide with the day-to-day in the city.

In late August of 1882, cholera had raged in the Philippine archipelago for over a month before having reached Manila. Around this time, the Countess of Arzarcollar, daughter of the governor general, called for a "Ladies Committee" to meet at the residence of the governor to address the question of orphans that had lost their parents to cholera throughout the archipelago, stating that "Manilas ladies have always answered charity's call".²⁶¹ *La Oceanía Española* reported on the meeting and on its resolution to open an orphanage to house these children. The author of the article wrote "You, ladies, will be from now on adoptive mothers to these little

²⁶⁰ Nerea Aresti Esteban, "El ángel del hogar y sus demonios. Ciencia, religion y género en la Espana del siglo XIX," *Historia Contemporánea* 21 (2000): 363-365.

²⁶¹ "Invitación," *La Oceanía Española*, August 27, 1882.

orphans and also to those who might, by providence's design, come to be in the future of this capital. Yes, you will be their tender and compassionate mothers." The author saw this as both the national and Christian obligation of these women, commenting on the calling of Christian charity, as well as on similar projects that took place in European cities.²⁶² Manila's Ladies Committee was called to motherhood through modernist and religious discourses, pointing again to the coexistence of notions of modernity alongside religiosity, as well as representing the ideal of femininity in the colonial order. The articles reporting on these caritative developments are probably the only occasions during the analysed period in which women are explicitly placed at the centre of the newspaper's narrative.

Furthermore, this ideal of femininity was not limited to a specific ethnic group. The committee called for "Spanish ladies" and "pious Filipinas" to take part in this project.²⁶³ This not only points to the fact that ideals of femininity were not exclusive to Spanish women, but also to collaborations and interactions between Spanish women and Philippine native women from the accommodated classes. Contrary to more frequent representations in the newspaper that highlighted the hierarchic character of the city and its society along ethnic lines, the Women's Committee shows the relevance of class in determining the city's social hierarchies, even if ethnicity is not completely discarded, as the committee's distinguished between Spanish *damas*, ladies or dames, and pious Filipinas, possibly alluding to the civilizing role that Spaniards, as well as other colonial empires, attributed to Christianity.²⁶⁴

Spanish ideals of femininity also influenced essentialized representations of native women. In an article previously discussed, *La Oceanía Española* reproduced an image of the native family's daily life in which the man of the family left every day to work while the woman

²⁶² "Junta de señoras en Malacañang," *La Oceanía Española*, August 29, 1882.

²⁶³ "Socorros para huérfanos," *La Oceanía Española*, September 13, 1882.

²⁶⁴ See Luengo, Dalmau, "Writing Spanish history in the global age," 434.

stayed at home throughout the day to take care of their children and left the house in the afternoon only to buy food, returning later to the house to cook dinner.²⁶⁵ The “average” native woman was imagined as confined to the domestic sphere. However, native women participated both in the regular and irregular economy of the city, as shown by the treatment of certain questions in the newspaper. The tobacco fabrics of the city, which represented an important part of Spanish interest in the colony, employed native women not only in manufacturing, but also in supervising positions, as alluded to by an article discussing the work at these fabrics during the epidemic that referred to the female *maestras*, the workers, and the *cabecillas*, heads of the working groups.²⁶⁶

While reporting on the different facets of the epidemic in Manila, *La Oceanía Española* also included different groups of women that moved beyond the spaces reserved for them in dominant Spanish discourses. Since the beginning of the outbreak in Manila, the question of increased meat prices at the city’s markets became a commonly discussed topic in the newspaper. This increase was attributed to native women from the lower classes referred to somewhat derogatorily as *ñoras* (shortened from *señora*), who bought meat directly from the butchers around the city and resold the meat at the markets.²⁶⁷ As a reaction to this, the city’s government intervened by establishing a centre at the *Arroceros* market for selling meat bought by the administration in an attempt to stabilize the meat prices. *La Oceanía Española* wrote that this had brought the *ñoras* to take their prices down.²⁶⁸ This shows that women played a role in public spaces of Manila and that their actions in this context were relevant enough to be addressed both by the city’s administration and by a newspaper that usually concealed female actors, considering however that in this case the *ñoras* were referred to derogatorily.

²⁶⁵ “La alimentación del indígena.”

²⁶⁶ “Alocución de la autoridad superior.”

²⁶⁷ “Lo de la carne,” *La Oceanía Española*, August 24, 1882.

²⁶⁸ “Venta de carne,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 15, 1882.

A further group of women that were present in newspaper reports during the epidemic were the *hermanas de la caridad*, nuns of the Daughters of St. Vincent of Paul. These nuns, as the other religious orders in the Philippines, took an important role in the missionary and educational activities of the Spanish in the colony.²⁶⁹ During the cholera epidemic, the sisters played an important role in the operations of the city's hospitals, as the newspaper reported of their zealous work at the cholera hospitals.²⁷⁰ This is remarkable as in the descriptions of their work what is highlighted is not only the charitable aspect of their work, but also characterizations of bravery and fearlessness, as well as an unintended contrast between the work done by priests at the hospitals, which was limited to the administration of sacraments to the cholera-sick, while highlighting the work of the sisters directly caring for the sick.²⁷¹ These reports and representations help to understand why women were marginalised or concealed in the narratives of *La Oceanía Española*, as the editors and writers of the newspaper propagated a specific ideal of femininity that was represented only in an appropriate context, while on the other hand revealing that in colonial Manila there was not one female experience, but rather a diverse array of them that depended on intersections of class and ethnicity.

The question of intersection must be considered in the approach to other groups represented by *La Oceanía Española* especially as the journal's dominant narratives represented the city's non-European in essentialized ways. Contrary to this the Chinese community of the city and its *gremio* were both characterized by their diversity.²⁷² Rich and influential Chinese interacted with the city's administration, contributed to the shaping of the city, and participated in public ceremonies. In the planning of the cemetery of La Loma that was opened during the epidemic, the colonial authorities worked together with the heads of the

²⁶⁹ Elizalde, "Filipinas en el marco del Imperio Español," 107-110.

²⁷⁰ "Sanidad," *La Oceanía Española*, August 26, 1882.

²⁷¹ "Pastoral."

²⁷² See Galang, "Los Chinos *Macanistas*," 40-70; For a comprehensive work Manila's Chinese population in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries see Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila*.

Chinese *gremio* in the designation of the cemetery's areal, as a portion of the land belonged to them.²⁷³ The same elites of the *gremio* participated in the celebrations of the opening of the city's waterworks that were mentioned earlier in this work by building a moving pagoda surrounded by musicians that would accompany the public civic procession of the city's authorities to the inauguration site in Sampaloc.²⁷⁴ In contrast to these reports stood the sporadic mentions of the Chinese gangs of *cargadores* that did heavy manual work by transporting different goods around the city.²⁷⁵ Seeing Manila's Chinese community as a monolith would miss its complexity and diversity.

The scholarship on the diversity within the native society is rich and approaches topics such as marginalization, the development of economic, political, or cultural elites, as well as the development of the Philippine national movement.²⁷⁶ In *La Oceanía Española*, this diversity is only marginally represented. The representation of natives was done in essentializing fashions. It is only through small passages that different groups between the native population become visible, such as in the case of native women participating the Ladies Committee, or in calls for charity in which the native elites were asked for donations.²⁷⁷ Discussing Mumbai's modernization, Preeti Chopra argues that it is essential to consider this a joint enterprise between the colonial administration and native elites.²⁷⁸ The marginal allusions to native elites in *La Oceanía Española* show the cooperation between the Spanish and native elites of the city but also show that this was not something highlighted by the Spanish elites.

While the colonial administration attempted to formally conceal transgressions to the idealized order, policy implementation acknowledged these crossing of lines. An order of the

²⁷³ "La necrópolis de Manila."

²⁷⁴ "Para los festejos," *La Oceanía Española*, July 8, 1882.

²⁷⁵ "Es un error," *La Oceanía Española*, September 7, 1882; See Galang, "Living Carriers in the East," 71-108.

²⁷⁶ E.g., CuUnjieng Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation*.

²⁷⁷ "La Caridad," *La Oceanía Española*, August 27, 1882.

²⁷⁸ Preeti Chopra, *A Joint Enterprise. Indian Elites and the Making of British Bombay* (University of Minnesota Press, 2011), xii.

colony's administration to regulate the orphanage initiated by the Ladies Committee was published by the journal. The order defined the individuals that would be eligible for assistance at the orphanage. These were children of up to fifteen years, and while the ordinance stated that help would be provided to any individual in need, it still listed before this the eligible children in function to the ethnicity of their parents, starting with civil and military officials that leave their children without resources after dying, followed by sons of peninsular and insular (born in the Philippines) Spaniards in similar circumstances, and then mentioning the natives.²⁷⁹ This perpetuates a formal concealment or marginal representation of the different mestizo groups in the newspaper, even as they represented a considerable portion of the native elites and whose existence was legally covered by colonial law. This may be explained by the rigidity of imperial discourse regarding hierarchy and segregation. This order covers the possibility of impoverished Spaniards living in the city, a topic otherwise absent in the newspaper as well as in scholarship. Representations and regulations formally concealed transgressions to colonial order while integrating its possibility in them.

These considerations show the complexity of social interactions within Manila, which in some cases challenged or contradicted the rigid order that the colonial elites represented through media and tried to impose and reproduce through policies and projects. This encourages us to challenge colonial representations and discourses, as well as to consider intersections regarding both colonisers and colonised to escape the reproduction of essentialized imaginaries. Thinking of this, it is thus fruitful to look beyond networks when approaching the question of empire and the port city, looking at this urban space as an arena in which empire was manifest in a complex and “imperfect” way.

²⁷⁹ “Socorro a Huerfanos,” *La Oceanía Española*, September 20, 1882.

La Oceanía Española represented Manila as a space of strict hierarchy. The nineteenth century saw the development of global hierarchies in tandem with globalization and the emergence of cholera and the authorities of the Spanish Philippines implemented reforms to modernize the codification of difference and hierarchy in the colony. The journal's representations showed an image of intersecting global and imperial hierarchies that legitimized the colonial order and the actions of the colonial administration, representing the government in Madrid and European international mechanisms as sources of authority. Hierarchy as well as imperial and racist ideologies played a central role in the production of space in urban colonial contexts. During the cholera epidemic of 1882, sanitation discourses were used to reproduce a hierarchic cityscape of Manila along ethnic and economic lines. Elizalde points to the complexity of social interactions in the Spanish Philippines and the many ways in which lines of difference and hierarchy were crossed. Considering intersections of class and gender in the representations of *La Oceanía Española* highlights the crossing of formal hierarchic lines and the transgression of idealizations in Manila. While the journal's hegemonic representation showed strict formal hierarchies, a closer look at them reveal a more complex image.

VII. Conclusion

In 1882, the topic of cholera was prominent in the issues of *La Oceanía Española* between the months of June and September, becoming dominant as the disease reached the Manila in mid-August and considerably dwindling from late-September and until the end of the epidemic in the Philippines in January of 1883. The themes present in the representations of the city by the newspaper during this period were not, however, portraying the epidemic in the city as an isolated phenomenon, but rather touched on processes, ideas, and anxieties of the colonial elites that transcended the epidemic and pointed to crucial aspects of the colonial imagination of Manila, including the city's port, its Oriental "nature," and its modernization. This work has asked how Manila's positionality as an Asian colonial port city determines the city's representations by *La Oceanía Española*, considering the ideologies projected on the city and how they dealt with the many contradictions of the city as the cholera epidemic highlighted many of the tensions present in Manila.

I have argued that Manila was represented as a hybrid space that stood between colonial ideals of modernity and orientalist tradition. This hybrid representation of the city was based on notions of cultural superiority and legitimized the Spanish colonial presence and the order it imposed, while marginalizing aspects, such as actors and practices, that did not fit into the colonial imagination of the city. Ideals of modernity were fitted into imperial ideologies and highlighted representations of steam mobility, effective sanitary policy, and imperial hierarchies, while the margins of these representations help understand the complexity and granularity of Manila and its society.

The representations of the city's port were prominent in the newspaper. The highlighting of steam technology through constant and prominent representations of steamships moving in and out the city's port in the front-pages of *La Oceanía Española*, as

well as the inclusion of telegraphic news from the rest of the world contributed to the colonial imagination of Manila as a place of connection. As cholera started spreading in Southeast Asia, these technologies prove to not only facilitate connection, but also disconnection, as shown through the role of telegraphic communication in the closing of ports, and the view of the Manila's port as a gateway for the disease to come into the city. Furthermore, looking closer at the daily information given by the newspaper, such as numbers provided by the customs and port authorities, points to the complexity of movement around the port, helping highlight the role of human agency in this phenomenon characterized by slowness, confusion, and frustration, as pointed out by articles describing the lack of labour at the customs office and reports of the burdens caused by quarantines during the cholera outbreak. Lastly, looking at marginal spaces of the newspaper reveals the hierarchical views of mobilities and mobile actors, as the large amounts of ships were marginally represented, and non-European actors were concealed. The port city was thus represented as a site of imperial modernity and connection, concealing the complexity of the city and what was perceived as traditional and Oriental.

The imagination of Manila reproduced by *La Oceanía Española* was full of contradiction, resulting in a hybrid image of the city, between the orientalist and colonial modernity. The city's geography and its inhabitants were represented in orientalist ways, relating the Asian context of the city to cholera, identifying the Chinese community of the city as an exotic, dangerous, and superstitious "other" and infantilizing the native population. With the cholera outbreak, the influence of global sanitary discourses on the colonial ideals of modernity became more visible, as germ and miasma theories were paternally expressed alongside representations of the sanitation efforts of the administration, such as controls over the city and the response to the cholera epidemic. Even as the newspaper framed its representations through scientific discourse, it offered considerable space to Christian religious practices as ways of addressing the cholera epidemic, in contrast, e.g., to Chinese religious

practices, pointing to the role of notions of cultural superiority in the use of modernization and sanitation discourses by colonial powers.

Manila was represented as a site of intersecting global and imperial hierarchies that legitimised the colonial order and the actions of the colonial administration, representing the government in Madrid and European international mechanisms, such as the International Sanitary Conferences, as sources of authority. These hierarchies concealed and marginalized certain groups and contributed to the reproduction of essentialized racial differences and the hierarchical imagination of the city's space, as shown by the calls for and reports of living spaces of poor Chinese and native Filipinos in Intramuros, as well as the expulsion of these groups to peripheral spaces of the city. Further reflecting on this and considering the intersectionality of class and gender at the margins of newspaper representations speaks of a more complex urban space where ideal lines were frequently crossed, as shown through the role native women took in the urban workforce or members of the native elites took alongside the Spanish population.

This thesis has offered an urban perspective into the global historiography of the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire. Building on scholarship from Global and Urban History, as well as from Spanish and Philippine historiography, it has addressed open questions regarding port cities and empire in the nineteenth century. The case of nineteenth-century Manila proves insightful as it touches on the question of peripherality in a twofold manner. On the one hand, Manila's peripheral position within the global context of the late nineteenth century highlights the relevance of global processes for marginal spaces. This is seen in the effects the spread of cholera had on the mobilities around Manila's port, the relevance of global sanitary and medical discourses in the development of the city, or the interplay of global and local discourses in the marginalisation of groups. On the other hand, considering Manila and the peripheral position of the Spanish Empire in the nineteenth century allows a more nuanced

analysis of modernization imaginaries and discourses as cultural tools of empire, as highlighted by the development of narratives of connection at the port, or the legitimization of empire through representations of modernization in the city. Manila shows the complexities of nineteenth century empire.

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IX. Figures

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