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Rethinking colonialism through early modern global diplomacy: A tale of Pampangan mobility

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Abstract

This study is an intervention in early modern global diplomacy. Integrating an indigenous community of the Philippines into foreign relations and maritime connections, the article reevaluates the complex story of the Pampangans of Luzon, allegedly long-term allies of the Spanish conquerors, and the narrative of indigenous collaboration. Foregrounding the Pampangans' involvement in military campaigns, as well as territorial and maritime expansion in the early decades of the 1600s, the article introduces three scenarios of Pampangan power bargaining with global consequences. The focus on Pampangan foreign relations opens new analytical perspectives on the role of language and knowledge for internal coloniality on the one hand, foreign and diplomatic negotiations on the other. Methodologically, it proposes a deep (re-)reading of the polyvocal archive of the colonial-indigenous encounter and integrates insights with the largely separated scholarship of diplomatic and indigenous history as a new avenue in global history.

Keywords: diplomatic practices; foreign relations; power bargaining; rethinking colonialism; indigenous elite (maestre de campo; *datu*)

In November 1623, a Pampangan nobleman by the name of Don Diego de Marocot visited the royal court of Philip IV in Madrid.¹ He was the first envoy of the Pampangan nation to Spain and the first indigenous Filipino who traveled to Europe in his own right and of his own accord. Pampanga, a relatively flat region on the northern shore of Manila Bay, was the first province founded by the Spaniards on Luzon, following the conquest of Manila in 1571.² The prosperous area played an essential role in feeding and supplying the fledgling Spanish settlement in Manila with natural resources, while the inhabitants of Pampanga supported the colonial expansion of the Spaniards in significant ways. During his stay in Spain, the Pampangan nobleman (*datu* in

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¹Archivo General de Indias (hereafter: AGI) Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1623-11-06) includes a letter by Juan Ruiz de Contreras about Diego de Marocot's presence at the court, dated 17 May 1624.

²Pampanga is described in detail by William Henry Scott, *Barangay. Sixteenth-Century Philippine Culture and Society* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1994). For their integration in early Spanish colonial administration, see Nicholas P. Cushner and John A. Larkin, 'Royal Land Grants in the Colonial Philippines (1571-1626): Implications for the Formation of a Social Elite', *Philippine Studies* 26, no. 1/2 (1978): 102–11. Their survey is based on a copy from a list of grants from 1698 kept in the Lilly Library.

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Tagalog and Visayan) demonstrated that he was a proficient negotiator. Equipped with the necessary language skills, knowledge, and habitus, he was received by the Habsburg court's highest representatives. Following face-to-face conversations with the Pampangan envoy, the Spanish crown granted the visitor's demands which materialized in major socio-economic concessions. I argue that Pampangan power bargaining at the blurring interface of foreign relations and internal coloniality has a lot to add to the burgeoning research on early modern global diplomacy.

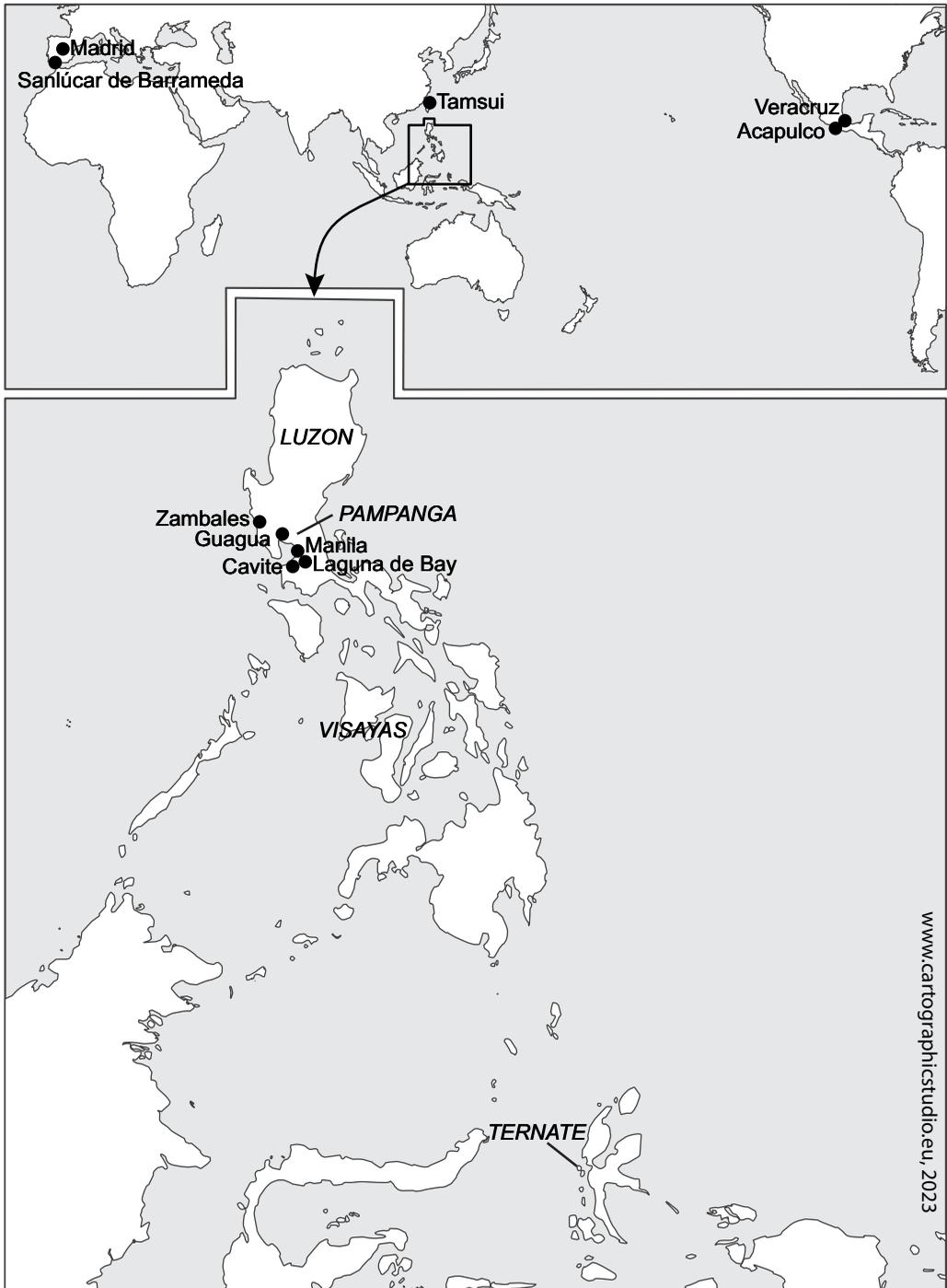
In this article I will explore the pluralistic and largely self-determined international portfolio of the Pampangan nation through three thematically organized case studies. Case study one shows how a Pampangan chief was able to leverage the isolation of the colonial government and its dependence on local assistance against the conquerors. Case study two will then demonstrate how Diego de Marocot was able to use his knowledge of Spanish to expand the power of his community and thereby shape the structures of empire (see Map 1). A comparison with indigenous envoys from other parts of the empire in Madrid will consider the diplomatic repertoire of mobile indigenous people within the framework of incomplete imperial power. Case study three emphasizes the obvious but often ignored point that the local context was not binary: neither the colonizers nor the indigenous people represented a homogeneous group. With these three episodes, I aim to advance the reader's understanding of how indigenous actors and perspectives became integrated into the international power politics of their time.³ The study is important for global history in two ways: first, it emphasizes how allegedly marginal actors actively contributed to both local and trans-regional processes; second, it underscores how the archives commanded what was remembered and what was obliterated.

Historiographical trends and methodological parochialism have kept seventeenth-century Pampangans, notably members of the local elite such as Diego de Marocot and Juan Macapagal, who both crossed the Pacific and the Atlantic in both directions, from the world-historical stage.⁴ Pursuing very different questions and agendas, researchers in diplomatic, indigenous, and colonial history start from conflicting projections. Colonial history, to begin with, has often accentuated binary narratives of conquerors and colonized with the latter perceived as having limited agency. Their engagement with the metropolis and its (overseas) governing institutions and jurisdiction was rendered into a sort of vassal relationship with an overlord who pulled the strings. As a result, the Pampangan nation is not remembered as a sovereign governing body but as the one ethnolinguistic group that became a close indigenous ally of the Spaniards in Luzon.⁵ It will be useful to integrate the indigenous past of the Philippines with the wider story of maritime Southeast Asia where local forms of negotiating and different logics of diplomacy have dominated inter-polity relations, as started by the groundbreaking work of Leonard and Barbara Andaya. Leonard Andaya explored how oral expressions of traditional ideas of overlordship and non-interference determined written treaties in South Sulawesi; his work emphasized the different motivations of war and peace-making which ultimately caused misunderstanding between

³The Philippines have historically been populated by hundreds of different Austronesian groups. While many ethnicities and languages disappeared because of conquest and assimilation, others survived until the present day. Some of them have their indigenous status acknowledged; see <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/indigenous-peoples-6/#:~:text=Ten%20upland%20tribal%20groups%20on,%2C%20Gaddang%2C%20Ilongot%20and%20Negrito> (last accessed 1 November 2022). In 1997, following a long campaign, the government of the Philippines passed the Indigenous Rights Act which included important rights to ancestral land: June Prill-Brett, 'Contested Domains: The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) and Legal Pluralism in the Northern Philippines', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 39, no. 55 (2007): 11–36.

⁴For Macapagal, see AGI Filipinas 43, n. 27 (1667-03-07). See also Stephanie Mawson, 'Philippine Indios in the Service of Empire: Indigenous Soldiers and Contingent Loyalty', *Ethnohistory* 63, no. 2 (2016): 392. For his service, as well as that of his forefathers, Macapagal was granted an *encomienda* worth five hundred ducats a year.

⁵AGI Filipinas 34, n. 91 (1591-05-20); AGI Filipinas 340, l. 3, f. 54r (1608-09-13); Cushner and Larkin, 'Royal Land Grants', 108. The authors speak of 'complete and constant loyalty'. For a survey of indigenous soldiers serving in Spanish campaigns since the 1570s, with a particular focus on Taiwan, where hundreds of Filipinos supported the Spaniards, both as paid soldiers and forced labourers, see José Eugenio Borao Mateo, 'Contextualizing the Pampangos (and Gagayano) Soldiers in the Spanish Fortress in Taiwan (1626-1642)', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 70, no. 2 (2013): 581.



Map 1. Pampangan mobilities, c. 1600–1630.

www.cartographicstudio.eu, 2023

indigenous rulers and colonial Dutch leaders.⁶ Barbara Watson Andaya has stressed how real and imaginary kinship ties dominated politics in the Sumatran pepper trading kingdoms of Palembang and Jambi.⁷ Looking at the maritime frontiers in the southern parts of the Philippines and eastern Indonesia, Ariel Lopez has recently highlighted the role of religiously motivated negotiation strategies.⁸ The current article builds upon these strands of historiography that highlight indigenous concepts of negotiating and bargaining by showing how indigenous elites in the Philippines utilized imported forms of power bargaining to reshape their own political and economic status; this study thus demonstrates how the worlds of the colonized and the colonizers became intertwined in a more complex way than generally believed.

Indigenous history, on the other hand, has focused on restoring pre-colonial life stories of 'history's outsiders', or on unearthing the lost pasts of on-the-ground processes and resistance.⁹ Given the epistemological challenges and the methodological burden on top of the abundance of topics to be rediscovered, it is understandable that indigenous historians are not primarily interested in highlighting indigenous actions in macro-historical processes, not to mention the involvement of indigenous elites with an oppressive regime. Scholarship on the history of indigenous people in the Philippines is no exception in this regard.¹⁰ Sebastian Kroupa has made a welcome intervention for the period between the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. He identified the tattooed body of the Visayans as part of the polyvocal archive of the Philippines. Analyzing the performative dimensions and different dimensions of literacy in interpreting body markings, he concludes that such 'embodied histories' should be read as signs of incomplete colonial control.¹¹

Diplomatic history, as the third relevant field of research, has paid limited attention to colonial settings. The all-dominant paradigm that sovereign polities were the pillars of an emerging international system excluded what had been categorically defined as dependent territories. Such a rigid conceptual framework eliminated alternative actors including quasi-state actors such as members of the colonial regime and non-state actors such as colonized parties from foreign relations narratives. As a result, the dynamics of the frontier, the negotiation practices of colonial officials, and in particular the political bargaining strategies of indigenous communities are rarely considered. It was only with the emergence of new imperial history and studies on plural legal regimes that scholars began to explore power relations within and outside colonial spaces.¹² Similar points could be made for the integration of non-sovereign, non-European polities within new diplomatic history.¹³ Even the dynamic field of early modern diplomacy is slow to integrate

⁶Leonard Y. Andaya, 'Treaty Conceptions and Misconceptions', *Bijdr. Tot de Taal-, Land-En Volkenkunde* 134, no. 2 (1978): 275-95.

⁷Barbara Watson Andaya, *To Live as Brothers: Southeast Sumatra in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993).

⁸Ariel C. Lopez, 'Kinship, Islam, and Raiding in Maguindanao', in *Warring Societies of Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia: Local Cultures of Conflict within a Regional Context*, ed. Michael W. Charney and Kathryn Wellen (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2018), 73-100.

⁹Ann McGrath and Lynette Russell, 'History's Outsiders?: Global Indigenous Histories', in *The Routledge Companion to Global Indigenous History* (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2021), 1-30. See also Stephanie Mawson's call for 'Indigenous Histories of Encounters in the Asia-Pacific' as part of the Global Maritime History initiative.

¹⁰It is telling indeed that the ethnically diverse Philippines do not receive much attention in the extensive Routledge companion on *Global Indigenous Histories*. For more context, see F. Landa Jocano, *Filipino Indigenous Ethnic Communities: Patterns, Variations, and Typologies* (Quezon City: Punlad Research House Inc, 1998).

¹¹Sebastian Kroupa, 'Reading beneath the Skin: Indigenous Tattooing in the Early Spanish Philippines, ca. 1520-1720', *The American Historical Review* 127, no. 3 (2022): 1258, 1281-3.

¹²For the US-American frontier, see James Hart Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: Norton & Company, 2000); Pekka Hämmäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). For legal pluralism, see Lauren E. Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty. Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹³The field of new diplomatic history is growing fast. Important titles include Tracey A. Sowerby and Jan Hennings, eds., *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c.1410-1800* (London: Routledge, 2017); Giorgio Riello, 'With Great Pomp and Magnificence. Royal Gifts and the Embassies between Siam and France in the Late Seventeenth Century', in *Global Gifts: The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia*, ed. Zoltán Biedermann, Anne Gerritsen, and Giorgio Riello

non-European patterns of power negotiations in its broader research frame. The common hierarchical distinction between formal and informal diplomacy, in which the latter is practised by marginal individuals or non-sovereign groups with no official status points at limitations in an overdue reconceptualization of the field.¹⁴ If a global diplomatic history wants to seriously challenge the metanarrative of diplomacy based on the idea of singular European practices, it has to become more inclusive than generally is the case. Global diplomatic history must take full account of contributions from around the world by paying undivided attention to both non-European practices and to indigenous people's engagement and selective adoption of imported practices.

To integrate colonial, indigenous, and diplomatic history I suggest framing the diplomatic relations of the early modern colonial world as a history of global (dis)connections and globalizing epistemologies.¹⁵ Juxtaposing the realm of ad-hoc diplomacy with established diplomatic practices of central state actors can be seen as a response to pleas for decolonizing global history with nuance and conceptual accuracy.¹⁶ The strength of such an approach lies in the possibility of challenging existing paradigms of sovereignty, coercion, and resistance. Indigenous mobility (including bilinguality)¹⁷ and episodes of overseas travel offer an important analytical lens.¹⁸ Caroline Dodds Pennock's reversal of the traditional narratives of the age of encounter is the latest in a line of works on marginalized figures traveling or being transported to Europe. These studies accentuate the often-forgotten story of members of indigenous elites from different parts of former Amerindian empires coming to redefine their relationship with the respective colonial powers and their internal positions. In the Philippines, indigenous mobilities tell a counter-narrative to stories of indigenous passivity or stagnation. Exploring the travels of indigenous Ituy, Italon, and Igorot chiefs to Manila, Mark Dizon has made an important intervention for how 'reciprocal mobilities impacted the formation of bonds between guests and hosts across multiple sites' during the eighteenth century.¹⁹

In line with the title of this article, I suggest that indigenous mobility was a defining element of early modern diplomacy. The question of how indigenous communities managed relations and made formative contributions to the emerging diplomatic system is still insufficiently explored. Reading the Spanish colonial archive with and against the grain in search for accounts of a Pampangan diplomatic agency provides a useful lens for rethinking colonialism.²⁰ Spanish

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 235–65; Lisa Hellman and Birgit Tremml-Werner, 'Translation in Action: Global Intellectual History and Early Modern Diplomacy', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 82, no. 3 (2021): 453–67.

¹⁴Diana Carrió-Invernizzi, 'A New Diplomatic History and the Networks of Spanish Diplomacy in the Baroque Era', *The International History Review* 36, no. 4 (2014): 603–18.

¹⁵Kristie Dotson, 'Tracking Epistemic Violence, Tracking Practices of Silencing', *Hypatia* 26, no. 2 (2011): 236–57; Gurminder K Bhambra, 'Historical Sociology, International Relations and Connected Histories', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 23, no. 1 (2010): 127–43.

¹⁶Studies in global history have frequently been criticized for the lack of nuance and conceptual flaws. See, for instance, Gabriela De Lima Grecco and Sven Schuster, 'Decolonizing Global History? A Latin American Perspective', *Journal of World History* 31, no. 2 (2020): 425.

¹⁷Historians of indigenous America have highlighted numerous examples of members of the indigenous nobility, who found bilinguality 'a medium of mobility into colonial society'; see, Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 88.

¹⁸For indigenous elites crossing the Atlantic to Spain where they would turn into intermediaries between the colonized and the colonizers, see Caroline Dodds Pennock, 'Aztecs Abroad? Uncovering the Early Indigenous Atlantic', *The American Historical Review* 125, no. 3 (2020): 787–814, and her book *On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe* (New York: Knopf, 2023). On the subject of indigenous people's visits to Europe, see Christian F. Feest, ed., *Indians and Europe: An Interdisciplinary Collection of Essays* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999); Beatriz Perrone-Moisés, 'Performed Alliances and Performative Identities', in *Performing Indigeneity: Global Histories and Contemporary Experiences*, ed. Laura R. Graham and H. Glenn Penny (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 110–135.

¹⁹Mark Dizon, 'Reciprocal Mobilities in Colonial Encounters in Eighteenth-Century Luzon', *Itinerario* 46, no. 3 (2022): 4.

²⁰In her path-breaking study, Nancy van Deusen provides manifold examples of indigenous actors using colonial institutions and archives to make claims; see *Global Indios: The Indigenous Struggle for Justice in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

authors across the globe stated how Pampangans productively used conflict and power asymmetries in inter-polity relations. I will thus use the example of Diego de Marocot, the Pampangan Governor of Guagua, an indigenous town in central Luzon, to disrupt how we think about colonialism and diplomacy, about the visitors and the visited. The seventeenth-century Pampangan community with their mission to Spain and their maritime competence as a sedentary, non-nomadic group were part of a long history of dynamic, multi-layered mobilities. Their experience can thus help to recast prevailing assumptions of rigid power asymmetries between the colonizers and the colonized and to contextualize collaboration and coercion. Tracing indigenous mobilities, agencies, motives, and perspectives, the article ultimately integrates internal coloniality into a new narrative of diplomatic relations.

Inspired by setting narrative history and microhistory in a global frame, as demonstrated by Tonio Andrade more than a decade ago, I aim to understand historical developments from the point of view of the actors involved.²¹ To approximate indigenous perspectives, I follow Gunlög Fur's suggestion of considering the economic, social, and political contexts, horizons of expectation, and understandings of the world of the people involved.²² For Southeast Asia this means taking interrelated histories of maritime, intertidal, and territorial experiences into account while paying close attention to the diversity of indigenous communities, who continuously negotiated their positions – both with each other and the outside world. Jennifer L. Gaynor has skillfully traced indigenous sea cultures through the Sama people's alliances with the sultanate of Makassar and the Bugis of Boné.²³ Her work provides a useful point of departure for the Philippines, where indigenous people not only connected the different parts of the archipelago through hazardous mountain passages and perilous sea lanes, but also shaped the nature of colonial governance.

My use of the term indigenous is derived from a historical-political definition of indigeneity of first nations, or 'a people living in countries which have a population composed of differing ethnic or racial groups who are descendants of the earliest populations living in the area and who do not, as a group control the national government of the countries within which they live'.²⁴ While this self-definition by indigenous peoples has been informed by post-1955 decolonization movements and the experience of renewed marginalization within nation-states in the second half of the twentieth century, it provides a useful conceptual framework for the seventeenth century. In the colonial Philippines, power imbalances between those who had lived on the land and navigated the sea lanes for centuries (i.e., the indigenous populations) and those who represented the recently conquering newcomers who implemented central forms of power (i.e., the conquerors or settler-colonists) created a complex political setting.

This article follows the foreign relations itinerary of the Pampangan chief Diego de Marocot and explores the key mechanisms behind negotiation processes and the principal factors determining conflict management and power asymmetries. I have divided the main part of the

²¹Tonio Andrade, 'A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory', *Journal of World History* 21, no. 4 (2011): 573–91.

²²Gunlög Fur, 'Concurrences as a Methodology for Discerning Concurrent Histories', in *Concurrent Imaginaries, Postcolonial Words: Toward Revised Histories*, ed. Diana Brydon, Peter Forsgren, and Gunlög Fur (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 33–75. Similar approaches have been suggested for the study of Southeast Asian polities by Peter Borschberg, 'Lost in Translation? Property, Republican Liberty and Sovereignty in the Languages of Early Modern European Diplomacy with Southeast Asia (16th and 17th Centuries)', in *Konstruktionen Europas in der Frühen Neuzeit. Geografische und Historische Imaginationen*, ed. Susan Richter, Sebastian Meurer, and Michael Roth (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing, 2017), 287–312.

²³An insightful study in this regard is Jennifer L. Gaynor, *Intertidal History in Island Southeast Asia: Submerged Genealogy and the Legacy of Coastal Capture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016). See also, Keng We Koh, 'Familiar Strangers and Stranger-Kings: Mobility, Diasporas, and the Foreign in the Eighteenth-Century Malay World', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 48, no. 3 (2017): 390–413.

²⁴The definition was reached by the World Council of Indigenous People in the 1970s; see Jonathan Crossen, 'Another Wave of Anti-Colonialism: The Origins of Indigenous Internationalism', *Canadian Journal of History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 533–59.

article into four sections. Firstly, I situate Pampanga within the shifting political landscape of the Philippines since the Spanish conquest and within globalizing spaces. In sections two, three, and four I examine different case studies of Pampangan diplomacy, beginning with Diego de Marocot's power bargaining in Manila. In case study two, I follow Marocot across the oceans to Spain and explore his negotiation strategies with foreign authorities. Comparing his case with members of other indigenous elites and envoys visiting Madrid, I stress the importance of direct communication between the crown and indigenous elites for the colonial project. In case study three I move between Luzon and Ternate and examine Pampangan contributions to Spanish colonial expansion. I argue that while the alliance with the Spanish military regime meant a major status gain for the Pampangan elite it increased the effects of internal coloniality. In all three cases, Diego de Marocot represents the indigenous elite that actively shaped the fate of his nation. I conclude by discussing how different interpretations of indigenous mobility and negotiation strategies complicates our understanding of early modern colonialism and global diplomacy.

Pampanga diplomacy

Pampanga was one of the larger pre-conquest cosmopolitan polities in Central Luzon. The valley produced a surplus of rice while its forests offered rich hunting grounds enabling foreign commerce with Borneo, China, and Japan at the time of the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors. In a world of shifting allegiances, products from outside the archipelago were of major political importance across island Southeast Asia.²⁵ In the Pampangan case, it began with the exchange of local deerskins for foreign luxury goods. Following the increase in commercial activity in the Manila Bay area after 1571, the Pampanga River came to facilitate transport and communication between Manila and the mountains.²⁶ To uphold their fragmented territorial claims the numerically weak Spaniards not only depended on alliances with the indigenous population for commerce and supply but also on a meaningful adaptation of existing political and social structures. Hispanic foreign relations became entangled with the existing exchange patterns of the archipelago. Various *datu* were integrated into Islamic Malay networks between Borneo and the Sulu Sea, and engaged in maritime commercial relations of the China Seas, which were themselves integrated into the Sinocentric diplomatic protocol.²⁷

Since its foundation in 1571, Manila, which has received enormous attention of global economic historians over the past two decades, became a centre for multi-ethnic and multi-lingual exchange. Merchants from Mexico, Peru, China, Japan, and the Indian Ocean frequented the colonial capital, and so did high-ranking delegations from Japan, Ming China, Siam, Tonkin, and the Sultan of Brunei.²⁸ They met with members of the colonial government, who depending on the occasion, did their best to host them adequately while taking caution against potential risks and ulterior motives. The nature of the vast empire was a mixed blessing for the diplomatic agenda of the colonial government that officially was bound to instructions from the king and his council in Madrid. The colonial government was habitually in search of trustworthy allies in and outside the archipelago to further the economic interests of the colonial society and to secure the colony against manifold enemies at sea. Hence, they invested in relations with Asian stakeholders by both sending and receiving envoys and diplomatic gifts.²⁹

²⁵Scott, *Barangay*, 130.

²⁶Scott, *Barangay*, 243, 248.

²⁷F. Landa Jocano, *Filipino Prehistory: Rediscovering Precolonial Heritage* (Quezon City: Punlad Research House, Inc., 2001); Ethan Hawkey, 'Reviving the Reconquista in Southeast Asia: Moros and the Making of the Philippines, 1565–1662', *Journal of World History* 25, no. 2-3 (2014): 285–310.

²⁸Arturo Giráldez, *The Age of Trade. The Manila Galleons and the Dawn of the Global Economy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

²⁹Birgit Tremml-Werner, *Spain, China and Japan in Manila, 1571-1644: Local Comparisons and Global Connections* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015), 171–99; Ubaldo Iaccarino, 'Spanish Diplomacy in the China Seas at the

Understanding Pampanga's value for the commercial development and military expansion of the Spanish colony in Asia, the Spaniards invested in its socio-economic organization. Following the example of New Spain and Peru, the province was divided into private estates (*encomiendas*).³⁰ *Encomiendas* were royal grants of authority over native populations awarded in remuneration for services rendered to the crown. Such grants were usually distributed among Spanish officials and merited soldiers, but in certain cases indigenous allies received them too. Such exceptions complicate the notion of colonialism and the political role of the indigenous elite within it. *Encomiendas* provided access to agriculture and livestock, as well as indigenous labour and soldiers. Hence, while being extractive and exploitative, as contact zones between the Spanish military personnel and the indigenous population, *encomiendas* were also important sites for negotiations.

Filipino scholars have suggested that the pre-Hispanic social hierarchy and the sedentary economy in the region gave the Pampangan indigenous elite (*datu* in Tagalog and Visayan; *principales naturales* in Spanish) a significant degree of independence. Pre-Hispanic power relations were essential in creating and maintaining political roles: a *datu's* authority arose from his lineage but his power depended upon his wealth, the number of his slaves and subjects, and his reputation for physical prowess.³¹ The indigenous elite served as *maestre de campo* or village chiefs (*gobernadorcillos*) and prevailed over a dependent mass in their villages and towns. If needed, they could lead their followers into war against the enemies of Spain according to the pre-colonial logics of warfare and alliance.³² Over the years, pre-Hispanic indigenous leaders became integrated in hybrid power structures through baptism and the adaptation of Spanish names.³³ The indigenous elite commanded their subjects to either defend or extend Spanish control in other parts of the island. One family clan that operated within such a hybrid imperial framework shaped by the indigenization of the Spanish imperial structures was the Marocot. As *gobernadorcillos* and *alcaldes* they collected tribute, provided labour force, and had minor judicial authority.

The comparatively high concentration of Pampangan chiefs in the army and civil bureaucracy has long supported the thesis of both their military supremacy and their popularity among the Spaniards.³⁴ Yet, the notion of more advanced and yet obedient indigenous warriors has recently been replaced with the paradigm of subtle Spanish coercion and exploitation. Stephanie Mawson's frontier perspective has complicated the story of Christian indigenous collaboration by convincingly arguing for the continuity of pre-Hispanic forms of indentured labour.³⁵ Many others joined the Spanish service as a way of escaping forced labour.³⁶ Indeed, the Pampangan elite's ability to gather and mobilize obedient warriors and military equipment drew different groups of the Pampangan society into the Spanish colonial enterprise: as victims and perpetrators alike. From the early seventeenth century onwards, Pampangans had formed a professional

Turn of the Sixteenth Century', in *Audienzen und Allianzen. Interkulturelle Diplomatie in Asien und Europa vom 8. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Birgit Tremml-Werner and Eberhard Craillshiem (Wien: Mandelbaum, 2015), 99–107.

³⁰AGI Patronato 24, r. 19 (1571); AGI Filipinas 10, r. 1, n. 3 (1670-06-10).

³¹Scott, *Barangay*, 128–9.

³²Felice Noelle Rodriguez, 'Juan de Salcedo Joins the Native Form of Warfare', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 46, no. 2 (2003): 143–64.

³³Danilo Gerona, 'The Colonial Accommodation and Reconstitution of Native Elite in the Early Provincial Philippines, 1600–1795' in *Imperios y Naciones en el Pacífico*, ed. M. Elizalde et al. (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2001), 265–76; Patricio Hidalgo Nuchera, 'Las Bases de La Encomienda en las Islas Filipinas: Los Despachos Reales', *Revista de Indias* 53, no. 199 (1993): 785–97. Controversies about the degree of hispanization in the Philippines have produced a substantial body of scholarship: Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society* (London and Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993); Isaac Donoso Jiménez, ed., *More Hispanic Than We Admit: Insights into Philippine Cultural History* (Manila: Vibal Foundation, 2008).

³⁴For a discussion of the notion of Pampangan military might, see Kristie P. Flannery, 'Battlefield Diplomacy and Empire-Building in the Indo-Pacific World during the Seven Years' War', *Itinerario* 40, no. 3 (2016): 467–88.

³⁵Mawson, 'Philippine Indios', 381–413.

³⁶Mawson, 'Philippine Indios', 396.

military group that garrisoned the presidios in exposed places of the Filipino archipelago.³⁷ Numerous accounts in the Spanish colonial archive report of Pampangans supporting Spanish naval campaigns, offering assistance in subduing revolting parties, fighting alongside Spanish soldiers in the battlefields all over Luzon and in Maluku, or defending colonial frontiers in the Visayas and even in Tamsui in northern Taiwan where the Spaniards had a fortified presence, 1626–42.³⁸ Colonial records thus point at both the ability and willingness of young and vital Pampangans to leave their ancestral lands for significant periods of time. This pattern moreover indicates that the more stationary female majority of the Pampangan society was capable of living without and covering for the mobile part of the population.³⁹

Mobility was a particularly decisive asset of the male indigenous elite, who commanded dependent members of their community across the archipelago. Wealthy Pampangans shipped and equipped large groups of coerced Pampangan soldiers across the sea where they would assist Spanish attempts to expand their territorial and spiritual presence both south and north of Luzon. Such military support was likely to culminate in administrative posts in the Spanish colonial administration. Such *datu* were able to redefine power relations and acted as go-betweens between the foreign regime and the indigenous population on the ground.⁴⁰ Colonial officers' repeated claims of their alliances with the *Nación de Pampangas* (or *Indios de Pampangas*) are a clear sign of interdependence and power equilibrium between this group of indigenous people and the foreign colonial power. The contractual nature of social relations and military alliances thus involved all parts of the colonial society. For the indigenous elite of *datu* and their families, colonial conquest offered new socio-economic opportunities and prestige. Yet, for a large group of Pampangan inhabitants, the new regime only meant a minor modification to lives of forced or indentured labour.

Military prowess often determined both inter-indigenous and asymmetrical colonial relations. Through collaboration with the Spanish colonial regime, an indigenous chief like Diego de Marocot was able to exercise authority over his supporting chiefs. All forms of collaboration with the conquering power were a necessary compromise between the Spaniards and the indigenous *datu*.⁴¹ While the title of *datu* was open to both sexes, the right to rule depended on the direct descent from former rulers. When Spanish colonial scribes recorded Diego as the 'legitimate son of Don Guillermo' they indeed replicated the indigenous logics of power and lineage.⁴² However, the male-oriented phrasing is problematic, as the concept of male lineage (like primogeniture) was alien to pre-colonial societies in the Southeast. The wording could therefore be interpreted in two different ways: either as proof of strategic Pampangan accommodation of Spanish legal norms, or as a sign of Spanish misunderstanding of indigenous socio-political norms. Either way, it shows the leverage of indigenous elites and how the Pampangans navigated globalized diplomatic terrains.

Re-reading Pampangan foreign relations through three case studies

Diego de Marocot's father Guillermo was a powerful *datu*, one of the few indigenous leaders who received a *caballería* from the colonial government of Don Francisco de Vera in 1585. Such large royal *encomienda*-grants were usually reserved for Spanish subjects. Eight years later, Governor

³⁷Mawson, 'Philippine Indios', 385.

³⁸Borao Mateo, 'Contextualizing the Pampangos', 581.

³⁹Nancy E. van Deusen, 'Indios on the Move in the Sixteenth-Century Iberian World', *Journal of Global History* 10, no. 3 (2015): 387–409.

⁴⁰John Alan Larkin, *The Pampangans: Colonial Society in a Philippine Province* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); Yanna Yannakakis, *The Art of Being In-between: Native Intermediaries, Indian Identity, and Local Rule in Colonial Oaxaca* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Russ Davidson, Ethelia Ruiz Medrano, and Susan Kellogg, eds., *Negotiation within Domination: New Spain's Indian Pueblos Confront the Spanish State* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2010).

⁴¹Mawson, 'Philippine Indios', 392–93.

⁴²AGI Indiferente 451 (1624).

General Diego Pérez Dasmariñas would bequest Guillermo with yet another *encomienda*.⁴³ The Marocot family estate serves as the point of departure for exploring the early seventeenth-century Pampanga agency in diplomacy and international relations. In what follows, I will examine three concrete scenarios that reflect the pluralistic and largely self-determined international portfolio of the Pampangan nation. The thematically organized case studies are a way to highlight how aspects of mobility, agency, and language influenced negotiating moments and internal coloniality. Each case thus illustrates the complex relationship between foreign relations and colonialism. Internal diversity and multiple competing interests guided all parties involved and, consequently, affected the colonial encounter.

Case study one: Manila

In the summer of 1622, Diego de Marocot and an unspecified number of armed subjects marched from their Pampangan hometown Guagua into Manila for peaceful talks with the Spanish Governor General Alonso de Fajardo de Tenza (r. 1618-24).⁴⁴ Leading his people inside Intramuros (the walled city of Manila), Diego de Marocot ignored earlier colonial treaties that prohibited the marching of indigenous people into Spanish settlements. The prototype of indigenous Filipino-Spanish treaties, the so-called Treaty of Cebu of 1565, stated that the indigenous population should 'neither now nor at any other time, be able to enter the Royal Camp of the Spaniards'.⁴⁵ Written treaties and their documentation in the colonial archive admittedly have their limitations when it comes to explaining conquest and local understandings of political change. Oftentimes, not even references to treaties or contracts have survived, and if they did, only in Spanish. Post-conquest treaties reveal little about the binding nature of agreements or the frequency of interactions between the colonial regime and the indigenous communities. The excerpt from the Treaty of Cebu, however, points to a key principle of Spanish control over the local populations: to keep them at distance. Diego de Marocot's arrival shakes up the narrative of colonial surveillance and seclusion. The episode indicates that high-ranking Spanish officials in Manila hosted Indigenous *datu* inside the protected surroundings of the walled Spanish district. If not a real risk, the presence of the Pampangans certainly posed a major burden to colonial institutions. What put Diego in a position to make such a bold request?

The Pampangans' unannounced arrival in Manila occurred shortly after their return from Ternate (Maluku), where Diego de Marocot and his followers had supported a Spanish military campaign.⁴⁶ At that time a significant number of Pampangans had settled among other indigenous groups in the suburbs of colonial Manila. Residing outside the city walls they contributed to the material support of the port city. It is likely that Marocot's people entertained close connections to the Pampangan community in Manila. Moreover, as I will discuss below, sons of the Pampangan elite were admitted to Manila-based colleges. Literate Pampangans may thus have supported the Marocots and the colonial authorities in notary tasks and the administration of the official encounter.⁴⁷

After being admitted into the city's guarded centre, Diego de Marocot called on the Spanish governor with a concrete aim: an *encomienda* in Guagua with 2,000 native subjects and an additional yearly salary of 1,000 *escudos* for his family. After Marocot's audience with the Spanish

⁴³Cushner and Larkin, 'Royal Land', 105-6.

⁴⁴AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1623-11-06). Diego's arrival with an entire company of indigenous soldiers is described by the mayor Don Antonio de Arceo in a letter to the Council of the Indies, signed on 9 August 1622.

⁴⁵For the transcription of the Treaty of Cebu, see Scott, 52.

⁴⁶AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1623-11-06) includes an order of February 1620, in which the governor general orders the Spanish forces in Ternate to treat the Pampangan soldiers as well as the Spanish soldiers and support them equally.

⁴⁷For better contextualization of indigenous bargaining power and the role of literacy, see Alcira Dueñas, *Indians and Mestizos in the 'Lettered City': Reshaping Justice, Social Hierarchy, and Political Culture in Colonial Peru* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2010).

Governor General Alonso Fajardo de Tenza, colonial officials immediately set out to assess Marocot's claims by searching their archives. They did so by scanning the book of certificates (*Libro de Cédulas Reales*) kept in the city archive of Manila and by interrogating Luis Vasquez de Miranda and Gaspar Donis, both residents of Manila where they served as financial officers. The two Spanish witnesses confirmed the services of the Marocot clan for the crown, portraying them as noble and loyal ('obedient') allies, who regularly came to pay their tribute according to written agreements. Further archival investigations even revealed that Diego's father Guillermo had sent 8,000 Pampangan soldiers to Ternate where they served the Spanish king with their own weapons.⁴⁸

In his audience with the governor, Diego de Marocot argued that Pampanga was once the wealthiest of all the provinces. After the population's sacrifices for supporting Spanish military intervention, they would now find themselves among the poorest [of the island]. He described how his father and brother had unconditionally followed Tenza's predecessors Don Juan de Silva and Don Pedro de Acuña, spending their entire fortune on Spanish campaigns. The subsequent economic loss of the family estate forced Diego de Marocot now to petition the king for an *encomienda* and annual financial support. Only an *encomienda* would guarantee the *datu's* steady income and political power, which in turn would enable him to support the Spaniards with his services, his men, and his ships. These negotiations about money and compensation mark a crucial shift in indigenous political organization and warfare away from the logic of indigenous raiding as mutual support in eliminating a common enemy.⁴⁹ As the rationality of prestige and submission that characterized pre-Hispanic warfare had ultimately lost its appeal, economic considerations came to dominate questions of rule and collaboration.

The negotiations with Governor General Fajardo de Tenza, which were copied into the petition for compensation, depict Marocot as a smart negotiator. He elaborated on how the Spanish presence in the Philippines and its surrounding seascape was at severe risk, recalling multiple attacks on the area in previous years. Diego de Marocot claimed that Spanish foreign policies were largely the achievement of the Pampangans: it was his family who fought Chinese rebels in Manila, averted multiple Dutch attacks along the coast, and put down indigenous insurrections in Zambales [Luzon] and the Visayas. The diplomatic scenario in Manila reveals Diego de Marocot's access to essential knowledge for successful negotiations. He was both well-informed and well-prepared to make a point and win an argument. To strengthen his case, he made strategic use of the past and purposefully displayed Pampangan military power. Through his persuasive performance and a coherent argument, Diego de Marocot turned the colonial officials in Manila into advocates for maintaining indigenous Pampangan power. The governor general and other colonial officials in Manila repeatedly stressed that the Pampangan efforts were the greatest ever shown by indigenous chiefs (*principales naturales*) serving as military captains.⁵⁰

At the end of Marocot's Manila summit on 5 August 1622, Alonso Fajardo de Tenza issued him a license to board a galleon in Cavite to cross the Pacific and to continue his global negotiations in the heart of the Spanish empire.⁵¹ Marocot had successfully used the isolation of the colonial government and its dependence on local assistance as leverage. For Tenza, who believed in the loyalty of the Pampangans, supporting Marocot's petition and subsequent journey to Spain meant acknowledging the Spanish-indigenous alliance. Putting an indigenous *datu* on a journey to the metropolis was a bold move likely to meet with major opposition in those parts of the empire to which the colonial government in Manila was subject such as Mexico and Castile.⁵² Tenza's

⁴⁸AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1623-11-06).

⁴⁹Felice Rodriguez surveyed an ongoing shift in indigenous military involvement after the 1570s: Rodriguez, 'Juan de Salcedo', 147-8.

⁵⁰AGI Filipinas 3, n. 12 (1622-08-03).

⁵¹AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1622-08-05).

⁵²Charles H. Cunningham, 'The Residencia in the Spanish Colonies', *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1918): 253-78.

gamble of sending Marocot to Madrid put his own economic and political future at risk. Yet, weighing the consequences of potentially unpopular decisions in Madrid was part of everyday diplomatic practices in Manila. The decision to facilitate Diego's journey to Spain highlights the double-edged foreign policies of the colonial government. Tenza was fully aware that he would be tried for this act. And indeed, after his death, royal authorities charged him with misconduct, among other things for his alliance with indigenous people.⁵³ Nonetheless, in the poly-centred Spanish empire with the long distances between the political stages, it was common that diplomatic agendas of the colony had to be justified after the fact.⁵⁴ In that sense, the Pampangan embassy was part and parcel of the governor's diplomatic exchange with Asian stakeholders.

Case study two: Madrid

Endorsed by the governor, Diego de Marocot was able to present the case of his Catholic elite family to the court of the newly enthroned Philip IV, a teenager at the time, in the form of a petition.⁵⁵ To deliver it personally, Marocot crossed the Pacific to Acapulco together with two Pampangan followers (*criados*) known by their Christian names Gregorio and Juan in October 1622. In Acapulco, they continued their journey overland to Veracruz, where they boarded another Spanish merchant vessel to cross the Atlantic to Seville. Arriving after a year-long trip at the Iberian Peninsula, the Pampangan chief and his two servants were guided to Madrid, where the thirty-two-year-old Spanish-speaking Diego met members of the Council of the Indies. During an audience, he emphasized the crown's need for the service of people like himself and his late father Guillermo de Marocot, the governor of the Village of Guagua, to maintain control over the colony's 'remote and distant places' (*partes tan remotos y apartadas*).⁵⁶ The argument about distance and remoteness, which he had just experienced personally, had a double meaning: not only were the Philippines far away from Spain, Ternate, Taiwan, and the mountains surrounding Pampanga were also remote from the colonial government in Manila. His rhetoric choices not only attest to Diego de Marocot's geographical knowledge but also to his awareness that imperial spatial categories mattered in negotiations with colonial institutions, as described in Nancy van Deusen's work on lawsuits of indigenous people in Spain.⁵⁷

Diego de Marocot's struggle for justice was not that of a slave. He came to Spain as a free man with an agenda and should thus be placed in the broader landscape of indigenous elite envoys travelling to southern European courts including Lisbon and Rome. Other examples include the famed Uruch Beg Bayat (Juan de Persia), who visited Valladolid in 1601, and several Kongolese and Japanese nobles. By 1620, Madrid had a firmly established profile as a diplomatic city.⁵⁸ Court officials and commoners had seen or at least heard of non-European agents visiting Madrid. The metropole's history included several episodes of delegations sent from Asian Empires and Amerindian elites. Diplomatic undertakings of indigenous elites frequently followed first contact and conquest. The agency of these indigenous diplomats is key in juxtaposing their missions.

⁵³AGI Filipinas 20, r. 18, n. 118 (1624-08-12): 'recaiga en un natural o vecinos de esas islas'.

⁵⁴For scholarship on the polycentric geographies, see Tamar Herzog, Pedro Cardim, José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, Gaetano Sabatini, ed., *Polycentric Monarchies: How Did Early Modern Spain and Portugal Achieve and Maintain a Global Hegemony?* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2012); Sylvia Sellers-García, *Distance and Documents at the Spanish Empire's Periphery* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013).

⁵⁵AGI Filipinas 39, n. 20 (1623-11-06). Diego de Marocot was accompanied by two servants, the twenty-year-old Gregorio and the 25-year-old Juan. The reimbursement for the travel expenses was part of the negotiations and covered by the crown, while the Viceroy of New Spain was instructed to pay the demanded salary.

⁵⁶Filipinas 1, n. 200 (1623-11-26). In March 1624 Fajardo receives an order to bestow an *encomienda* on Diego de Marocot. See also AGI Indiferente, 451, L. A8, F. 20V - 21V.

⁵⁷Van Deusen, *Global Indios*.

⁵⁸See the special issue entitled 'Madrid: A Diplomatic City in the Seventeenth Century', in *Culture & History Digital Journal* 11, no. 1 (2022), coordinated by Diana Carrió-Invernizzi, Consuelo Gómez, and Ángel Aterido.

Susan Kellogg asserted that indigenous elites' post-conquest visits to the Spanish court were a sign of the natives internalizing Castilian hegemony.⁵⁹ The Tlaxcala elite who mastered Castilian court rhetoric in their petitions as loyal subjects of the crown have received particular attention as benefactors of power bargaining.⁶⁰ Travelling in person to Madrid as governor and representative of the Pampangan nation integrates Diego de Marocot into the group of indigenous noblemen visiting the court. This is not to say that the Pampangans knew of Amerindian practices or tried to replicate existing patterns, but rather to show that precedence existed and may have impacted how the visit was handled in Spain. Comparing the Tlaxcalan and Pampangan embassies can thus offer further essential insights.

During their visits to Madrid, both Pampangan and Tlaxcalan elites stressed the importance of their military assistance in direct negotiations with the crown. As a result, both were granted privileges and an *encomienda* which helped them to retain jurisdiction over their subjects in Mexico and the Philippines respectively. Yet, the negotiations in Madrid had different territorial consequences: while the indigenous lords (*señores naturales*) from Tlaxcala received a coat of arms for the Loyal City of Tlaxcala in 1535, Diego Marocot's native Guagua never received the label of a 'loyal city'. Instead, his family was granted an *encomienda*. Although the crown expressed its strong wish not to cause Diego de Marocot's family any future inconvenience, the *encomienda* was limited to indigenous labour worth 500 *escudos*.⁶¹ In addition, he received a stipend of 40 *escudos* per month and 500 *escudos* for his travel expenses. The two embassies' diverging results also meant different imprints in present-day historical engagement and pre-Hispanic nationalism by the two indigenous envoys: While Tlaxcalans are remembered as traitors for their help in the conquest and conversion of the Mexicans, the Pampangans are not associated with facilitating conquest.⁶² Yet, the parallels with regard to internal coloniality are telling: both groups took advantage of an oppressive system of a multi-dimensional empire to expand their own sphere of influence in a changing political landscape.⁶³ Diego de Marocot too sought personal benefit at the cost of hurting and exploiting other indigenous groups.

Other studies of indigenous delegations to European courts have stressed the performative aspect of alliances. Beatriz Perrone-Moisés has written about Tupi envoys visiting the French court in 1613 to practice 'diplomatic rituals' with which they demonstrated an alliance of which Amerindian agency is 'constitutive'.⁶⁴ Strategies of performativity were complex and could target both a display of cultural or religious closeness or conscious acts of self-othering.

During his stay in Madrid, Diego de Marocot skillfully played with notions of difference, distance, commensurability, and closeness. One example of performed identity of indigenous elites concerns their commitment to Christianity and the way it was practiced in imperial centres. Catholic Christianity, which Diego claimed to defend and support at home in Pampanga, was part of everyday life during his closely monitored stay in Spain. Hosted at an Augustinian convent, he mingled with Madrid-based Augustinian friars. Some of them were involved in missionary work in Pampanga or were acquainted with friars like the contemporary Felipe de Tallada, who wrote a

⁵⁹Susan Kellogg, *Law and Transformation of Aztec Culture, 1500-1700* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995).

⁶⁰R. Jovita Baber, 'Empire, Indians, and the Negotiation for the Status of City in Tlaxcala, 1521-1550' in *Negotiation within Domination: New Spain's Indian Pueblos Confront the Spanish State*, ed. Russ Davidson et al. (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2010), 36-7.

⁶¹AGI Indiferente, 451, l. A8, f. 20v-21v; AGI Filipinas 340, l. 3, f. 349r-350r (1624-01-21).

⁶²For indigenous elites and creole identity in Colonial Mexico, see, García Jesús Bustamante, 'La conformación de la antropología como disciplina científica, el Museo Nacional de México y los Congresos Internacionales de Americanistas', in *Los americanistas del siglo XIX: la construcción de una comunidad científica internacional*, ed. López-Ocón, Leoncio et al. (Madrid, Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2005), 171-91.

⁶³For coloniality and its systematic definitions, see Anibal Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America', *International Sociology* 12, no. 2 (2000): 215-32.

⁶⁴Perrone-Moisés, 'Performed Alliances', 110, 117. On 12 April 1613 three Maragnan ambassadors were received by Louis XIII in the Louvre. The chief Itapucu spoke before the king and assembled courtiers.

hagiography of the then-popular Saint Nicholas in the Pampangan language (Kampampangan).⁶⁵ Tallada was an acknowledged diplomat himself, having represented the Augustinian mission of the Philippines as deputy (*procurador*) of the Philippine mission in Rome and Spain in 1618–1620.⁶⁶ With local friars, Diego de Marocot and his two Pampangan companions would have practiced daily prayers, attended worship and visited various facilities.⁶⁷ The cultural knowledge they had acquired meeting various protagonists of the Spanish Empire in the Philippines and during the many months of ocean travel facilitated their integration in Renaissance Madrid. Everyday encounters in Madrid thus served two purposes: they provided opportunities to represent Pampangan culture and to deepen their knowledge of empire.⁶⁸

Language was a key skill for cultural learning. Diego de Marocot was able to engage in political and intellectual communication thanks to his command of Spanish. In the Philippines, as elsewhere in the empire, military service and social administration boosted the use of Spanish as a tool for communication. Archival records show that members of the indigenous elite conversant in Spanish gained access to schooling and education in Catholic institutions.⁶⁹ In the case of Pampanga, a noteworthy link between military prowess and language politics existed. Children of Pampanga chiefs who supported the Spaniards militarily against the Dutch were rewarded with access to the Spanish curriculum in Manila-based colleges. This practice resulted in the emergence of an intellectual elite of Pampanga, who gradually enrolled in Spanish schools and universities in Manila. Throughout the centuries, authors of diverse geographical backgrounds moreover remarked on the intellectual achievements of the Pampangans.⁷⁰ Diego himself, as the son of an indigenous *datu* serving as *maestre de campo*, was likely to have learned reading and writing, the basics of grammar, and mathematics in a missionary school.⁷¹ On the diplomatic stage this meant a lot: Diego de Marocot was able to speak for the Pampangan nation without engaging the service of an interpreter.

At the end of the negotiations, Diego de Marocot was granted what he had asked for. While this could easily be interpreted as an indigenous diplomatic success, the outcome of the negotiations must be put back into its global context. In handling the Pampangan mission to Spain, the Council of the Indies implemented a long-term policy of not receiving further indigenous delegations in the metropole. In a letter to Governor General Fajardo de Tenza, the king wrote that the court

⁶⁵The Austronesian language of Kapampangan is today one of the official indigenous languages of the Philippines with more than 2,000,000 native speakers. For the work of Fray Felipe de Tallada, see Emma Helen Blair, James Alexander Robertson, and Edward Gaylord Bourne, eds., *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898: Explorations by Early Navigators, Descriptions of the Islands and Their Peoples, Their History and Records of the Catholic Missions, as Related in Contemporaneous Books and Manuscripts, Showing the Political, Economic, Commercial and Religious Conditions of Those Islands from Their Earliest Relations with European Nations to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century*, 55 vols. (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1903), Vol. 24: 181.

⁶⁶AGI Filipinas 80, n. 37 (1620-04-02).

⁶⁷For the involvement of Catholic convents in hosting non-European diplomatic delegations, see Rubén González Cuerva, 'The Cloistered Ambassador: Non-European Agents in the Convents of Madrid (1585-1701)', *History Digital Journal* 11, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3989/chdj.2022.007>.

⁶⁸For Goffman's ideas on how identity is constituted through performance and modes of self-presentation, see Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1959).

⁶⁹Luciano PR Santiago, 'The Brown Knight: The Rise and Fall of Don Nicolas de Herrera (1614-1680)', *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 19, no. 3 (1991): 173–90. A prominent example includes Don Francisco Baluyot from Guagua in Pampanga, as first *indio* priest ordained in 1698: Stuart McManus and Dana Leibsohn have shown how Tagalog intellectuals displayed indigenous loyalty (humanist spirit and rhetoric in the second half of the eighteenth century: Stuart M McManus and Dana Leibsohn, 'Eloquence and Ethnohistory: Indigenous Loyalty and the Making of a Tagalog Letrado', *Colonial Latin American Review* 27, no. 4 (2018): 522–74.

⁷⁰The Jesuit-educated Tagalog priest Bartolomé Saguinsin referred to the Pampangans in the mid-eighteenth century as 'the most prominent of the region'. Cf. McManus and Leibsohn, 'Eloquence and Ethnohistory', 529.

⁷¹Blair et al., eds., *Philippine Islands*, Vol. 24: 21. The Dominican-run University of Santo Tomas (founded in 1611) and a Jesuit seminary were the first two colleges to educate secular priests and an important educational institution for local and indigenous communities.

would disapprove any further visits of Pampangan (or other indigenous) people in the kingdom because of the inconveniences they cause ('de no consentir que de aquí adelante vengan a estos reinos ningunos de esta nación por los inconvenientes que esto tiene').⁷² This concluding strike of the central authority had major implications for indigenous diplomacy: by making it a task of the colonial government to control indigenous mobility, the crown increased the decision-making power of the governor general on the one hand, while curtailing potential future alliances between the colonial officials and indigenous stakeholders.

In March 1624, Spanish authorities provided the three Pampangans with the necessary licenses and money to board a ship at Sanlúcar to cross the Atlantic. Once in Mexico, they had no choice but to wait until the next galleon set sail for the Philippines in April 1625. During that period, they were accommodated in a boat in the port of Acapulco. As in the case of other unforeseen diplomatic visits, lengthy negotiations about who would pay for the travel expenses occupied stakeholders and bureaucrats in the Spanish Empire.⁷³ The king finally managed to impose upon the viceroy to provide Diego de Marocot with an upfront payment of his *encomienda* which would allow him to finance the passage on a Manila Galleon arriving in Cavite in July that year. Marocot travelled in famous company: the new governor Fernando de Silva was on the same trans-Pacific fleet.⁷⁴

Case study three: Between Luzon and Ternate

Anthony Reid's work *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce* has shaped an understanding of the sea as a cross-regional and international connector.⁷⁵ More recently, studies on global maritime history have integrated indigenous actors more closely into oceanic approaches.⁷⁶ Such maritime approaches are useful when trying to integrate the sea into Pampangan political identity. Pampangans participated in shipbuilding, sea-borne transportation, and the management of port facilities. Through involvement in international conflicts in the early seventeenth century, the Marocots further expanded their naval profile. Between 1617 and 1619, Dutch ships succeeded in the blockading of Manila Bay. The Spanish defence depended heavily on Pampangan support: A naval battle against the Dutch under command of Juan Ronquillo del Castillo (*capitan de galeras*) with a fleet of seven galleons and three galleys manned with 980 soldiers and an army of seamen and slaves included many Pampangans.⁷⁷ Such everyday maritime practices gave the Pampangans bargaining power in colonial matters.

As previously mentioned, Diego de Marocot and his father Guillermo were not only *datu*, but they also occupied colonial posts. Diego de Marocot was *maestre de campo* and the head of the village (*gobernadorcillo*) of Guagua. Like his father, he mediated between the local population and the Spanish government in Manila. The Marocots' far-reaching political interventions had contributed to the village's transition into a political centre, transforming it from an 'indigenous village' (*pueblo de indios*) into a colonial town. Guillermo's *caballería*, Diego's *encomienda*, as well as their work as

⁷²AGI Indiferente 451, A8, f. 76r. (1624-03-24).

⁷³AGI Indiferente 451, A8, f. 20v-21r; f. 62 (1624-03-22). A more prominent example is the Japanese delegation of Hasekura Tsunenaga, see AGI Filipinas 37, n. 13 (1615-05-20).

⁷⁴Based on data collected by Bruce Cruikshank, cf. Blair et al., eds., *Philippine Islands*, Vol. 17: 290; 22: 62–3. For the shipping list, see <https://sites.google.com/site/manilagalleonlisting/1601-through-1625> (last accessed 7 November 2022).

⁷⁵Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680. Vol. 1: The Lands below the Winds* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

⁷⁶Jennifer L. Gaynor, 'Maritime Ideologies and Ethnic Anomalies', in *Seascapes. Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*, ed. Renate Bridenthal, Jerry H. Bentley, Kären Wigen (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 53–68. David Iglar, 'Indigenous Maritime Travelers and Knowledge Production', in *A World at Sea: Maritime Practices and Global History*, ed. Lauren Benton and Nathan Perl-Rosenthal (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 108–30.

⁷⁷Tien-Tse Chang, 'The Spanish-Dutch Naval Battle of 1617 Outside Manila Bay', *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 7, no. 1 (1966): 118; AGI Filipinas 7, r. 4, n. 52 (1617-06-15).

tributary collectors, put them in frequent communication with the Spaniards. All *encomenderos*, be they Spanish, mestizo, or indigenous, had an important role in the colonization of new territory and were the ones who negotiated and bargained with the people under their control. Such exchange meant increasing the political influence and economic power of the entire clan. Finally, the alliance with the Spanish meant a major status gain for *datu* within the indigenous community. Yet, what exactly did this mean for the Pampangan society and their role in internal coloniality?

Ethnohistorians and anthropologists speak of internal coloniality when one indigenous group came to interfere with the living environment of another indigenous or subaltern group as a direct result of the socioeconomic pressure deriving from conquest. Zambales, on the western coast of Luzon, north of Manila and a neighbouring province of Pampanga, featured in Spanish records as a source for indigenous uprisings and attacks on Spanish rule. Indigenous opposition in Zambales peaked in 1609, when inhabitants raided surrounding areas including Pampanga and the forests of Ilocos. These incidents imply that forms of pre-Hispanic warfare and foreign relations had survived.⁷⁸ As the Pampangans became involved in subduing the Zambales, Diego de Marocot spoke of ‘pacifying’ them – or so the colonial archive implies.⁷⁹ Applying Spanish colonial rhetoric and references to the past, the Pampangan elite presented themselves as the collaborative and enlightened indigenous inhabitants of the archipelago. Pampangans had developed a notion of superiority towards a range of ‘others’ including their neighbouring Zambales, the indigenous inhabitants of northern Taiwan, and even the Chinese diaspora in Manila.

It is well known that Manila was home to a large Chinese community composed of a majority of Fujianese merchants (*sangleys* in the Spanish sources), their mestizo offspring, as well as sojourners from other parts of China. Together they controlled much of the prosperous trade with China and the commercial navigation to various ports in the South China Sea. Their relationship with the Spanish settlers was characterized by tension and mutual mistrust. In 1603, the situation escalated when Spanish leaders misinterpreted the arrival of three Mandarins in Manila as a sign of a long-feared invasion.⁸⁰ Following rumours of a near attack, the Spaniards burnt down the rich Chinese silk market (*alcaicería*) before subsequent tumults led to the slaughter of a minimum of 15,000 *sangleyes*. The brutal massacre was carried out by joint forces consisting of Spanish and Pampangan soldiers, as well as Japanese mercenaries. Despite major scholarly interest in the bloody event and its consequences for Manila’s economy, questions about the military and material logistics behind the event are still not sufficiently answered. The support of the Pampangan troops and their outstanding military organization may indeed be the missing link when it comes to making sense of the quick defeat of tens of thousands of revolting *sangleys*.⁸¹ Another question worth asking is, why the Spaniards kept worrying about a possible retaliatory attack from China, but never openly feared a potential Pampangan rebellion or the like.

Through their support of the Spanish colonizers, Pampangans came to be seen as a superior ethnic group exposed to complex cultural hierarchies. De Marocots’ thirty years of service to the Spanish king were also essential for subduing the indigenous Zambales.⁸² Emphasizing difference, contemporary Spanish accounts came to describe the Zambales as people with limited social and political organization. Zambales’ practices such as head-hunting, raiding, and roaming, built the perfect contrast to the reliable and sedentary Pampangans in the Spanish indigenous imaginary. Against this background, we should consider that the king personally sent a note of gratitude to *maestre de campo* Don Guillermo and Don Ventura of Laguna de Bay (south of Manila) in September 1608. Mediated by a royal order to Governor General Don Juan de Silva, King Philip III

⁷⁸AGI Filipinas 329, l. 2, f. 104v (1609-08-08).

⁷⁹AGI Indiferente 451, A8, f. 20v (1624-03-22).

⁸⁰Tremml-Werner, *Spain, China, and Japan*, 307–9.

⁸¹AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12. For the controversy of the Chinese uprising in Manila in 1603, see Ryan Dominic Crewe, ‘Pacific Purgatory: Spanish Dominicans, Chinese Sangleys, and the Entanglement of Mission and Commerce in Manila, 1580–1620’, *Journal of Early Modern History* 19, no. 4 (2015): 337–65.

⁸²AGI Indiferente 451, A8, f. 21r (1624-03-22).

thanked them for their loyalty and for the love he received from them. Indeed, the king mentioned other *datu* (*los demás principales*) involved in fighting the uprising by the Chinese, but it is Don Guillermo and Don Ventura whom he knew by name and place of origin.⁸³ This is particularly noteworthy because Philip III's reaction in 1608 differs drastically from the communication of his son fifteen years later. Philip IV was reluctant to acknowledge the help the Spanish colonial regime had received from the Marocots in later years – perhaps because his advisors framed him as a puppet of Governor General Fajardo de Tenza.

Pampangan troops and sailors moreover helped to link Luzon with the southern archipelago. From 1606 onwards, more than 1,000 Pampangan warriors led by Diego's family members including his father Don Guillermo and his brother Juan Toloso had supported Spanish troops in Ternate. In 1619, Diego de Marocot shipped the Spanish and Pampanga infantry across the ocean to Ternate, where Diego de Marocot's troops (*tercio*) supported the forces of the *maestre de campo* Luis de Bracamante.⁸⁴ The Marocots' commitment shows their material wealth, navigational capabilities, and flexibility. It means that the Pampangan elite invested in their own vessels and trained their subjects to support Spanish expansion. All they asked for in return was an *encomienda* of 2,000 indigenous people and a yearly salary of 1,000 *escudos*.

The Pampangan-Ternaten moment allows a global historical gaze into the often-silent side of the non-European 'other' in the colonial frontier. In the early 1600s, a few years after the defeat of the Chinese community in Manila, Pampangans engaged with Ternaten captives in Manila and Pampanga became a refuge for members of the exiled Ternaten elite. In 1606, the 'rey' (sultan) of Ternate was captured by the Spanish and imprisoned in Manila following their invasion of the Maluku islands.⁸⁵ The presence of Pampangans living outside the city walls in Manila challenges binary explanations even further.⁸⁶ Pampangans' active involvement in Ternate-Filipino relations complicates the narrative of the failed Spanish attempt(s) to bring the clove-producing island of Ternate under its influence. Fierce rivalry with the Portuguese and the Dutch, as well as competition among different indigenous communities, came intertwined with power bargaining in the colonial centre.

In February 1620, Governor General Alonso Fajardo de Tenza wrote a report about the bad treatment of Diego de Marocot's troops while stationed at Ternate. This information on the matter was obviously provided by Diego de Marocot himself. As commander of the Pampangan troops ('governador del tercio de los naturales de la militia de la Pampanga') he willingly offered his service to the Spanish captains. Yet in return, he argued, he received only contempt and had to watch the Spanish soldiers stationed in Ternate mocking and abusing his people. Marocot claimed that his soldiers were treated much worse than slaves. He complained that deprived of the opportunity to serve in military campaigns (as they had been promised) they were instead forced to do other menial work.⁸⁷ This report from the ground is immensely telling as it reveals the divergence between the expectations and qualifications versus the power inequalities. On the one hand, it points to tension and friction within the multiethnic Spanish military apparatus, and on the other, it reveals the limited protection colonial authorities were able to offer their indigenous collaborators. Far away from the colonial centre, representatives of the military regime oppressed and attempted to enslave their indigenous allies. For Fajardo de Tenza this was treacherous and dangerous. He did not want to risk breaching the indigenous contract. To avoid jeopardizing the

⁸³AGI Filipinas 320, l. 3, f. 54r (1608-09-13).

⁸⁴AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1630-11-06).

⁸⁵AGI, Patronato Real, l. 47, r. 6, 11, 15; cf. Stephanie Mawson, 'Convicts or Conquistadores?: Spanish Soldiers in the Seventeenth Century Pacific', *Past and Present* 232, no. 1 (2016): 87–125.

⁸⁶David Max Findley, 'Of Two-Tailed Lizards: Spells, Folk-Knowledge, and Navigating Manila, 1620–1650', *Journal of Social History* 56, no. 2 (2022): 294–325.

⁸⁷AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1623-11-06).

Spanish-Pampangan alliance any further, he ordered that Pampangan duties, and their general treatment were to be written down and announced in public.⁸⁸

All things considered, Pampangan eloquence resonates with the older scholarship of Spanish vassals' self-promotion (*Relaciones de méritos y servicios*) based on recording merits and services for the crown.⁸⁹ With their petitions to the king and the governor general, the Pampangans applied tactics of contractual reciprocity. Their self-fashioning strategies which remind of *caciques* and *principales*, carried weight both for internal matters and external relations of the empire.

Concluding remarks: Pampangans and the writing of global diplomacy

The Pampangan experience of military bargaining, negotiations, and other trade-offs offers a crucial example of the countless indigenous groups that thus far have either been regarded as colonial subjects or as revolting tribes but never as diplomatic actors in their own right. Revisiting the colonial archive and complementing it with examples of indigenous mobilities clearly shows that colonial history benefits from being read as diplomatic history. A comparison of indigenous envoys from Tlaxcala and Pampanga in Madrid, although separated by nearly a century, highlights that indigenous actors possessed a diplomatic repertoire of which they could make use within the framework of incomplete imperial power. Foregrounding this perception of colonial reality is a way to challenge the idea of indigenous political stagnation and an attempt to respond to calls for new global histories that explore historical developments from indigenous vantage points. Even if not enacting a large-scale plan of conquest, representatives of indigenous people followed global agendas or made use of global politics to further their own interests. Indigenous negotiations, petitions, and diplomatic practices as performed in diverse international relations settings are unmistakable signs of diplomatic agency. In highlighting this, I may be added to the list of pretentious global historians speaking in the voice of the suppressed, prominently criticized by Sanjay Subrahmanyam.⁹⁰ Yet, my approach simply pursues multi-layered, polyvocal connected histories for a better understanding of early modern diplomacy and its archives.

Pampangan mobility and foreign relations can only help to complicate global diplomacy and to reframe colonial history if the power dynamics within the Spanish Empire are considered. One way of doing so is by assessing three key domains of control: military authority, language, and the narrative power of the archive. When reading history backward it may indeed be striking that the Pampangan opted to collaborate with the Spaniards instead of turning dependencies around or allying with other parties against the foreign conquerors. This was not for a lack of alternatives but should rather be interpreted as a conscious choice of maintaining a fluid balance of power in which the Pampangans were far from puppets of the colonial regime but increased the power and influence of their community. They stood out in terms of military organization, in the number of soldiers Pampangan leaders were able to command against any enemy, in the availability of military equipment, and in the necessary skills both on land and at sea. The alliance with the Spaniards in maritime Southeast Asia meant a shift in their own foreign relations context.

The question of Pampangan 'loyalty' (*fidelidad*), a term which frequently appears in the Spanish colonial archive, often in combination with 'love' (*amor*) or 'friendship' (*amistad*), allows further conceptual considerations. In using it, the Spanish colonial administration crossed the lines between colonial complicity and independent indigenous politics. For instance, when the Pampangans supported the Spanish conquerors against naval Dutch attacks, they did so not only in their own neighbourhoods but even in places far away from home. They stand out in their

⁸⁸AGI Filipinas 39, n. 12 (1623-11-06).

⁸⁹Murdo J MacLeod, 'Self-Promotion: The Relaciones de Méritos y Servicios and Their Historical and Political Interpretation', *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 7, no. 1 (1998): 25-42.

⁹⁰Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Why Connected Histories? Some Reflections' (paper presented at award ceremony of the ICHS International Prize of History, Poznan, 24 August 2022).

commitment because of the continuity of their support, when short-term indigenous allies had given up on the Spaniards as overlords after seeing their military supremacy challenged by the Dutch. This may have been one of the reasons why colonial authorities and observers perceived them as loyal, yet it has little weight when it comes to explaining European-indigenous relations.

Diego de Marocot could be seen as an inter-imperial envoy who was sent on an official mission to Madrid to represent the governor-general of the Philippines. It is indeed possible that he negotiated with the king as part of the Pampangan-colonial Philippine alliance that rested on the pre-Hispanic idea of subservience to an overlord. In line with such an interpretation, diplomatic missions and their adjunct cultural organizations in Spain and the Philippines would have good reasons to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of that event marking lasting friendship, peace, and alliance – to paraphrase the euphemistic language of public and cultural diplomacy of recent decades.⁹¹ The colonial archive provides evidence for a bilateral agreement. Spanish colonial officials not only authorized the legitimacy of their indigenous ally, but also invested in his commensurable political profile: for instance, when they translated Diego de Marocot's status as *datu* and *principal natural* into *gobernador de la infantería*, *maestre de campo*, or *capitán y sargente mayor* who commanded over his own troops ('la gente de guerra de su nación'). Internally, the colonial bureaucracy contributed to the status increase of their indigenous ally, while simultaneously providing a frame for global diplomatic practices. Re-reading the colonial archive of frontier relations demonstrates that the archive was an integral part of the empirical story of global diplomacy and not its metahistorical framework.

With regard to language, the Pampangan elite's mastery of Spanish as an administrative and diplomatic language facilitated their bilateral negotiations with representatives of the Spanish Empire. Within the colonial context, access to the Spanish language was moreover an advantage other indigenous communities in the Philippines lacked. Yet, it would be misleading to confine our understanding of language and power to the hegemonic language. The fact is that the Pampangan language – unlike many other indigenous Austronesian languages – survived the consequences of multi-layered linguistic colonialism. What is more, Kapampangan remains the dominant language in the central plains of Luzon, the only one with its indigenous script, Kulitan.

Although modern Kulitan developed from the indigenous writing system *súlat Kampampangan*, which was in use in the early 1600s, no sources illustrating the Pampangan perspectives on the events described above have been located thus far. The asymmetry of available sources causes an imbalance of power for any historical narrative. The absence of written accounts produced by indigenous actors in their own words is a clear disadvantage for global indigenous history. But there are ways forward. Focusing on the position of Pampanga within present-day Filipino society and Guagua as a regional centre can be equally insightful. Most importantly, the absence of the victors' grand narrative guards against the creation of heroes and villains as a qualifying, often ahistorical, marker of foreign relations. That Diego de Marocot cannot be instrumentalized as either has enormous potential for the further theorization of early modern global diplomacy including its unsatisfactory division into formal and informal diplomacy.

⁹¹See, for instance, the 2009-2014 events commemorating 400 years of friendly relations between Japan, Spain, and Mexico following the shipwreck of a Spanish nobleman off the shore of eastern Japan in 1609 and subsequent diplomatic exchange; see <https://www.town.onjuku.chiba.jp/content/files/old/kikakuzaiseika/kikaku/400/400kinensi.pdf> (last accessed 12 September 2022). The language of the commemoration included powerful terms including 'heart', 'friendship', and 'future', while a simple Japanese logo of 'Spain Onjuku Mexico 400 aniversario' served as soft power branding.