THE GOLDEN STORE OF HISTORY

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THE USUAL PURPOSE OF THE HISTORIAN IS TO PRESENT and interpret persons and events of given periods and places. However, this article proposes to give an account of a depository of documents on Spanish Colonial history from 1492 until 1865, and to suggest its place in Philippine and Asian history. This depository is al *Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla,* which is an organ of the state of Spain, and at the same time an institution just as much Sevillan.[1] Yet, its treasured documents, which are regally housed in marble, stone and brick, do not belong exclusively to Spain or Sevilla. They also belong to the New World, to which the Philippines was joined, and to Asia—from Japan to the Moluccas spice islands—between which lie the Philippines. For more than three and three quarters centuries, these documents transmitted the testimony of life and rule between Spain and two continents, and the Asian east coasts and archipelagos.

All the later documents—which the Spanish Crown and Church had such propensity in writing, and the colonial administrators had an equal felicity in composing—are not in the Archive of Sevilla. After 1865, the colonial documents were deposited in Madrid, where the last ones were filed in 1898. There are many depositories in Spain which contain materials of the colonial period. In Madrid, there are the National Archive, the Library of the Royal Academy of History, the Palace Library, the Naval Museum and the Army Museum.

In Valladolid, there is the Archive of the Augustinian Friars, and near the city is the General Archive of Simancas. Also, the Archive of the Philippine Province of the Franciscans is in Pastrana. Together with these, there are many supplementary research centers. In addition, Spain has many valuable private historical collections, and many Spanish Universities have invaluable historical work. Yet, for all these, Charles E. Chapman correctly stated that the Archive in Sevilla is "practically inexhaustible in its wealth of materials on almost every conceivable subject in Spanish colonial administration and is the most valuable single archive on the field in existence."[2]

The Sevillan collection is further enriched with a multitude of individual documents wherein the writers felt the need to write and had the right to appeal to the King. For example, in Philippine history, when Don Miguel Lopez de Legaspi received orders to take an expedition to the Pacific Islands within Spanish limits, one order gave any member of the expedition the right to write to the King.[3] One of the early letters from Cebu to the

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[1] José Maria de la Peña y Cámara, *Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla* (Valencia: 1958), 7.

[2] *Ibid.*, 65.

[3] *Colección de Utrafar,* II, Ch. XXI, 145-200.

King in 1565, was a request for more pay due to the high cost of living.[4] These documents include matters of life and death, of praise and blame, ambitions and humilities, statements of officials and appeals from subjects, natives, foreigners and allies. There were quarrels and peacemaking, documents on food and shelter, aggression and defense, on law and sacraments. They encompass the whole of life's way of affairs.

1. A New Age

Present world events are forcing a new appraisal of history. The world has been forced into an unsought unity by speed and nuclear power. One illustration, which shows the world's size in proportion to speed, can be seen in three different circles. In 1760, when the stagecoach travelled at five miles per hour, the world-circle was three inches in diameter. In 1850, when the railroads accelerated speed to fifty miles per hour, the world-circle shrank to two inches in diameter. In 1960, with commercial airlines travelling at 600 miles per hour, the world shrank to one-eighth of an inch in size.[5]

The speed of travel in 1760 was relatively no faster than travel in 1519. On this date, Fernando Magellan sailed from Sevilla, September twentieth; and Sebastian del Cano sailed back to Sevilla, arriving on September 8, 1522. They circled the globe for the first time at a speed of less than one mile per hour. Today, by air, one can go around the world in twelve days which could include eight twenty-four-hour rest stops. The average speed is some 86 miles per hour, which is 540 times faster than the first circumnavigation of the world.

This increase of speed and nuclear power has brought much good to our way of life, with opportunities literally unimagined in the other New Age when the world was found to be round and new continents were discovered under the Spanish banner. Nevertheless, this present, forced technological unity of the world without spiritual unity among its people, has brought it extreme dangers which cannot be removed until people begin to know themselves and sympathetically understand others. Also, positively, this same understanding is needed for living together in peace, common honesty and human dignity. The historian has a large responsibility in the achieving of this understanding. A knowledge of what, in world history, has caused our present world status, is a necessary first step toward present understanding; the need for it is immediate.

One of the more fortunate nations of the world, in regard to sources for its past, is the Philippines. In 1953, Professor H. Otley Beyer said that although a full history of pre-Spanish Philippine art and culture cannot be written, still much had been learned in archaeological findings of the past twenty-five years.[6] This statement was made 432 years after the first Spanish record was written about the Philippines. Since that statement, much has been done in the Philippine anthropology and archaeology, down to the pre-

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[4] *Ibid.*, XXXII, 372.

[5] Sydney H. Zebel and Sidney Schwartz, *Past and Present, A World History* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 374.

[6] Pedrito Reyes, *et al, Pictorial History of the Philippines* (Quezon City: Capitol Publishing Co., 1953), 44.

sent explorations of the Palawan Caves and the findings of the Calatagan excavations.[7] The sociological and cultural knowledge of the Philippines continues to increase through such organizations as the Institute of Philippine Culture at Ateneo de Manila and the Philippine Sociological Society. The dissemination of this knowledge is to be found in such well known journals as *Philippine Studies, Unitas, Philippine Sociological Review, Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review* and the journal of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Asian Studies, the *Asian Studies.* There are individual and specific books in all these fields, and academic theses are increasing in number at home and abroad. However, in mining terms, much of the above progress is still within the prospecting field and the future bids fair for a better understanding of the Philippine people through these fields, which are catching up with studies of Philippine history.

Explorations in the area of the history of the Philippines by such pioneer scholars as Emma Blair and Alexander Roberston, W. E. Retana and Pardo de Tavera, have served well their purposes, but they have not nearly exhausted Philippine historical resources.[8] In 1958, Professor Gregorio F. Zaide published in the *Sunday Times Magazine,* a series of articles on the theme of filling in the blank pages of Philippine history.[9] This author magnified the wealth of Filipiniana in the *Archivo General de la Nacion* in Mexico City. He said that of some 45,000,000 documents, about 7,500,000 are classified and in volumes arranged by ramos. In the *ramo de Filipinas,* there are sixty-three volumes.[10] In the next year, Dr. Domingo Abella wrote about his search for depositories abroad having Filipiniana.[11] He listed some twelve Spanish archives together with eight research centers, and he magnified the value of the Spanish archives, and especially of the one in Sevilla as the greatest source of Filipiniana. Likewise, the author listed the Vatican Archives and Vatican Library in Rome with supplementary research centers, and he also named depositories in England, Holland, France, Mexico, Cuba, Japan, Macao and the Republic of China. Then he emphasized, for the American period, the Library of Congress and the National Archives in Washington, D.C., as large depositories of Filipiniana, together with other public and academic collections. Such prospecting for historical primary sources have their value in bringing scholars up-to-date on where to search for materials. They help modernize the searchings of Blair and Robertson, Retana and Tavera.

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[7] Robert B. Fox, "The Calatagan Excavations," *Philippine Studies,* VII, No. 3 (August 1959), Reprint.

[8] Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (Eds.), *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898* (55 vols; Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1903). W. E. Retana, *Aparato Bibliográfico de la Historia General de Filipinas* (3 vols; Madrid: Successora de M. Minuesa de los Rios, 1906). T. H. Pardo de Tavera, *Biblioteca Filipina* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903).

[9] Gregorio F. Zaide, "Filling in the Blank Pages of Philippine History," *The Sunday Times Magazine,* July 27 and August 10, 1958.

[10] *Ibid.,* July 27, 1958, 13.

[11] Domingo Abella, "Filipiniana Treasures in Repositories Abroad," based on a paper for the Educational Conference of the Ateneo de Manila Centennial Celebration, Manila, November 21-22, 1959.

However, to use a mining figure, it has been well established that the mother lode—the primary belt of gold-bearing quartz in Philippine written history—is in Spain; and a second lode—equally important to the whole, but of lesser size, due to fewer years presence in the Island—is in the United States. But the immediate need is to bring to light the contents of these depositories in objective and critical appraisal. The student of Philipine History realizes that certain themes, as important as they are, have been worn smooth in the retelling, because certain collections in printed form are available for their contents, such as the familiar *Colleccion de America y Oceania* and *Colleccion de Ultramar.*[12] Yet, there are many gaps to fill in; for example, the first fifty years of the Nineteenth Century, to mention one of many.

2. Sevilla and History

For a reappraisal of what has been written in Philippine history and its Asian setting, and to continue adding chapters to this history, the place of priority is the Archive General of the Indies. The similarities of the place of Sevilla in the world-moving events and changing hegemony of the sixteenth century, and the strategic position of Manila in Asia today, are worth comparing.

There were two brilliant periods in the long history of Sevilla: the period from 1492 until 1600, and the period of 1808 to 1843. The first part of its history belonged to the marching forces of Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, and Sueves who cris-crossed each other. Engraved on the Jerez Gate are these words:

> Hercules built me; Julius Caesar surrounded
> me with walls and high towers; and the
> Holy King (Fernando II) took me... .[13]

From the eighth through the twelfth centuries, Sevilla was captured and populated by the Moors who raised the old city in greatness until it became the rival of Cordoba—its neighbor—140 kilometers to the east.[14] In the thirteenth century, the saintly King—Fernando III—took Sevilla from the Moors with the aid of Garci Perez de Vargas.[15] A new Christian community took over Sevilla and made it a powerful city. Then, under succeeding reigns, it became commercially important.

Such a long and arduous history created a people known as *Sevillanos,* whom St. Teresa de Jesus felt to be aggressive, evasive, rich, and unconcerned. The people, together with glistening white walls and intense heat, made the Avila saint and Carmelite foundress—from her higher, cooler, thin-

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[12] *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las posesiones españolas en América y Oceania, Sacados, en su mayor parte, del Real Archivo de Indias* (42 Vols.; Madrid, 1864-1868). And *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiquas posesiones españolas de ultramar* (13 Vols.; Madrid, 1886-1887). Hereafter *Colección de América* and *Colección de Ultramar.*

[13] Marcel N. Schveitzer (Ed.), *Spain* (Paris: Hackette, 1961), 736-737.

[14] Ministerio de Obras Publicas, *España* (Madrid: 1962), 110.

[15] Schveitzer, *op. cit.,* 737.

ner, clearer air—say that there was something about Sevilla one could not explain.[16] She reacted like the old proverb which said that Sevilla either drives you away or swallows you up.[17]

St. Teresa had spoken about Sevilla in its most brilliant period of history. During this same period, Don Luis Zapata, 1526-1595, spoke of Sevilla as the best tract of land in Spain, with the largest Cathedral, the famous, *Alcaraz,* the *bodega* of olive oil, the customshouse, the Arsenal, the *Cabildo,* the Merchants' Exchange, the Shipyards and the Royal Audiencia.[18] And added to this, it was *la puerta del nuevo mundo,* the gateway of the New World.[19]

Another characteristic of the old city which did not go unrewarded, was loyalty. When King Alfonso (the Wise) was forced to fight his son—Sancho—who took his father's cities one by one, Sevilla remained loyal to the King. King Alfonso conferred on the city the title, *Muy noble, muy leal, muy heroica e invencible.*[20] The King also put the *Sevillano* loyalty in a riddle, which the people have kept through centuries, and have put it on their doors, railings, and stone facings until this day, which is in the shape of a monogram. Of the city, the King said, *No me ha dejado* ("It did not forsake me"). Place a parenthesis in this sentence thus, *no (me ha deja) do* and with an elision, the word is, *madeja,* which means a skein of thread. A skein of thread is generally in the shape of the figure 8, usually lying on its side. In each loop were placed the letters NO and DO, thus monograming *no (me ha deja) do.* As to a past characteristic of a people, or the meaning of a sign, historians have been able to notice the loss of that characteristic or the incomprehension of the sign of it in a different generation. In the case of the *Sevillano* today, he retains wonderful loyalty to his city and can recite perfectly the meaning of his ancient monogram.[21]

Sevilla became many things in that New Age of Discovery, and to St. Teresa and Don Luis Zapata, just as challenging and confusing as our own Atomic Space Age. Sevilla was the place where ship pilots were trained for going on undreamed-of distances across the world, where cartography changed its flat charts into a round world, where a university of merchants won a King's favor, where civil law unfolded the world's great single realm, and the Church spoke its soul.[22] From the front steps of the world's greatest gothic Cathedral, all the way around to the side at *Puerta de Pardon* which led into the Patio of Oranges, on the two steps of the *Casa de Contratacion,* and later, on the steps of the *Casa Lonja,* the comings and goings of soldiers, sailors, scribes, lawyers, prelates, friars, handi-craftsmen, gentlemen and merchants, formed the beating heart of the New World and an Asian archipelago, under the hard, blue Sevillan sky.

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[16] Marcelle Auclair, *Teresa of Avila* (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1959), 283.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] Don Luis Zapata, "De cosas singulares de España" in Peña, *op. cit.,* 23.

[19] Peña, *op cit.,* 19. Rafael Laffón, *Sevilla* (Barcelona: Editorial Noguer, S.A., 1963), 45 and all in *Illustraciones.*

[20] Schveitzer, *op. cit.,* 737.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Peña, *op. cit.,* 25.

About four long blocks away from the Cathedral, which is the center of Sevilla, is the Tower of Gold—guardian of the Guadalquivir River. On the opposite bank, a little downstream, was the *Puerto de las Muelas,* from which sailed Columbus, Magallanes, Del Cano and thousands of others for the New World. But the seventh century demand for ships of greater tonnage began to take the commerce from Sevilla's inland port to Cadiz with its easily accessible and deep bay.[23]

The other brilliant period of Sevilla's history was from 1808 until 1843. But the part it played was for the Peninsula more than for the colonies. Sevilla rebelled against the French from 1808 until 1812. At this time, Napoleon found among the individualistic Spaniards such a unity of opposition—together with English armed pressure—that he was forced to withdraw from Spain. Then Sevilla took part in the Constitution movement, but later the *Cortes* founded there had to be moved to Cadiz. Sevilla revolted against the liberal Regent Espatero, which was a foretaste of the Carlist Wars and the struggle between Absolutists and Liberals. Sevilla showed that it could resist its enemies and be progressive, yet conserve its values.[24] A slow response to the Industrial Revolution and the Spanish War of Independence from Napoleon, which was followed by the colonial Wars of Independence from Spain, which in turn, were interlaced by the nation's Civil Wars, left Spain on the point of exhaustion. After 1898, there were no colonies left.

3. Manila and History

When Sevilla was the gateway to, and the place of, departure for the New World, Manila was at the end of it and was Spain's gateway to China and Japan. Like Sevilla, it was also favored by its King. Philip II, on June 21, 1575, at Madrid, confirmed the city's corporation and granted it the title of *Ynsigne y siempre leal ciudad de Manila:* "the distinguished and always loyal city of Manila."[25] Sevilla had two tests of survival; one, with the Moors; one, with the French. Manila had two equal tests and fared better than Sevilla, which fell to the Moors and was occupied for four centuries. Manila successfully resisted Limahong—the Chinese colonizing corsair—on St. Andrew's Day, 1574.[26] Sevilla was occupied by the French from 1808 until 1812, while Manila was occupied by the British from 1762 to 1764. Neither occupation was successful. The French withdrew from Spain, without accomplishing their purpose, but after occupying vast areas of the land. In 1762, the English forces—with their East India Company employers—took Manila during a late and troublesome typhoon season, and with comparatively light opposition from Manila. After they landed their Madiera wine and stores, their troubles began. They were able to occupy no land other than the Manila perimeter. They failed to collect the city's ransom, and were so hard pressed by Don Simon Anda's counteraction, that had not the Treaty of Paris in 1763

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[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Enciclopedia Universal Illustrada Europeo-Americana* (Barcelona: Hijos de J. Espasa, 1923), XXI, 1017-1032.

[25] *Colección America,* XXXIV, 68-70.

[26] Conrad Myrick, "The History of Manila from the Spanish Conquest until 1700" (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1961), 91-99. A Master of Arts Thesis.

permitted the English to withdraw in peace, their posture showed one ready for defeat.[27]

Both cities lived up to their royal mottoes of loyalty during their occupations, and Manila continued a Spanish colonial capital until 1898, when the Philippines was ceded to the United States. Then, it kept a Spanish-oriental character until World War II. On the other hand, and equally true, Sevilla has kept only a few specific Moorish monuments like *la Giralda* and the *Alcazar,* yet a flavor remains. Again, the two cities have Moslem similarities. The early Moslems holding Manila up until 1572, were not as advanced as the Almohades of Sevilla, and they left no monuments. They fell before Spanish conquistadors—Goiti, Legazpi and Salcedo—who opened Manila to the same world-moving and changing hegemony of the sixteenth century which made Sevilla the gateway to the New World.

Portuguese Macao—an enclave of Kwangtung Province in South China—and Manila, Philippines, presented to China and Japan the first stable centers of Western commerce and a hegemony which has now encircled most of the world. Macao has a continuous history from its foundation, as an open port of European trade, a haven for missionaries and a door to China, but it is now eclipsed by the nearby British Crown Colony of Hongkong, and for the moment, both continue to exist as they are with the tacit permission of Red China.[28]

On the other hand, the Philippines—spanning a gap between Taiwan and Borneo—and its capital of Manila being only 636 miles from Hongkong, is a natural crossroads for all Southeast Asia. Its island-geography grants it an independence which the mainland areas of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand do not have. Manila's location of sixteen degrees from the equator makes it a natural crossroad, not only for the east and west, but north and south. With China's aggressive military threat and the advent also of nuclear power, the Philippines is in a strategic position geographically in today's new age. In Southeast Asia, Manila could have thrust upon it the responsibility of world center for this area today, as Sevilla had thrust on it in the sixteenth century.

4. The House of Exchange

In today's new era, old Sevilla does not command so great a place as formerly. Yet, within its Archive, are the documents which could enlighten this area of Asia of its past, which could be of great assistance as it fits itself for the new age. There is yet much to be learned from those documents, in a house built for another purpose.

> The catholic and very high and powerful don Phelipe, Segundo, King of the Spains, commanded to make this exchange, at the expense of the corporation of the merchants. . . . Negociations in it began on the fourteenth day of the month of August in the year of 1598.

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[27] The whole account is well covered in Blair and Robertson, *op. cit.*, XLIX, and Great Britain, Record of Fort St. George *Manilha Consultations* (Madras: Government Press, 1940), I-IV, IX, X.

[28] *Geographical Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass: G. and C. Merian Co., 1959), 646.

This inscription is over the principal door of the building which now houses the Archive. It is conservatively carved in stone, without any ornamentation, which recalls that the Exchange was inaugurated when the grand King had begun his long and exemplary illness unto death, which came September 13, 1598, in the Escorial, a monument of his heart's desire.[29]

The merchants of Sevilla in the sixteenth century had no building in which to transact their various affairs and contracts. They used the steps of the Cathedral instead, which brought to the temple's doors the fabulous and exotic Indies.[30] For some reason, they did not hold the privilege of *consultado,* or tribune with rights to try and decide matters of navigation and trade, although Burgos—in the century before—had such rights on the exportation of wool.[31] Business was so brisk on the Cathedral steps and at the *Puerta del Perdon,* which had above it an elegant relief showing the Lord driving out the money-changers from the Temple, that it was disturbing to spiritualities. And when business—due either to volume or weather—got to the naves themselves, the canons and the Cathedral authorities protested at the intrusion. After pressure on the King, finally the "right of exchange" was granted to Sevilla, and permission was given to build a worthy house on a site of raised land at the middle of a triangle between the *Alcazar,* the *Casa de Contratacion,* and the opposite side of the Cathedral, from its famous steps.

The builder of the Exchange—the *Casa Lonja*—was Juan de Herrera, who had built the great, plain, granite parallelogram Monastery of San Lorenzo at El Escorial, for Philip II.[32] The Escorial style shows in the *Casa Lonja,* and it is completely different from the Gothic intricacies of the Cathedral and the forbidding walls of the *Alcazar.* It also has it own steps on the north and west sides.

This building is a palace worthy of the other great buildings around it and superior to all except the Cathedral and *Alcazar.* It has four equal sides of 56 meters each, with a spacious patio within, which has sides of 20 meters each.[33] It is two stories high with ceilings of great heights. There are eleven windows above and below on the four sides. The composition of the building is of brick, stone and marble; and the entrance is in keeping with the simple, *sencillo* exterior, but not lacing in grandeur. The entrance hall, the grand staircase, and great vestibule are Jaspers of Maron in rose and dark gray colors, the ceilings are vaulted and the wall-high windows on the patio sides are arched. It is a building which is noble in its severity and austere in its beauty. Such was the *Casa Lonja* of Sevilla. Its construction began in 1584 and terminated in 1598, one month before Philip II died.

With the inauguration of the *Casa Lonja,* Sevilla was at its zenith, but the seventeenth century had its demands even on the great. Sevilla was an inland port town, one hundred miles up the Guadalquivir River, a safe port on a noble and curving river. The new day demanded greater ships which needed the easier access of the ample and deep bay of Cadiz, although the

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[29] Peña, *op. cit.,* 29.
[30] *Ibid.,* 25.
[31] *Ibid.,* 26.
[32] *Ibid.,* 29, and Luis Felipe Vivanco, *El Escorial* (Barcelona, Editorial Noguer, S. A., 1959), 8-11.
[33] *Ibid.,* 14.

town itself was narrow and constricted to a limited spit of land.[34] So after 1717, when the *Casa de Contratacion* was moved to Cadiz, almost all the commerce of the Indies followed and the merchants of Cadiz became world famous.[35]

Meanwhile, the administration of the colonies through the *Consejo Real y Supremo de las Indias* (the Royal and Supreme Council of the Indies) required multitudes of documents in order to answer every phase of overseas life and every intention of the Crown. These documents were read, summarized on the sides, noted and dated by successive hands until disposed of by the Council, or even by the King himself. Such a procedure helped the Council speed up its work, and today it helps the investigator to learn the general contents of a document before the whole text is read. Since, oftentimes, the Council referred back to past documents, it was necessary to file them. At first, the documents were kept in many places; then they were concentrated in Simancas. The castle of Simancas was safe, and, on the whole, dry; but it was a long way from the sealanes which gave the documents passage, and the ports wherein they were received. Nevertheless, it soon overflowed with documents.[36] So, in 1788, King Charles III set up the old *Casa Lonja* in Sevilla as the Archive of the Indies and their Asian dependents.

It was an aftermath and yet, a climax that the documents of the Council of the Indies, which administered the affairs of the world's vastest area of single rule, would be housed in the *Casa Lonja* in Sevilla—the center where so many of them first originated. Simancas and Madrid continued to keep in their depositories, the national archives; thus, for investigation of Spain's long and important history, these depositories are of prime importance. But for the Spanish Americas, the Philippines and its Asian setting, the Archive of the Indies is the most important single depository of documents in the world.[37]

5. The Archive of the Indies

Today, the Archive General of the Indies is surrounded by gardens and is the center around which is grouped the Cathedral, the *Alcazar,* the *Plaza Triumfo* and the Post Office. The building is set apart with its own steps and boundary stones, linked together by heavy iron chains. Its interior has two *salas* of investigation: one on the ground floor, facing the south side of the Cathedral, and is used in the summer; and the other, on the first floor facing the patio, and running east and west. The Archive has its own library of reference books and collections about the Indies and the Philippines. There is a *sala* for the director and offices for its administration.

The building is connected with telephone service, but it does not have electric lights. Work is done in the mornings and afternoons. Sevilla, on the whole, has fair, bright weather, but there are times when cloudy weather makes the investigator tie up his *legajo* and go home because it is too dark

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[34] José M. Caballero Bonald, *Cádiz, Jerez y los Puertos* (Barcelona: Editorial Noguer, S. A., 1963), 7.
[35] Peña, *op. cit.*, 31.
[36] *Ibid.*, 41.
[37] *Ibid.*, 63.

to read. In the winter, there is steam heat, but the radiators—one in the director's *sala,* and two in the *Sala de Investigacion*—are rarely more than warm, giving what is called "background heat." During the winter rains, researchers can be seen working early or late in overcoats. But during Sevilla's hot summers, the heat in the ground floor sala is rarely a problem, and sometimes a pleasant breeze may make a *portero* close the window for fear of blowing the documents.

The first floor has three galleries of exposition, running on three sides with windows to the outside, and in which are priceless documents, plans, maps, historical objects, autographs and the signatures of Columbus, Magellan, Cortez, Philip II, and the papal bull and seal of Alexander VI which divided the world between Spain and Portugal. On the three sides of the inner court, both above and below, and in the *salas* of exposition, are the *estanterias,* or cases, built of new world mahogany and metal, housing the uniform *legajo* boxes containing the documents.

6. The Heart of the Matter

The documents themselves are, of course, the reason for the existence of the Archive of the Indies. The actual number of folios is unknown.[38] The director estimates, as a conservative count, that there are about 14,000,000 leaves *(hojas)* in all, both by individuals and the authorities, and the folios measure some 31 by 22 centimeters in size. If sheet were laid to sheet, they would form a ribbon of paper some 8,680 kilometers long, and would stretch from Sevilla to many points of the New World, for which they were written.

The Archive catalogues are general guides to the specific subjects desired. They list the section, for example, *Estado,* with the geographical group like *Filipinas;* then, include the years, like 1762-1824, with the number of *legajos,* for example, 44-47. This means that in the section on *States* for the *Philippines* between the years of 1762-1824, there are four *legajos* numbered 44,45,46, and 47. A *legajo* is a bundle of documents in which there are some 500 sheets, which need not be necessarily in order and may be of more than one subject. By filling in a simple form, the investigator can request the general *legajo* wherein he hopes to find his specific subject. The other divisions of classification have more to do with the archivists, such as the division of the *legajos* into 1. the *Consejo de Indias,* 2. *Secretarias de Despacho,* 3. *Casa de Contratacion,* 4. *Capitania General de Cuba,* and 5. *Secciones Facticias,* which include titles, maps and plans. There are 38,903 classified *legajos* in the Archive with 3,392 maps and plans. In addition to the Archive Catalogues, there are other guides and various descriptions which help locate more specific subjects within a given *legajo.* But the investigator always works with a *legajo,* as a unit—whether to copy one sentence or to study several pages—in order to keep the particular unit of documents together. Each *legajo* is signed for individually.

There are some 1,659 *legajos* and 224 maps and plans which are catalogued under *Filipinas.*[39] Many of these have never been opened by an investigator. Because of this, often times, small piles of sand, which dried the ink

[38] Peña, *op. cit.,* 73.
[39] *Ibid.,* 84, 99, 100, 102, 109, 115, 118, 120, 122, 127, 128, 130, 131, 144-145.

so long ago, accumulated on my table during my year's work there in Spanish-Philippine Colonial History, under the direction of the University of Sevilla. Beyond the actual count of *legajos* bearing the name Filipinas, there are Philippine documents uncounted in the Mexican *legajos,* and in many of the other related areas, like *Ultramar;* and also stray documents in other *legajos,* about which investigators willingly tell one another when one finds a document of particular interest to another.

7. The Investigator

The Archive of the Indies is not open to the public as such. Visitors must apply to see the Archive and must be accompanied by an official; and the investigator must apply and register in order to work there. It is a national archive, preserving documents intimate to Spain's history, but it is open to any serious researcher who presents references for work, and especially is it available to graduate students and professors. The visitor's opportunity to see the exhibitions is free, but the researcher's registration carries a small fee for his card. This entitles him to do research in all Spanish Archives for a period of one year.

Needless to say, the language requirement is Spanish. English books in this field are growing, but the documents are in Spanish. A few are in Latin. The personnel is Spanish, and the hours and regulations are Spanish. Not only is a good reading knowledge of the language necessary, but equally necessary is the matter of paleography, the knowledge of antique writings. Any document from the fifteenth century to well into the eighteenth century, will require some knowledge of the various scripts of their particular century. Also, some knowledge is needed concerning the style and protocol of various documents, especially in the diplomatic portfolio. The involved signatures and *rubricas* or monograms and seals have direct bearing on the content of the document. Invocations, salutations, directions, dates, and *notas*—that is, side notations and dispositions—all come within the paleographic knowledge needed.[40]

Another thing which the investigator should be aware of are word changes, not only in spelling, but changes of meaning, and, in supplement, changes of grammatical structures. All these things are not insurmountable but, for those whose cradle tongue is not Spanish, constant references must be made to etymological dictionaries and fuller grammars than those for just a cursory knowledge of the language, such as the *Diccionario Etimologico Español e Hispanico* and *Real Academia Española, Gramatical de la Lengua Española.* The Archive staff and professional investigators are always willing to help in any difficulty if the investigator will ask. Otherwise, Spanish courtesy will never interfere with your work.

8. Back to the Purpose

The necessity of better knowing one's self as a first step toward understanding the world around us, is immediately necessary in this fast space and nuclear age today. Philippine scholarship is aware of this, and it is not

[40] The best work in this field is a double work by Don Antonio C. Floriano Cumbreño, Professor at the University of Oviedo, called *Curso General de Paleografía y Diplomática Españolas, Texto* (1) *y Selección Diplomática* (2) (Oviedo: 1946), all.

without efforts toward it. The advance of Philippine historical studies, since the beginning of this century, has not stopped, and new subjects and new periods, since the last documents were filed in Sevilla, have been developed. All these, for the good of historical research. However, Philippine historical work—in reappraising what has been written and in adding new chapters to that history—has only begun to utilize its richest source of primary documents which are deposited in the Archive General of the Indies in Sevilla, Spain.

With this as a premise, the need to exploit these documents is known. Two other factors are also known. First, the Sevillan Archive grants its treasures willingly to the researcher, and willingly assists him with his problems. Second, in this day, the opportunities for both educational programs and financial grants are world-wide, adequate, and obtainable for the earnest inquirer. Therefore, what remains is the individual's interest in this field.

It could be a rich experience for many of our historians to go to the gateway of the old world and learn. To bring back new knowledge and new understanding for our day would be even a richer experience.

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