

1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era

Volume 21

Article 3

2014

THE "NEW" NATURE IN THE LANGUAGE OF TRAVEL Domingo Navarrete's and John Locke's Natural Law Rhetoric

Matthew Binney

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/sixteenfifty>



Part of the [Aesthetics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Matthew Binney (2014) "THE "NEW" NATURE IN THE LANGUAGE OF TRAVEL Domingo Navarrete's and John Locke's Natural Law Rhetoric," *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era*: Vol. 21, Article 3.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/sixteenfifty/vol21/iss1/3>

THE “NEW” NATURE IN THE LANGUAGE OF TRAVEL Domingo Navarrete’s and John Locke’s Natural Law Rhetoric

Matthew Binney

John Locke wrote to Nicolas Toinard, a biblical scholar and friend whom Locke met during his travels in France from 1675–1679, asking him several times to translate Friar Domingo Fernández de Navarrete’s (1676) *Tratados Historicos, Politicos, Ethicos, y Religiosos de la Monarchia de China*, “dans une langue que j’entend” (2580, May 1, 1699) because, as Toinard observes, it is “tres curieux et rare” (2571, April 18/28, 1699).¹ In fact Locke’s interest persisted

¹ See *The Correspondence of John Locke*, ed. E. S. de Beer, vol. 6 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

when, in the 1706 edition of *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, the philosopher used the friar's travel account of China to argue against innate ideas.²

Not only did Navarrete's *Tratados* attract Locke, but other late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century luminaries, such as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Voltaire.³ Locke and his contemporaries read and digested Navarrete's account in part because the friar presents a novel approach to understanding other cultures, which contrasts sharply with prior and contemporary travel accounts and collections. Many accounts posit an ideological discourse that does not square with particular experiences of unfamiliar cultures in many travel narratives.

Critics of travel writing have commented upon this ideological discourse by following the example of Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism* in showing how home cultures, particularly European and Western, use these discourses or cultural frameworks to interact with foreign or unfamiliar cultures. These frameworks reveal, ultimately, the superiority of their home culture; for example, in Said's study the West uses an ideological discourse or framework to discuss the Other, the East, thereby positioning the West as the superior society: "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self."⁴ Recently, critics acknowledge this framework's often imperialistic role in perceiving other peoples and countries, but they

² Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. John W. Yolton (London: Everyman, 1996), was published originally in 1690, but the 1706 edition contains the reference to Navarrete (bk. I, ch. IV, par. 8).

³ See, for example, Leibniz's (1700) *On the Civil Cult of Confucius* in *Writings on China*, ed. Daniel J. Cook and Henry Rosemont, Jr. (Chicago: Open Court, 1994), 61–66; and Voltaire's *Essai Sur les Moeurs* (1756) or the English edition *An Essay on Universal History, the Manners, and Spirit of Nations*, trans. Thomas Nugent (London, 1759). Voltaire calls him, "the famous archbishop Navaretta" (24; vol. 1, ch. II). See also J. S. Cummins's introduction for descriptions of Navarrete's wide-ranging influence, especially in England in *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete: 1618–1686*, ed. J. S. Cummins (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1963), ci.

⁴ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), 3. These important works follow Said's lead by critiquing the dominant discourse: Francois Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Pratt admits that her text is "a study in genre as well as a critique of ideology" (10); and Nabil Marar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

go beyond examining the limiting binaries in this relationship (Self and Other) to explore the reciprocity within cultural engagements, indicating how cultural encounters compel the home and foreign culture to reexamine and alter thoughts, practices, and ideals, which reveals, according to Felicity Nussbaum, how "among various territorial levels . . . the local, regional, national, transnational, and global are mutually implicated."⁵ This is the purpose of this study: to determine how cultural encounters compel writers and thinkers to reassess and modify their ideological discourse after experiencing the reality of the foreign, a reality that often contradicts their cultural framework.⁶

⁵ These important works examine cultural interchange: Urs Bitterli, *Cultures in Conflict: Encounters Between European and Non-European Cultures, 1492–1800*, trans. Ritchie Robertson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986); Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh, eds., *Travel Knowledge: European "Discoveries" in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Palgrave, 2001). The editors state, "Travel knowledge . . . is hardly unmediated insofar as it is shaped by political factors, subject to authorial intervention, and plagued by general epistemological problems that attend the movement of information from one culture to another" (6); in *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), Felicity A. Nussbaum, ed., states, "At its best critical global studies tacks back and forth between and among various territorial levels to examine ways in which the local, regional, national, transnational, and global are mutually implicated" (10).

⁶ I use "framework" and "discourse" similarly to refer at once to Foucault's notion of discourse as well as Martin Heidegger's conception of "frame" or "Ge-stett," an ideological mesh or frame that controls / directs being. See Heidegger's discussion of this en-framing in "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977). See also Charles B. Guignon, *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983): "The Anglo-American tradition generally tends to see philosophy as a set of current topics or problems that are to be discussed within pre-given frameworks . . . Heidegger maintains that it is these frameworks themselves that are the source of traditional philosophical problems" (1). This notion of discourse reflects Robert Markley's thesis in *The Far East and the English Imagination, 1600–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); he states, "I argue throughout this study that the confrontation of English writers with China and Japan became a catalyst of their recognition that the discourse of European empire was an ideological construct" (9). However, in my study I identify how travel writers and thinkers alter the framework by drawing upon conceptual tools, such as natural law theory. In contrast, Markley's analysis pursues a Marxist approach, an "eco-cultural materialism," which examines the effect of "intensification": "the investment of more soil, water minerals, or energy per unit of time or area" (15). For those who would disagree with my "ideas" approach, I would say, the debate continues. In his Preface to *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), Jonathan Israel states, "Yet if very few grasped or engaged intellectually with the core ideas in question this did not alter the fact that fundamentally new ideas had shaped, nurtured, and propagated the newly insurgent popular rhetoric used in speeches and newspapers

Navarrete's *Tratados* interests Locke because its approach largely reflects and reinforces his own: it accounts for diversity and cultural difference while ostensibly circumventing apparent shortcomings in the dominant seventeenth-century Western framework. This dominant discourse determines generally how editors and writers describe unfamiliar cultures, societies, and peoples in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century travel collections, such as the brothers Awnsham and John Churchill's *Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1704–32) and John Harris's *Navigantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca* (1705). Pointedly, the framework posits a nature or reality that is hierarchical, historical, and teleological. Reality contains a progressive biblical narrative that begins with God's creation, moves and ascends toward a Christian *telos*, and ends in unification with God in a higher universal community, the City of God.⁷ Travel writers and editors,

to arouse the people against tradition and authority" (vii). I would add and will show that these "new ideas" shaped travel rhetoric.

⁷ These are not new claims or observations; several important texts outline this earlier framework. It originates from the Middle Ages, propelled by Augustine's thought, and creates a unifying, progressive, and hierarchical metaphysics for European nations, i.e., Christendom. See for instance, C. A. Patrides's *The Grand Design of God: The Literary Form of the Christian View of History* (London: Routledge, 1972); Otto Friedrich von Guericke's *Political Theories of the Middle Age*, trans. Frederic William Maitland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), in which he states that "all Order consists in the subordination of Plurality to Unity . . . and never and nowhere can a purpose that is common to Many be effectual unless the One rules over the Many and directs the Many to the goal. So is it among the heavenly spheres; so in the harmony of the heavenly bodies, which find their Unity in the *primum mobile*. So is it in every living organism. Here the Soul is the aboriginal principle, while Reason among the powers of the Soul and the Heart among the bodily organs are the representatives of Unity" (9). See Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) and *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007). Both describe Augustine's important role in defining the internal/external notion (internal and external authority) of the Western consciousness. In this premodern framework, hierarchy serves an important role, according to W. H. Greenleaf, *Order, Empiricism, and Politics: Two Traditions of English Political Thought, 1500–1700* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), because "[o]rder implied the harmonious maintenance of each form of being in the place designed for it in the divine plan of creation and its obedient subordination to the degrees of being superior to it" (26). To see other descriptions of this "old" hierarchical order, see also John Neville Figgis, *The Divine Right of Kings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914); Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936). The notion of connecting progress to Christian history and narrative follows from Augustine; see Frederick J. Teggart, *The Idea of Progress: a Collection of Readings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949). See also R. W. Dyson's Introduction in his translation of Augustine's *The City of God Against the Pagans*, trans. R. W.

like the Churchills and Harris, use this basic outline in their introductory sections but conflate the higher biblical narrative with their own society's and Western culture's perceived narrative. They use this preassigned cultural narrative to catalogue, explain, and authorize their experiences of unfamiliar lands and peoples. Ideally, the framework serves to produce a higher understanding; that is, people use their reason to collect knowledge, which in turn raises them to a higher understanding of God's universal community.⁸ The framework's focus upon knowledge compels travelers to document the exact particulars of foreign cultures and experiences in order to render comprehensive accounts that justify the beginning and ending points of their metaphysical narrative. The Churchills' and Harris's collections reflect these notions, and initially Navarrete seems to follow suit.

Yet as Anthony Grafton notes, "rude facts contradicted venerable books, and debate and research might challenge any inherited verity."⁹ The "rude facts," or knowledge of particulars, especially in Navarrete's observations of China's prosperity,¹⁰ direct the friar to adjust the old

Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xxi. See also Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500–c. 1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), Chapter 1.

⁸ In *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor explains this framework of reason, knowledge, and higher understanding in terms of Augustine's philosophy: "Augustine's proof of God is a proof from the first-person experience of knowing and reasoning. I am aware of my own sensing and thinking; and in reflecting on this, I am made aware of its dependence on something beyond it, something common. But this turns out on further examination to include not just objects to be known but also the very standards which reason gives allegiance to. So I recognize that this activity which is mine is grounded on and presupposes something higher than I, something which I should look up to and revere. By going inward, I am drawn upward" (134).

⁹ *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: the Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 255.

¹⁰ Ray William Frantz, *The English Traveller and the Movement of Ideas: 1660–1732* (New York: Octagon Books, 1968), describes how the emphasis upon observations described in the "new science" proves important for contributing to the attraction of Navarrete's narrative. Travelers focused on collecting and recounting facts, and these fact-gathering narratives exerted "considerable pressure on crystallized institutions." Frantz stresses that "[t]he various forces that produced seventeenth- and eighteenth-century humanitarianism, toleration, and cosmopolitanism were . . . many; but not least among them must have been the influence exerted by travel-books" (118). The previous narratives fail to account for particular observations, so writers seek to find alternate models that may account for incongruities between their metaphysics and their observations. Robert Markley touches upon China's prosperity in "The destin'd Walls / Of Cambalu': Milton, China, and the Ambiguities of the East," in *Milton*

framework significantly by using features of Thomistic natural law that he mastered as a member of the Dominican order.¹¹ The natural law elements diminish the external authority of a preset hierarchical, historical, and teleological reality that determines the significance and viability of unfamiliar cultures and peoples, and instead privilege the local and internal authority of people and nations by connecting their critical reasoning capacity with the laws of nature, laws determined by God at the universe's creation.¹² That is, in Navarrete's modified framework people use their critical reasoning capacity to determine how they *function* within a nature governed by God's law.¹³ By re-envisioning people's relation to nature and God, Navarrete realigns how people perceive their relation to foreign nations and peoples.

and the Imperial Vision, eds. Balachandra Rajan and Elizabeth Sauer (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1999). He states, "China has avoided the civilization-rending sins that [Peter] Heylyn describes because it has escaped moral, political, economic, and ecological 'desolation'; it defies the theocentric logic that structures both degenerative and redemptive narratives of history. China's prosperity was axiomatic" (196). Markley argues that different political groups interpret China's prosperity in terms of their ideologies: for example, "If the example of China gives royalists in England a means to reinforce their sociopolitical views, the empire's prosperity offers a more general hope that the age-old dream of an unfallen . . . nature is not a lost ideal but an attainable and profitable reality" (200). My study follows Markley's, but identifies how natural law rhetoric accounts for such jarring notions of prosperity, which do not fit within what Markley calls "an authoritative Judeo-Christian metanarrative" (194).

¹¹ In *A Question of Rites: Friar Domingo Navarrete and the Jesuits in China* (Cambridge: Scholar Press, 1993), J. S. Cummins notes that "the friars revered their master theologian Thomas Aquinas as an oracle, any divergence from his teaching . . . was automatically denounced" (33). Cummins adds that "Friar Domingo differs from his predecessors, for . . . he maintains a consistent, all-embracing praise of the [Chinese] empire"; indeed, Navarrete insists that the Chinese "government fulfills Aquinas's precepts" (199). See also Henry Joseph Schroeder, "Domingo Fernandez Navarrete," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. X (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), also online, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10723a.htm> (accessed March 10, 2011). After finishing his studies, Navarrete was offered the chair of Thomistic theology at several Spanish universities.

¹² For Richard Tuck in *The Rights of War and Peace: Political thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), one characteristic of this new nature and its framework is that "an individual in nature . . . was morally identical to a state, and that there were no powers possessed by a state which an individual could not possess in nature" (82). Much of my natural law terminology follows Martin Rhonheimer's analysis in *Natural Law and Practical Reason: A Thomist View of Moral Autonomy*, trans. Gerald Malsbary (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000).

¹³ "Critical reasoning capacity" refers to depiction of the change of the role of reason in Paul Hazard's *The European Mind: The Critical Years (1680–1715)*, trans. J. Lewis May (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).

This realignment connects directly to observations in John Locke's *Essays on the Law of Nature* (1663–64), *Essay, Two Treatises* (1689), and his *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) because, like Navarrete, the philosopher seeks to remove an authorizing hierarchy and historical teleology from nature, by questioning the existence of innate ideas. Instead, particular cultures and peoples prove legitimate because they use their critical reasoning capacity to determine their proper function within nature.¹⁴ Navarrete's description of China and Locke's subsequent usage of Navarrete indicate the evolution toward a new cultural discourse in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century thought that substantially changes the Western framework, thereby signaling a transformation in the European conception of the foreign.¹⁵ Navarrete's training in Thomistic theology complements John Locke's natural law rhetoric,¹⁶ and discloses how the new Western discourse foregrounds the local and internal authority of people and nations while removing a prescribed hierarchical and historical narrative from cataloguing Europeans' observations of foreign peoples and lands. As a result, this natural law realignment alters the global sensibility of Europeans, allowing them to conceive that particular foreign cultures could be legitimate and self-sufficient without initially grouping those societies into a culturally predetermined hierarchical position within their Christian metaphysics.

¹⁴ In *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson: Contesting Diversity in the Enlightenment and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Daniel Carey states that Locke's "accumulation of testimony on customs and manners treated human nature as something to be understood inductively, rather than through preassigned assumptions about essences" (34). My study differs from Carey because he outlines some of the "implications of cultural diversity," whereas I seek to define specifically how the European framework changes in response to cultural diversity and how it still insists upon "unifying notions" that continue to join disparate cultures and nations.

¹⁵ My assertion for this significant shift in the framework is influenced by Jonathan I. Israel's *Radical Enlightenment* and also, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670–1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). My use of "the foreign" comes from David Porter, "A Peculiar But Uninteresting Nation: China and the Discourse of Commerce in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33.2 (1999–00): 181–99.

¹⁶ Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), states, "it is better to take [Locke] to be working with the modern natural law framework" (142). See also Steven Forde, "Natural Law, Theology, and Morality in Locke," *American Journal of Political Science* 45.2 (2001): 396–409.

* Early Eighteenth-Century Travel Collections *

With its stress upon a preset hierarchical and historical narrative, the earlier framework emerges within the introductory sections of the two largest travel collections to appear in print after Richard Hakluyt's and Samuel Purchas's compilations of the early seventeenth century: Awnsham and John Churchill's *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* and John Harris's *Navigantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca*.¹⁷ Unlike the Churchills' and Harris's editions, other early eighteenth-century large collections lack extensive introductory sections, such as James Knapton's *A New Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1711), which appeared six years later, as well as the Royal Society's third volume of *Miscellanea Curiosa: Containing a collection of Curious Travels and Natural Histories of Countries* (first edition 1707, second edition 1727).

These important collections show the continued interest in travel narratives and their sustained influence in eighteenth-century English and European thought and culture and, further, reveal two common threads of travel writing, identified by Jas Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (1999): that travel writings contain a European tradition of Roman/Christian imperialist "nationally tinged" paradigms with their "universalist assumptions" and they contain, simultaneously, a "Humanist sensibility" with its focus on science and empiricism.¹⁸ These two threads are evident in Churchills' and Harris's prefatory material on history and navigation, as they seek to establish a historical narrative that chronicles human developments in terms of a biblical/Western progression, while underscoring, at the same time, the importance of reason and observation.

¹⁷ Peter J. Marshall and Glyndwr Williams, *The Great Map of Mankind: Perceptions of New Worlds in the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), discuss how these collections added to the renewed popularity of travel narratives (48–9). Subsequent in-text citations regarding the Churchills and Harris refer to the following sources: Awnsham and John Churchill, *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1704–32), Eighteenth Century Collections Online; John Harris, *Navigantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca* (London, 1705), Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

¹⁸ *Voyages and Visions: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 47–48.

* Awnsham and John Churchill's Prefatory Material *

Awnsham and John Churchill open the "Introductory Discourse" by locating the history of travel and navigation within a universalizing biblical narrative. Many argue that navigation was, for the editors, the "execution of the direction given by Almighty GOD, since the first vessel we read of in the world, was the ark Noah built by the immediate command and appointment of the Almighty" (ix; col. 1). Since navigation was directed first by God, then "[t]he first vessel ever known to have floated on the waters, was the ark made by God's appointment, in which *Noah* and his three sons were saved from the universal deluge" (ix; col. 1). Noah and the ark establish a biblical origin to the editors' account of navigation and exploration, and the unfolding description serves as an extension of God's divine providence, which the editors note, directs the ship: "this ark, ship, or whatever else it may be called, had neither oars, sails, masts, yards, rudder, or any sort of rigging whatsoever, being only guided by Divine Providence" (ix; col. 2). Historically, God made the first vessel, and it was directed by his providence, and analogously the story of "navigation" begins with the biblical story, and as such, reveals God's providence, that is, Western navigation and exploration realize God's divine plan. Thus, by documenting particular inventions and improvements to navigation over the centuries, the editors document the progression of the biblical account. By superimposing the Christian story and *telos* on navigation, the editors indicate that subsequent travel narratives in the collection will contribute to an ongoing biblical story established in prefatory sections. Particular narratives will offer specific insights into the complexity of cultures, peoples, and nations and how they fit into a progressive overarching narrative, determined by divine providence.

For the editors, this narrative advances historically and purposefully towards God and prosperity, and it must when signs of progress exist, like the discovery of the "magnetical needle." Navigation and humankind benefit tremendously from its development: "it shall suffice here to shew the benefits and advantages navigation, and in it mankind, has reaped by the discovery of this most wonderful secret" (xiv; col. 2). The compass itself suggests the possible advantages that people attain by understanding the relation between navigation, exploration, and God's plan—prosperity and wealth. Indeed after recounting major excursions into Africa and Asia,

the editors underscore the tremendous resources that these vast lands and people offer Europeans:

[I]t now remains to shew what a vast extent of land is by these means made known, which before *Europe* was wholly a stranger to, and the commodities it supplies us with; which is one great point of this discourse, . . . to shew what benefit is reaped by navigation, and the vast improvement it has received since the discovery of the magnetical needle. (xxx; col. 1–2)

The editors outline their narrative purpose clearly, showing how they follow the older Western framework. God created the means to navigate; humans have refined this facility through the development of the compass, and now humans enjoy the benefits of this technology by appropriating newly uncovered resources.¹⁹ The story of European exploration and travel follows a basic plot established by the biblical narrative. Foreign lands provide the opportunity for Europeans to extract resources and commodities, which ultimately reveal the progress that directs travelers' actions. When people follow the biblical narrative, they will multiply, improve, and prosper because they follow God's plan, his providence, which is written into reality itself. Hence, by stressing the importance of realizing God's plan and attaining happiness, the editors underscore the need to experience and observe disparate foreign lands, peoples, and cultures. Exploration and observation produce knowledge, which, in turn, reveals their progress in the narrative as they advance closer to God.

¹⁹ The editors highlight some of the commodities that Africa has to offer Europeans: "gold-dust, ivory, and slaves" (xxx; col. 2). This turns out to be the extent of that continent's resources because "the greatest part of it [is] scorched under the torrid zone," while the natives are "almost naked, no where industrious, and for the most part scarce civilized" (xxx; col. 2). Referring to Africa, the editors note that the natives hardly fit into a cultural ideal that Europeans would identify. They are "scarce civilized," pointing to their diminished capacity to partake in the historical progression in contrast to most European countries. The editors also point to the commodities of other lands like Persia, which "to speak by way of trade, the commodities here are diamonds, silk . . . , cotton . . . , and infinite plenty of it in calicoes and muslins, all sorts of sweet and rich woods, all the gums, drugs and dyes, all the precious plants, and rich perfumes, not to mention the spices" (xxxii; col. 2); the East Indies: "Their wealth is incredible, for they produce whatever man can wish; but the principal commodities exported are ginger, pepper, camphor, agarick, cassia, wax, etc." (xxxiii; col. 1); and then they list generally the commodities from this region that "the discovery whereof has been the subject of this discourse, supply the Christian world" (xxxiv; col. 1).

To encourage this advancement and improvement, Europeans must continue to investigate the unexplored regions of the globe, acquiring knowledge and information, propelling the unfolding historical movement. By either writing or reading travel narratives the traveler and reader benefit and improve because, "[w]hat was cosmography before these discoveries?"; it was scarcely a science, and "great was the ignorance of man" (lxix; col. 1); "But now geography and hydrography have received some perfection by the pains of so many mariners and travelers" as well as "Astronomy" and "Natural and moral history is embellished" (lxix; col. 2). The result is that "[t]rade is raised to the highest pitch, each part of the world supplying the other with what it wants, and bringing home what is accounted most precious and valuable" (lxix; col. 2). Again the editors connect navigation, exploration, and prosperity. Exploration encourages trade, and trade promotes wealth, and prosperity creates a larger prosperous community:

The empire of Europe is now extended to the utmost bounds of the earth where several of its nations have conquests and colonies. These and many more are the advantages drawn from the labours of those who expose themselves to the dangers of the vast ocean, and of unknown nations . . . the relations of one traveller is an incentive to stir up another to imitate him, whilst the rest of mankind, in their accounts without stirring a foot, compass the earth and seas, visit all countries, and converse with all nations. (lxix; col. 2)

The editors connect the unfolding biblical narrative and its promise of prosperity with a global community. This global community, nevertheless, is an "empire" defined by its European attributes and goals, which is validated implicitly by the overarching narrative. Thus the more Europeans travel, the more they collect information; the more they come to understand the world, the closer they come to establishing a prosperous global European community—a neo-Augustinian City of God. Clearly this expansionist doctrine borrows the Western framework by suggesting that travel and exploration follow a Christian narrative within an ascending hierarchy that moves people toward prosperity and a higher unity with

God.²⁰ The editors conflate, however, this framework with a distinct early eighteenth-century European narrative, which superimposes its ideals upon navigation, exploration, travel, and foreign cultures, while hierarchically positing the superiority of its conventions and practices. In this conflated narrative, European culture directs people upwards towards God's universal community, which in reality proves to be an early eighteenth-century European global empire. Thus the ending of the narrative, a universal unification with God, accedes to a universal community that conforms to the European Christian ideals of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Accordingly, to attain the prosperity and progress writ into this cultural narrative, explorers and travelers must practice proper humanist-empiricist methods of observation when encountering unfamiliar lands. The editors acquire these methods from the Royal Society, more specifically from a short piece by "Mr. *Rook*, a fellow of the Royal Society" (lxix; col. 2), that is, Lawrence Rooke, a founding member of the Royal Society, whose "Directions for Sea-men, bound for far Voyages" appeared in the Society's *Philosophical Transactions* (1665).²¹ The prefatory note states that the Royal Society's purpose is "to study *Nature* rather than *Books*, and from the Observations, made of the *Phaenomena* and Effects she presents, to compose a History of Her" (140–41). Pointedly the Royal Society's mandate necessitates the observation of nature so that people may assemble a narrative or record to produce a story of nature.²² For this reason, members of the society have asked for "*Inquiries* of things Observable in forrain Countries," and they offer suggestions on collecting "Particulars, they desire chiefly to be informed about" (141). Thus Rooke directs sea travelers to mark particulars by indicating their longitude and latitude, plotting coasts, promontories, islands, etc. The editors add that one should "make a reasonable stay at all places where there are antiquities, or any rarities to be observed; and not think that because others have writ on that subject, there is no more to be said; for upon comparing their observations with other mens, they will often find a very considerable difference" (lxxi; col. 2). For the benefit of all, travelers should keep a notebook to make notes;

²⁰ See Pagden, *Lords of all the World*, 24–27.

²¹ *Philosophical Transactions* 1 (1665): 140–143.

²² The *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates that the first definition for "history" means "a relation of incidents...a narrative, tale, story." See OED, 2nd edition (1989).

this way, they may transcribe those annotations at night "more methodically." Additionally, "travelers ought to carry about him several sorts of measures, to take the dimensions of such things as require it" (lxxi; col. 2). By highlighting these "measures" and quantifying experience, the editors affirm that travelers must measure their observations faithfully to provide precise accounts of phenomena. These particulars will contribute to collective knowledge by assisting others to formulate a complete history or story of nature. This narrative will help people understand where they reside hierarchically within the progression of the Western narrative so that they may ascend towards happiness and prosperity in a European-defined global community.

✱ **John Harris's Prefatory Material** ✱

John Harris's (1705) Introduction and "Epistle Dedicatory" to the queen reflect similar principles as Awnsham and John Churchill: the reliance upon a preset hierarchical and historical teleology while stressing the importance of evidence and observation. When addressing Queen Anne, Harris underscores England's own cultural supremacy, stating that "when either a Man hath actually travell'd the whole World himself, or carefully consider'd the Accounts which those give us that have done so, he will be abundantly convinced, that Our own Religion, Government and Constitution is, in the Main, much preferable to any he shall meet with Abroad."²³ From the outset Harris establishes his own nationally and culturally tinged universalism. Granted, he writes for a patron's preferment and flattery; nevertheless, the fact that he asserts the primacy of his own culture indicates a tendency to measure the world based upon a definite narrative. Even after surveying the diversity of the world, one must come to the conclusion that one's own country is superior to another (as we will see, this contrasts significantly with Navarrete). This realization indicates the hierarchical and providential order that God has established which ascends toward prosperity because "Providence seems graciously to have design'd to make us Great and Happy." By pointing to the importance of providence and wellbeing, Harris imposes, like Awnsham and John

²³ N.p.

Churchill, an English/Protestant *telos* upon travel experiences, validating and authorizing observed phenomena. Since other cultures fail to fit into this narrative, they prove deficient and incomplete.

Harris's Introduction reinforces the importance of conforming to an overarching narrative by documenting the "Origination of Mankind" in the Bible. Harris begins, stating that

Whoever will carefully and unprejudicately consider, That there hath in all Ages, and amongst all Nations been a constant Tradition, That Mankind had its Original *ex non Genitis*, or from some first Parents not begotten in the common way, but immediately created by God himself. . . . Whoever, I say, will candidly consider these Evidences, must conclude that we have all the moral Assurances possible, That the World had a Beginning, and that Mankind had its first Original about the Time we have so particular an Account of in the Sacred History of the Bible. (i; pt. I, col. 1)

Like Awnsham and John Churchill, Harris offers his collection as an account of the unfolding and overarching biblical narrative. The Introduction traces a biblical trajectory, in which the Christian God dictates a specific providential beginning and, presumably, ending. The narrative itself validates what Europeans perceive as they experience the world. In fact, Moses's "account" offers sufficient evidence of the biblical narrative's authority: "the Account which *Moses* give us of the peopling of the Earth after the Deluge by *Noah's* Children, is so conformable to all the authentick Records yet remaining in any languages, that it carries with it irresistible Evidence" (i; pt. I, col. 1). In an unexplored and un-traveled world, experiences and observations already fit into the predetermined pattern outlined by the biblical narrative. The narrative serves as an authorizing template for documenting and cataloguing phenomena. Its authority is "irresistible."

Thus the overarching narrative authorizes evidence and dictates how it should be classified, while stressing, simultaneously, the collection of knowledge by observing particulars. While discussing navigation's improvements, Harris seeks to counter claims that he focuses too much upon "the several particular Steps of these Mens Voyages" (4; bk. 1, ch. 1, col. 1). The reader may tire of the detailed account of years, months, days

when sailors travel and find it "minute and trifling." However, Harris insists upon the significance of such information because "the Particularness of those Observations, which might be a Fault, with respect to a well-known world, is necessary . . . in reference to a World not yet discovered" (4; bk. 1, ch. 1, col. 2). Because these lands are unfamiliar, travelers must detail their observations:

Every step taken by a first Discoverer, presents an Original in those Matters; others that come after, do but Copy or Refine upon him, and continue the Story that he begins. . . . 'Tis for this Reason, that we propose so punctual an Observation of the several Steps of the Voyages, made by those celebrated Persons, who first ventur'd out into the World, and laid a Foundation for Europe's Acquaintance and Converse with the remoter Parts of it. (4; bk. 1, ch. 1, col. 2)

For Harris, the age of exploration fits into a narrative or "Story" that the travelers and explorers relate through their experiences in foreign lands. The beginning of the story has been written. Now the explorers must collect particulars to accumulate knowledge, which will reveal the unfolding historical storyline. To understand their position within the story, travelers must note details and particulars of experience to map reality, thereby acquiring sufficient knowledge to realize their position within God's progressive, overarching, and providential plan. Once travelers become aware of their position in the providential plan, then they realize the primacy and significance of their own culture's perspective. Unfortunately, the detailed documentation of experiences and observations, encouraged by Harris, the Churchills, and the Royal Society, complicates their notion of a hierarchical and historical narrative, as seen in John Locke's arguments against innate ideas and in Navarrete's account of China's history, culture, and prosperity.

* John Locke, Reason, Laws of Nature,
and Cultural Difference *

John Locke's argument against innate ideas underscores how experiences about other cultures have complicated a predetermined narrative. In the initial chapters of *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, travel accounts reveal, as Daniel Carey says, the "disparities in religious belief and moral practice across the world" and consequently these accounts, by writers such as Thevenot, Ovington, and Loubere, "unseat the mistaken view that certain innate ideas or principles informed human nature."²⁴ Further, Locke's emphasis upon localized, inward reason resists the need to situate cultures within a hierarchy or historical teleology; instead, people use reason to determine how they function within nature, which is based upon laws established by God and accessible to all humans.²⁵ This shift toward focusing on determining one's function within nature points towards his and Navarrete's new framework.

When Locke maintains that innate principles do not exist in the mind, he challenges the notion that humans possess imprinted principles that guide their behavior. He states: "Nature, I confess, has put into man a desire of happiness and an aversion to misery . . . these may be observed in all persons and all ages, steady and universal; but these are inclinations of the appetite to good, not impressions of truth on the understanding" (31; bk. I, ch. III, par. 3).²⁶ Locke states that there are certain inclinations that are inherent to all humans;²⁷ however, they are not principles of truth and knowledge imprinted upon people's understanding, principles

²⁴ Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson*, 34.

²⁵ In "Locke on the Law of Nature," *The Philosophical Review* 67.4 (1958): 477–98, John W. Yolton states: "What [Locke] was arguing for in the second of these *Essays* was that the law of nature . . . is not known through inscription or handed down by tradition but is known by reason through sense experience" (482).

²⁶ John Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. John W. Yolton (London: Everyman, 1996). Subsequent quotes in the text come from this edition.

²⁷ This notion of "inclinations" connects with Aquinas's (1964–76) natural law theory: "it is evident that all things partake somewhat of the eternal law, in so far as, namely, from its being imprinted on them, they derive their respective inclinations to their proper acts and ends" (II, q. 91, a. 2). *Summa Theologica*, New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/> (accessed March 10, 2011). See again Martin Rhonheimer's authoritative analysis of Aquinas's thought, 67.

that, ready-made, help people determine the nature of reality.²⁸ Since principles are not imprinted upon people's minds, then different people may generate, for example, very different moral rules: "Hence naturally flows the great variety of opinions concerning moral rules which are to be found amongst men, according to the different sorts of happiness they have a prospect of, or propose to themselves" (33; bk. I, ch. III, par. 6). Different people develop different moral standards because they possess varying perspectives of reality and happiness directed by their inclinations that belie, consequently, the existence of a preset hierarchical and historical order. If an order exists within people's minds, then people across the globe would possess similar moral laws and conceptions of happiness. Experience shows this is not the case. For instance, Locke points out how different cultures acknowledge a deity. He states that "[i]f any idea can be imagined innate, the idea of God may" (39; bk. I, ch. IV, par. 8). Yet he uses examples from travel narratives like Navarrete's to demonstrate that there are "whole nations . . . amongst whom there was to be found no notion of a god."²⁹ Indeed some nations enjoy the "improvements of arts and sciences" without the knowledge of God. These cultures experience "improvements" or progress because they use and apply their faculties; however, they do not possess knowledge of God because they have not used or applied their faculties to a sufficient extent:

For, though there be no truth which a man may more evidently make out to himself than the existence of a god, yet he that shall content himself with things as he finds them in this world, as they minister to his pleasures and passions, and not make inquiry a little further into their causes, ends, and admirable contrivances, and pursue the thoughts thereof with diligence and attention, may live long without any notion of such a being. (43; bk. I, ch. IV, par. 23)

So the attainment of true knowledge "depends upon the right use of those powers nature hath bestowed upon us." For this reason, a culture may

²⁸ Yolton, "Locke on the Law of Nature," 490.

²⁹ He uses other travel narratives such as Jean de Thevenot's *Relation d'un Voyage fait au Levant* (1664); Jean de Léry's *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil, Also Called America* (1578); P. M. La Martinière's *Voyage des Pays Septentrionaux* (1676); Edward A. Terry's *Voyage to East India* (1655); John A. Ovington's *A Voyage to the Suratt* (1696); and La Loubere's *Du Royaume de Siam* (1691).

improve without the knowledge of God because they use their natural faculties to a certain extent, while stopping short in applying them sufficiently to attain some notion of the true deity. For this reason, Locke states: "There is a great deal of difference between an innate law and a law of nature, between something imprinted in our minds in their very original, and something that we, being ignorant of, may attain to the knowledge of, by the use and due application of our natural faculties" (36; bk. I, ch. III, par. 13).³⁰ By using their natural faculties, reason and sense, people may attain knowledge of the world and God; however, if they fail to acquire an understanding of God, then clearly they fail to "make inquiry a little further into their causes."

Hence, for Locke, people use reason to examine nature to acquire knowledge;³¹ that is, by using their natural faculties, reason and sense, they discover through experience the constitution of reality.³² Locke has shifted the emphasis significantly. For Churchill brothers, the older framework serves as the ready-made, authorizing historical template to chronicle and catalogue phenomena. The more information and knowledge one collects, the more one reveals the narrative, and the closer one moves to God and his universal community. However, for Locke, people do not begin passively with an imprinted narrative that influences how they should catalogue experience; rather people begin with inclinations and their own natural faculties, which allow them to discover the laws of nature.

Locke provides an excellent example of this inward authority attached to the natural faculties in his *Two Treatises of Government*.³³ By focusing on people's reason and sense, Locke diminishes the external authority of a hierarchy and strengthens the internal authority of all people: "Man has a *Natural Freedom* . . . , since all that share in the same common Nature, Faculties, and Powers, are in Nature equal, and ought to partake in the

³⁰ Aquinas, *Summa*, maintains that "natural law is nothing else than the rational creature's participation of the eternal law" (II, q. 91, a. 2).

³¹ Yolton, "Locke on the Law of Nature," states that for Locke "[r]eason and sense are the sole foundations for all knowledge" (482).

³² Rhonheimer, *Natural Law and Practical Reason*, states that with natural law, "man himself becomes a participating and responsible interpreter of the divine providence" (68). With natural law, people actively interpret divine providence, rather than passively accept the authority of the hierarchical narrative in the old framework.

³³ John Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960). Subsequent quotations in the text refer to this edition.

same common Rights and Priviledges, till the manifest appointment of God . . . can be produced to show any particular Person's Supremacy" (208; tr. I, ch. VI, par. 67, lines 20–26). Since all people share the same natural faculties, they are equal; no person dominates another.³⁴ Locke adds in the *Second Treatise* that the "*State of Nature* has a Law of Nature to govern it, which obliges everyone," and for everyone, "Reason, . . . is that Law" (Treatise II, Chapter II, Paragraph 6, Lines 6–7).³⁵ If people choose to break a law of nature, they break the law of reason too: "In transgressing the law of nature, the offender declares himself to live by another rule than that of reason and common equity, which is that measure God has set to the actions of men for their mutual security" (290; tr. II, ch. II, par. 8, lines 9–13). God has created laws of nature that all people can understand by using their reason. People who do not follow Christianity have the ability to live prosperously without direct knowledge of the Bible because they use their reason to follow the laws in nature that God established at creation. Locke suggests as much by emphasizing people's critical reasoning capacity regarding questions of spirituality in *A Letter Concerning Toleration*:

[N]o man can so far abandon the care of his own Salvation, as blindly to leave it to the choice of any other. . . . For no Man can, if he would, conform his Faith to the Dictates of another. All the Life and Power of true Religion consists in the inward and full persuasion of the mind. (26)³⁶

Religious persuasion occurs within the particular mind, not within a predetermined and prescribed order within reality. For this reason one should tolerate other religions because others cannot be forced to believe one's

³⁴ In "The Coherence of a Mind: John Locke and the Law of Nature," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 37.1 (1999): 73–90, Alex Tuckness states: "Locke believed that reason was sufficient to generate knowledge of ourselves as created beings and to recognize that all other creatures created with the same capacities, particularly reason, were for that reason equal and not in a state of subordination" (84).

³⁵ Like a law, reason functions as a "rule," "measure," a "standard" or a "measuring stick," that orders actions to a particular end; see again Rhonheimer, *Natural Law and Practical Reason*, 62, 70.

³⁶ John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. James Tully (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983). Subsequent references refer to this text.

own religious ideals; rather, others should be persuaded only through reason and inward reflection. Indeed, “however clearly we may think this or the other doctrine to be deduced from Scripture, we ought not therefore to impose it upon others, as a necessary Article of Faith; . . . unless we would be content also that other Doctrines should be imposed upon us in the same manner” (57). Since spiritual persuasion occurs within the mind and innate principles are not imprinted in the mind, then people should avoid presuming that their interpretation of doctrine must be imposed upon others. This notion itself resists indicating that particular perspectives are higher or more significant than another. Clearly Locke’s emphasis upon the laws of nature and people’s natural faculties serves to erode a preset, authorizing narrative that catalogues information under culturally determined stratifications. The old framework informs, however, a portion of Locke’s theory, when he insists that people must use their faculties, sense and reason, sufficiently to acquire a complete understanding of the godhead.³⁷ This point will prove important for Navarrete too, suggesting the limitations that these natural law accounts place upon understanding cultural difference.

With Locke’s natural law principles, we can understand why Navarrete’s narrative would attract Locke and other eighteenth-century thinkers.³⁸ Navarrete uses natural law philosophy and language that stresses reason and its role in determining how people function within nature, rather than privileging the external authority of a hierarchical and historical teleology.

³⁷ Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson*, states that Locke “assumes that even the most advanced mind among [natives] would lack an array of thoughts extending beyond their circle. Their condition results from the fact they do not take part in conversation with ‘thinking Men,’ balancing rival positions as they search for truth, aided by literacy” (90).

³⁸ I do not argue that Locke propounds a Thomistic natural law doctrine. Rather, I argue that Locke senses characteristics of natural law in Navarrete’s travel narrative. These characteristics include the natural faculties and laws in nature.

* Domingo Fernández Navarrete and China *

Like the Churchills and Harris, Navarrete bears a cultural framework, but his experiences of China limit its application.³⁹ Navarrete, a friar in the Dominican order and scholar of Thomistic theology, seeks to discover truth, like the previous editors, and this truth serves a larger purpose of accumulating knowledge that directs people to God. Differing from the Churchills and Harris, Navarrete draws upon his background in Thomistic theology to minimize the hierarchical and historical narrative while expanding the significance of reason and the laws of nature. By highlighting reason, the "light of nature" (*luz natural*), Navarrete privileges the authority of particular and local experiences of people existing and functioning within nature. For Navarrete, the Chinese are heathen ultimately, but they prosper and thrive locally because they use reason to follow the law that God establishes within nature.

Navarrete follows the preceding editors in his humanist/empiricist stress upon particulars, details, facts, and knowledge. One should examine foreign cultures in detail—whether by examining their customs and traditions or reading their cultural documents—to collect and document truth. In his preface, "The Author to the Reader," Navarrete registers his intentions first stating, "There is no doubt but he who writes and aspires to the name of a historian, is obliged in the first place to shield and guard himself with truth [*verdad*]," and then adding "I resolved not to make account in this work of any thing but what I have seen, read, and has gone through my hands. The penalty he incurs who does not stick to truth in all particulars, is, not to be believed when he speaks true" (N.p.; vol. I, par. 2, col. 1). Like the previous editors, Navarrete signals his empirical method by stressing truth and particulars; nonetheless, the particulars should fit into an overarching narrative: "How could we in China oppose abundance

³⁹ I use Domingo Fernández Navarrete's *An Account of the Empire of China in A Collection of Voyages and Travels*, ed. Awnsham and John Churchill (London, 1705). Subsequent quotations within the text refer to this edition. I used the Churchill translation because, as J. S. Cummins notes: "On the whole . . . the translator managed remarkably well" (cxvii). Navarrete, Domingo, *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete: 1618–1686*, ed. J. S. Cummins (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1963). Subsequent translations from the original Spanish originate from *Tratados Historicos, Politicos, Ethicos, y Religiosos de la Monarchia de China* (Madrid, 1676) from Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections in Washington State University Library.

of errors [*innumerables errores*] those heathens hold, if we did not read and study their books and doctrine? . . . It is also useful to make our benefit of what truth there is found in them" (133; vol. I, bk. IV, col. 2). Europeans may read foreign texts to discover truth, which adds to collective understanding, while exposing the errors in the foreign culture's thought and practices, by comparing these to a predetermined narrative. In many ways, the "errors those heathens hold" originate from their failure to conform to Navarrete's own cultural narrative metaphysics, which he defends by repeatedly drawing upon the authority of church thinkers like Aquinas, Augustine, Jerome, and others. In addition, Navarrete submits his account to the Catholic Church and "its universal head the pope,"⁴⁰ signaling the ultimate authority as the hierarchical head of earthly Church, the pope.

Even so, this authorizing Christian narrative falters as Navarrete experiences incongruities between his cultural narrative and the customs of China. Particularly, he glimpses Chinese prosperity:

The empire of *China* has such plenty and even superfluity of all things, that it would take up many volumes to treat of them in particular. My design is only to give some hints of what is most remarkable, which will suffice to make known how bountifully GOD has dealt with those people who know him not, giving them all they can desire, without being necessitated to seek for any thing abroad; we that have been there, can testify this truth. (31; vol. I, bk. I, ch. 14, col. 1)

He practices empiricist notions by pointing to the "truth" of his experiences, and these experiences show the "superfluity" and bounty of China. This prosperity contrasts, however, with the friar's own teleological Christian narrative. For instance, when commenting upon the emperor "Tai Zung," Navarrete states: "Therefore it is said, that the first thing a king ought to conceive, is, that GOD is absolute lord of all things; and it is most certain that all things prosper [*sucede todo bien*] with him that truly serves and honours him." Then, Navarrete quotes Aquinas to support this assertion: "My holy father S. *Thomas* has excellent lines to this purpose. . . . he makes out his assertion by what happened to *Solomon*, for whilst he continued to worship the true GOD, his kingdom and glory still advanced. He fail'd

⁴⁰ Navarrete's "The Author to the Reader," last page, 2nd col.

in that particular, and soon found a general decay in all respects" (94; vol. 1, bk. II, ch. 15, par. 6). Clearly for Navarrete prosperity and progress connect to a Christian *telos*, the worship of "the true GOD." Based upon Navarrete's own declaration and Churchills' and Harris's framework, the Chinese should not prosper because they fail to realize their position within a hierarchical Christian teleology.⁴¹ However, the culture and people of China thrive, even at times showing more civility and virtue than their Christian European counterparts. For the Chinese

never fail of their usual civilities. These things very often made us stand amaz'd, and we could not but remember the rude scoffing, and insolent expressions commonly us'd in our countries, in cities, upon the road, and in other places, to gentlemen, elderly persons, modest maids, and churchmen; and notwithstanding all this those must pass for *Barbarians*, and we be look'd upon as very much civiliz'd. (34; vol. I, bk. I, ch. 15, par. 6)

Although the old framework requires that Navarrete designate the Chinese as "Barbarians," because they fail to measure up to his culture's hierarchical standards, his experiences prove otherwise and contradict the framework. Indeed, after recounting part of China's history and discussing particular

⁴¹ Pagden, *Lords of all the World*, describes the medieval empires and those that may succeed them in terms of an "Aristotelian identity. The ancient polis had made human flourishing—*eudaimonia*—possible. By rendering *eudaimonia* as 'blessedness' . . . Aristotle's thirteenth-century translator, Robert Grosseteste, had made that a state which it was clearly only possible to achieve within the territorial limits of the Christian *monarchia*" (27). Rome's new heirs realized that powerful and prosperous countries existed, like the Ottoman Empire and China, but their cultural framework neglected to account for that prosperity, because cultural interaction was limited. However, according to Donald F. Lach and Edwin J. Van Kley, "Asia in the Eyes of Europe: The Seventeenth Century," (242–259) in *An Expanding World: The European Impact on World History, 1450–1800*, vol. 31: part 1, *Facing Each Other: The World's Perception of Europe and Europe's Perception of the World*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000), 242–59, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a "stream of information" became "a virtual deluge" that altered European stereotypes of China. Indeed, Anthony Pagden writes in the Introduction of *Facing Each Other*: "Ever since Marco Polo's celebrated description of the seventeen years he claimed to have spent there between 1274 and 1291, supposedly in the service of Kublai Khan, Western Europe had maintained sporadic contact with China. It was not, however, until the first Jesuit mission was established by Matteo Ricci in 1583, that any sustained and serious attempt to understand and evaluate Chinese culture was made" (xxix). In *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete*, J. S. Cummins paraphrases Voltaire, "In the seventeenth century . . . almost nothing was known of the Empire" (ci).

emperors, like “*Kuang Vu*” and “*Ming Ti*,” Navarrete states, “Anybody that had not known these emperors were heathens, would certainly by their actions have taken them for good Christians” (104; vol. 1, bk. II, ch. 18, par. 9).

Between his actual experiences of the Chinese and his authorizing cultural narrative, Navarrete reveals disjunctions or complications within his cultural discourse. By emphasizing the “truth” in details and facts, the friar notices the prosperity and wealth of China, whether in acquiring commodities or practicing virtues. These observations fail to reconcile with the cultural framework that insists prosperity is attached to a hierarchical, historical, and teleological Christian narrative.⁴² According to the narrative, people accumulate knowledge, which indicates their hierarchical position in relation to the higher narrative trajectory, which, in turn, reveals their position in the historical progression towards a Christian *telos*. The old narrative and framework fail, however, to account for a prosperous and powerful China. In order to reconcile the disjunction between the framework and his observations, Navarrete must modify his understanding of how people move towards God.⁴³

For this reason, the friar alters people’s relationship to nature. To do this, he stresses a Christian *telos*, like the previous editors, but indicates that it is realized by focusing on direct observation of nature. He states in Chapter 15 that

GOD is wonderful in his creatures, and stupendous in the multitude, diversity and beauty of them; the variety of only plants he has created, were sufficient for ever to express his great power and infinite wisdom. The trees, flowers, fruits, and plants I my self

⁴² Again, this notion of a Christian/Western narrative defining other non-Christian cultures is not new. See Anthony Pagden, Robert Markley, and Kenneth J. Knoespel, “Milton and the Hermeneutics of Time: Seventeenth-Century Chronologies and the Science of History,” *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 22 (1989): 17–35.

⁴³ In “A Peculiar But Uninteresting Nation,” David Porter indicates how “the very principles of trade seem to originate . . . in a divinely given natural order of things” (185). He adds that this creates a “commercialist *telos*” (189). Since the Chinese fail to follow the commercialist *telos*, then they fail to recognize progress and advancement. The attachment of a *telos* to commerce comes about from early eighteenth-century writers connecting natural law theory to a stadial historical progression. See Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 2. Navarrete and Locke have not made those connections yet.

have seen in my life time, are so very numerous, they would more than fill a large volume. (32; par. 1)

The world's complexity and diversity serve as expressions of God. The more people observe, the more the natural world seems to validate God. In Chapter 19, Navarrete states: "There is no doubt but all we have and shall write, is a great motive to excite us to praise our LORD, and discover his infinite power and wisdom: for the more man knows of the creatures, the more occasion he has to bless and magnify [*alabar, y engrandecer*] his Creator" (42; par. 1). The more one observes God's creation, the more the devout may "bless and magnify" him. That is, the more one knows about the natural world, the more one understands its relation to God. Thus one must observe the natural world to prosper and to acquire wisdom:

Remember then what GOD has created, it is a plain case, the end is to bless and praise his divine Majesty. We have sufficient matter for it, in that which GOD has so bountifully bestow'd [*liberalidad concedio*] on the heathen *Chinese*, and perhaps he has given them so much that they may have the less excuse for their ignorance of his Godhead (42; ch. 19, par. 1).

So far, Navarrete appears to follow the Churchills' and Harris's framework, by stressing the importance of observing the created world through the Christian *telos*. That is, when observing creation, people should direct themselves by following the end of blessing and praising God. Thus one perceives nature through a Christian end, and when people view nature through that end, then they will realize God's bounty. All the more reprehensible for the Chinese, because they enjoy God's bounty and prosperity, yet they are ignorant "of his Godhead" (we will return to this observation of the Chinese later, when showing Navarrete's similarities to Locke). However, Navarrete's emphasis upon creation, nature, and diversity signals his significant change in tone and approach. In truth, rather than appeal to an authorizing hierarchical narrative, the friar emphasizes the significance of the diverse and heterogeneous natural world, part of God's creation.

In the preface, "The Author to the Reader," Navarrete connects this emphasis upon nature's diversity with people's critical reasoning capacity. Even more than the previous editors, Navarrete foregrounds the

observation of particulars in foreign cultures by highlighting God's complex and diverse nature, indicating that God's heterogeneous world offers many truths that travelers could overlook, if they follow their passions. Navarrete's tone shifts from the previous accounts by cautioning travelers not to view unfamiliar cultures as peculiar or strange, simply because they differ from a traveler's home culture: "otherwise only what we see in our own countries would be true, and all the rest fabulous, which is unreasonable." Instead of seeing their own culture as the "truth," travelers should look for truth elsewhere, and he couples this wide-ranging notion of truth with reason: "[w]e must not be governed by passion, or private affection [*afectos particulares*], but by reason [*la razon*], and the understanding, which we know does not comprehend all that is in the world."⁴⁴ Truth exists in unfamiliar lands, and reason tells one this, whereas too much focus on one's own culture reveals the influence of "private affection." In fact, if people use reason when examining other cultures, they may observe that China offers much to learn because even a remote nation like China can access the "light of nature." He affirms, "my design is no other but to make known what light of nature [*mi intento a manifestar la luz*] a nation so remote from conversation and commerce with all others as China is, has had for so many ages."⁴⁵

The natural law language of the "light of nature"⁴⁶ reveals Navarrete's similar approach to Locke, for example, in the earlier *Essays on the Law of Nature* (1663–64), his later *Essay*, and *Two Treatises*. In *Essays*, Locke states, "It is thus evident that there is a natural law . . . , and that this law can be known by the light of nature, i.e., by an inward process of reasoning starting from sense-experience" (97). This "light of nature" sanctions an internal law because "the law of nature is to be inferred not from men's behavior but from their innermost ways of thinking," where "precepts of nature are imprinted" and "are the same in every one of us," which function as an "internal law" (167). Similar to *Letter*, the philosopher maintains that the "light of nature" is an "inward process" that strengthens one's internal authority. Following the same course, Navarrete privileges this internal law and its authority by foregrounding reason and

⁴⁴ Navarrete, "The Author," under subheading "Some particulars," paragraph 3.

⁴⁵ Navarrete, paragraph two.

⁴⁶ Navarrete, bk. 4, ch. 2. This chapter deals with reason and the light of nature (*la razon, y luz natural*).

observations, rather than deferring to the specious and emotional authority of a cultural narrative.

For Navarrete, the "light of nature" permits people, through reason, to access the laws of nature that God established at creation, allowing them to acquire a broader understanding of phenomena, as long as they remain receptive to heterogeneous truth:

Those who are well read and curious, are safer, because they take better measures to go by; especially those who leaving their own country, have travell'd through strange countries, these have more lofty and universal ideas of things; they are less surpriz'd, and make a different judgment of what they hear or read, without rashly judging that doubtful and uncertain [*sin arrojarse temerarios à censurar de dudoso*], which is new to them.⁴⁷

Differing from the editors, who authorize new experiences with cultural hierarchies and narratives, which for Navarrete make people "rashly" (*temerarios*) judge, Navarrete opts for the inward authority of sober reason and the senses, which allow people to acquire more "universal ideas of things." They gain more knowledge, which allows them to calmly and rationally judge new experiences, without succumbing to the emotional distractions and biases of their own culture: "[h]e who has gain'd especial and particular knowledge of some points by experience, may freely and without apprehension [*libremente, y sin temor*] speak to them."⁴⁸ Particular observations of phenomena carry their own validity. Instead of using the external authority of a hierarchical and teleological narrative, people may look to themselves and how they function within their local environment to determine how they interpret and understand phenomena. This internal, local authority may explain, in some ways, Navarrete's position in the Chinese Rites Controversy: that the missionaries should base their understanding of Chinese religious thought, not upon classic texts, but upon the later commentators of those same texts.⁴⁹ Navarrete states that

⁴⁷ Navarrete, "The Author," under subheading "Some particulars," paragraph 3.

⁴⁸ Navarrete, paragraph 3.

⁴⁹ See J. S. Cummins's, *A Question of Rites*, judicious overview of the Chinese Rites Controversy. Also, see Cummins's introduction, *The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete*, (lxiv; vol. 1). See also, David E. Mungello's *Leibniz and Confucianism: The Search for Accord* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1977), 9.

the *Chinese* doctors themselves, who, as men learned in their own doctrine, are better judges of the sense of their books than the *Europeans*, more skilful and unbiass'd [*experimentados, y desapasionados*], and ought to be of more reputation in their own affairs than strangers; unless perhaps any one without regard to demonstration, will give more credit to his own imaginations than to the known truth. . . . It is therefore certain, that in what relates to China, we are to follow the opinion and judgment [*el sentir, y juyzio*] of the Chinese doctors. (74; vol. 1, bk. 2, ch. 9, par. 1)

To properly understand Chinese doctrine, the missionaries should defer to the "opinion and judgment" of local scholars because they are "more skilful and unbiass'd," in contrast to the Europeans who, informed by their private cultural affections, would disregard demonstrable evidence and "give more credit to [their] own imaginations." By following their private affections people reveal their cultural biases and prejudices. Thus, travelers should rely upon established local knowledge.

By using reason to determine how they should act within proximate nature,⁵⁰ people may flourish because their reason determines the law of nature that God established at creation. Remarkably, nature and people's inward faculties provide the means for the Chinese to prosper, without knowledge of the Christian conception of the good or God.

For instance, when recounting Chinese history, Navarrete mentions "*Kao Juen*, one of the council of state." Kao Juen is a singular figure because "having serv'd five emperors for the space of fifty years, [he] was not found to have committed the least fault or slip in the execution of his office." Not only did he faithfully execute his duties but "[t]his heathen [*Gentil*] was very much addicted to virtue, sparing, humble, upright, and uncorrupted" (92; vol. 1, bk. II, ch. 14, par. 12). Since Kao Juen was such an upstanding and virtuous figure, Navarrete adds, "Great pity that such a man should not have the knowledge of GOD!" Kao Juen, a "heathen,"

⁵⁰ I borrow this language of "proximate" nature from Baruch Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise* (1670) in *Complete Works*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002). He argues that the Scriptures (and other such validating narratives) do "not explain things through their proximate causes"; instead, using "narratives it merely employs such order and such language as is most effective in moving men—and particularly the common people—to devotion" (451). The Scriptures and narratives stimulate people's passions rather than allow people to use the "light of reason."

practices virtue better and thrives more than many Europeans: "Few are to be found among Christians that will imitate him." In order to explain the existence of a "heathen" with such remarkable virtue, Navarrete draws upon natural law rhetoric: "But if he observ'd the law of nature [*ley natural*], he could not fail of the assistance of his Maker." Notably, even without knowing, reading, or understanding divine law, Christian doctrine, someone may gain the "assistance of his Maker," if he "observ'd the law of nature." Navarrete's seemingly casual comment signals a dramatic shift within the cultural discourse—a shift that foregrounds local authority and understanding by redirecting people's relation to nature. Instead of appealing to a hierarchy and teleology in nature to authorize the statesman's actions, the friar allows the possibility for the statesman to "observe" the law of nature, which is accessible to all, to authorize his determination of right and wrong action.⁵¹

Navarrete repeats this natural law rhetoric when describing and arguing against Buddhism—a "hellish sect" (*pestifera secta*) (78; vol. 1, bk. II, ch. 11, par 2), which he calls "*Foe*." Despite his disapproval of the "sect," he maintains that many of its followers "have liv'd good lives [*vivido ajustadamente*] according to the laws of nature [*la ley natural*]" (82; vol. 1, bk. 2, ch. 12, par. 10). Like the virtuous statesman, Navarrete insists that the Chinese can lead virtuous lives and prosper as long as they use reason when observing phenomena, which allows them to follow the laws of nature, or God's eternal law or providence. Importantly, to live virtuously, they must not submit to the external authority of God's divine law, which resides in the Bible.⁵² Since they do not reflect upon divine law, Navarrete indicates that "there is little likelihood they should be sav'd" (82; vol. 1, bk. 2, ch. 12, par. 10). Although they may lead "good lives" because they

⁵¹ This natural law influence occurs before notions of progress and commerce, or the development of, as David Porter calls it, a "commercialist telos." Again, see Ronald L. Meek's *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* and his discussion of a stadial progression and its connection to commerce in the mid-eighteenth century. See also Jennifer Pitts's discussion of Adam Smith in *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), Chapter 2.

⁵² Navarrete praises certain aspects of Chinese writings on moral virtue in Book IV, Chapters 1–3. Also, Aquinas draws a distinction between eternal law and divine law. Eternal law, divine providence, differs from natural law because, for Aquinas, *Summa*, "natural law is nothing else than the rational creature's participation of the eternal law" (II, q. 91, a. 2). Divine law stems from the Bible.

use reason, the “light of nature,” to follow the laws of nature, their ignorance of biblical doctrine prevents their salvation. Navarrete offers an example by referring to a Christian martyr:

I follow the opinion of *S. Peter Marinmenus* martyr. . . . He lying sick at Damascus, some *Mahometans* came to visit him. The saint told them that those who did not profess the law of GOD went to hell, as *Mahomet* had done. The infidels kill'd him for these words, and he was a glorious martyr. Why might not he be so, who should say the same of *Foe* and others? (82; vol. 1, bk. 2, ch. 12, par. 8)

For Navarrete, the “*Foe*,” or Buddhists, will go to hell as much as the “Mahometans” because they fail to acknowledge the Christian *telos*. They fail to recognize the ultimate authority of biblical doctrine.

Here we can outline Navarrete's approach. In the new framework, non-European lands and cultures could contain “good” people, even though they fail to recognize the Christian God.⁵³ People, like the Chinese, could live their entire lives without following the dictates of Christ or divine law, yet still prosper. They may attain some measure of earthly happiness by using reason to interpret the eternal laws that God placed within nature at the universe's foundation. In this move, Navarrete clearly distances God from the westerner's account of foreign cultures by removing the authorizing hierarchy and narrative within nature that would direct experiences and observations toward a Christian *telos*.⁵⁴ People do not require an authorizing hierarchy or teleology because nature and reason provide the means by which people determine how they should or should not function. Similar to Locke's arguments against innate ideas, Navarrete's focus on the “light of nature” diminishes the role of a pre-assigned, externally validating authority, and foregrounds the critical reasoning capacity

⁵³ Again, see footnotes 10 and 41. The fact that the Chinese fail to fit within this Western / Christian narrative of virtue and prosperity necessitates a restructuring of the framework by using natural law theory.

⁵⁴ Here Navarrete's use of natural law rhetoric distinguishes the friar from Aquinas because Aquinas places more stress upon hierarchy. See Rhonheimer, *Natural Law and Practical Reason*, 67–68, and David E. Luscombe's “Thomas Aquinas and Conceptions of Hierarchy in the Thirteenth Century,” in *Thomas von Aquin: Werk und Wirkung im Licht Neuerer Forschungen* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), 261–77.

and observations of people in acquiring knowledge. Thus, by underscoring reason and observation, Navarrete and Locke subscribe to a similar framework that accounts for diversity and cultural difference by drawing from features of natural law rhetoric that empower the internal, local, and particular.

As evident from Navarrete's disapproval of Buddhism, this natural law rhetoric includes aspects of the old framework, like Locke, in attaching a Christian *telos* to people's reasoned observations of nature. If people fail to reason and observe sufficiently to acquire an understanding of the Christian God, then they will not receive salvation. In this sense, different people and cultures may thrive locally because they use reason to regulate their natural inclinations, but they may fail universally because they use reason insufficiently to perceive their larger, metaphysical connection to the Christian God. As noted earlier, Navarrete finds this especially disappointing for the Chinese because God "has given them so much that they may have the less excuse for their ignorance of his Godhead" (42; vol. 1, bk. 1, ch. 19, par. 1). The Chinese fail to exercise reason sufficiently to discover the truth of the Christian Godhead, even though the old framework clearly suggests they should, because of their prosperity. Thus, on the local level, they thrive because they use reason and observation to perceive the laws of nature, but on the larger level, the metaphysical totality, they fail because they do not follow the writer's own conception of the Christian good—in this case, Navarrete's Catholicism or Locke's Protestantism. To summarize, Navarrete shifts the emphasis toward how people reason within nature, which prevents unfamiliar peoples and cultures from being validated and authorized by a hierarchical, historical, and teleological narrative, yet, in relation to the metaphysical totality, he designates them as inferior because they reason and observe insufficiently and do not recognize the truth of the Christian God.

In Navarrete's *Tratados* and Locke's thought, the metaphysical limits privilege the home culture in abstract totality, but the natural law rhetoric authorizes particular cultures in particular, proximate nature. That is, the new travel discourse/framework embraces local and internal authority, without immediately submitting distant cultures to the preset standards of a cultural narrative, and it realigns people's relation to nature, underscoring their critical reasoning capacity and their observations, which connects them to the laws of nature, established by God at creation. Consequently,

by minimizing the influence of a pre-assigned hierarchical, teleological, historical, and metaphysical narrative, the new framework distances the home culture from using the Christian God and *telos* to regulate cultural difference, that is, it distances God from authorizing proximate reality. Contrasting with Awnsham and John Churchill's and John Harris's collections, which use a framework that validates phenomena through an external hierarchy and narrative, Navarrete and Locke opt for a framework that accepts diversity and cultural difference upon their own terms by underscoring the authority of particular societies—their use of reason and their ability to interpret laws in nature. This shift permits the home culture to accept unfamiliar beliefs and practices, without cataloguing these customs within hierarchical standards that assert the superiority of one culture over another. Additionally, it points to a burgeoning global sensibility that accepts and embraces cultural difference as necessary in a larger, inclusive, and diverse world community.