

Juan de Paz, O.P. (1622-1699): "The Oracle of Asia"

In 1648, a little over sixty years after the establishment of the Dominican Order in the Philippines, a small group of Spanish friars, following earlier expeditions of their fellow Dominicans, arrived in Manila. Among them was a young cleric, 26 years of age, who was destined to spend the remaining fifty years of his life in the Philippines and would, unintentionally, earn the reputation of being the greatest theologian of Seventeenth-century Asia. This young Spanish Dominican friar was Juan de Paz¹.

Born along the banks of the river Guadalquivir, in the town of Cabra, province of Córdoba, Juan de Paz was baptized on 4 April 1622. Since it was then the practice to have the child baptized not later than a few days after birth, he must have been born a day or two or a few days before this date. His parents were Jacinto de Paz and Francisca de Castro-Viejo, while his grandparents were Juan de Paz and Isabel Lorite (father's side), Lucas

¹ Vicente de Salazar, O.P., *Historia de la Provincia de el Santísimo Rosario de Philipinas, China y Tunking, de el Sagrado Orden de Predicadores*, tercera parte, 1669-1700 (Manila: Imprenta de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, 1742), p. 728; Mariano Velasco, O.P., *Ensayo de Bio-Bibliografía de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas, China, Japón, Formosa y Tonkin*, MS in APSR, section "Bibliografías," vol. II, fol. 118; and Wenceslao E. Retana, *Aparato Bibliográfico de la Historia General de Filipinas*, vol. I, 1524-1800 (Madrid: Imprenta de la Sucesora de M. Minuesa de los Rios, 1906), no. 143.

Pérez de Castro-Viejo and María Ramírez (mother's side), all natives of Cabra.²

He spent his childhood in his native town and subsequently entered the Convent of San Pablo in Cordoba, where, on 25 August 1638, he pronounced his religious vows. Noticing in him the early signs of an extraordinary intelligence, his superiors sent him to what was then the most prestigious center of learning in the whole region of Andalucía, the College of Santo Tomás in Seville, where his performance as a brilliant student led to his appointment—after graduation—as a philosophy professor there. He was not yet a priest then, but a deacon.³

Soon after that, while still engaged in teaching, he volunteered to join a group, led by Fr. Juan Bautista de Morales, which was preparing to go to the Philippines. The high probability of his ultimately becoming a renowned academician in Spain (or perhaps in the entire Europe) apparently did not appeal to him as much as the challenge of becoming a missionary—probably an obscure missionary—in some distant corner in faraway Asia.

His first assignment here was Cagayan (or, as the Spaniards had renamed it, "Nueva Castilla"). He must have soon discovered that the language of Nueva Castilla—known as *Ibanag*—was completely different from the language of the original Castilla. And yet, he learned Ibanag fast, indicating thereby his eagerness to dedicate a great portion of his life to the pastoral ministry among the *indios* of this mission territory. But his superiors had other plans for him. He was recalled to Manila in 1654, after having served the town of Buguey for only a couple of years as pastor of the Parish of St. Anne.

Back in Manila, he was assigned to the University of Santo Tomás, where, aside from being a theology professor for many

² F. T. Medina, *La Imprenta en Manila desde sus orígenes hasta 1810* (Santiago de Chile, 1863), p. 69; Salazar, *ibid.*; and Velasco, *ibid.*

³ Hilario Ma. Ocio, O.P., *Reseña Biográfica de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas desde su Fundación hasta Nuestros Días*, parte primera, 1587-1650 (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico del Real Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1891), p. 459; *Compendio de la Reseña Biográfica de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas desde su Fundación hasta Nuestros Días*, 1587-1895 (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico del Real Colegio de Sto. Tomás, 1895), p. 176; Salazar, *ibid.*; and Velasco, *ibid.*

years, He became regent of studies, rector of the college and chancellor of the university. He was a vicar provincial⁴ for many years. He was, for two times, a diffinitor⁵. He also held the position of *socius* (that is, private secretary) to the bishop of Cebu, Msgr. Diego de Aguilar, O.P.⁶

For three times, he was elected prior of Santo Domingo Convent, although he declined to accept the position the third time, because he was, by then, very sickly. As prior, he was so considerate with his friars, so clearly concerned with their well-being, so ready to attend to their needs, that they, in turn, promptly obeyed him even if his commands took the form of mere insinuations. He made everyone in his religious community contented and, at least partly because of this, he was able to maintain in it the strict religious observance.⁷

The prestigious positions which Friar Juan de Paz held, far from causing him to show symptoms of pride, only served to stress the depth of his humility and his spirit of poverty. He accepted willingly whatever position was given to him: high or low, glamorous or unpopular. After having been a top manager and a professor of disciplines that required very high intelligence, he did not hesitate to become "only" a grammar teacher. He looked at all the jobs assigned to him as occasions to practice the virtue of obedience. He was never heard complaining about his assignments. He showed no signs of dissatisfaction with them⁸.

What Juan de Paz was best known for was the combination of a great interest in studies, an extraordinary intelligence, a wide range of knowledge, and the ease with which he applied the abs-

⁴ During the time of our story, the Province of the Most Holy Rosary of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) covered the regions of East Asia and Southeast Asia, with central headquarters in Manila. The over-all superior was called a "Provincial". He was assisted by deputies referred to as "vicars provincial", each of whom was responsible for a given portion of that very large territory.

⁵ A diffinitor was a member of the diffinitory, a body of four religious elected from among the delegates to a Provincial Chapter, for the purpose of revising the work of the Chapter in collaboration with the newly-elected Provincial.

⁶ Salazar, *ibid.*, pp. 728-9; Velasco, *ibid.*; Ocio, *Reseña*, pp. 459-60; and *Compendio*, pp. 176-7.

⁷ Salazar, *ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

tract principles of law and morality to individual cases concretized by the circumstances existing during that time (the seventeenth century) and in that specific place (Asia, especially the Philippines). Many of the problems presented to him were complex and complicated, delicate and difficult: here-and-now cases never before touched by books and far removed from the generalizations and abstractions of earlier writers who were indeed familiar with European convent life and classroom atmosphere but ignorant of the individuating situations of the Chinese gambler in Manila, the raped girl in Bicolandia, the aggrieved farmer in Pampanga. Fr. Paz answered the questions promptly and fast, but thoroughly. Very often, he would solve several problems in a row in one single night. His explanations—invariably peppered with quotations from the Holy Scriptures, from canon law, from the civil laws of Spain, from early Christian writers and other authors—were very long. But they were done in such a way as to be well-understood by the interested clients, whoever they were⁹.

All kinds of people consulted him: members of religious orders, diocesan priests, the so-called "nobles," the peasants, businessmen, bishops. They all ran to Fr. Paz to ask him to resolve their doubts, especially in matters of conscience. His answers were so commonly accepted that, having received them, people felt assured and, having the assurance of Fr. Paz, they acted without hesitation. Even evil men, in their underground dealings, used his name, often misquoting him, just so as to justify their actions.¹⁰

The sick and the dying summoned him to their beds. The sick requested him to visit them regularly for their spiritual direction. The landowners, in their dying days, asked him to guide them in making final decisions regarding the *haciendas* which they were leaving behind, requiring the solution of legal problems connected with them.¹¹

Even members of the hierarchy sought his guidance. He was the spiritual director and confessor of Msgr. Miguel de Poblete,

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 728-31.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 728-31.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

secular (archbishop of Manila from 1653 to 1667), Msgr. Juan López, O.P. (archbishop of Manila from 1672 to 1674) and Msgr. Diego de Aguilar, O.P. (bishop of Cebu from 1680 to 1692). Also seeking his advice were the Chapter of Canons of Manila, when the see was vacant, and the Royal Audiencia. There were some points where a pronouncement coming from Fr. Paz was the final word for these bodies.¹²

Friar Juan de Paz gave equal attention to all his counselees, making no discrimination between those at the bottom and those at the top of the social ladder. For him, there were no *indios* and no *españoles*, no poor and no rich, no commoners and no governors. He was as interested in solving the problems of the numblest person as he was in solving those of the most powerful. And he never left a case hanging unanswered.¹³

Of human interest was his photographic memory. Many times, when he had to answer questions on the spot and he had no books on hand, he would quote from memory the pertinent texts from the codes of church law or civil law or passages from the works of authors on morals or dogma, including the Fathers of the Church, with their corresponding chapters, paragraphs and pages, without making any mistake, as was observed by some people who played little detectives.¹⁴

Around this time, the Dominican missionaries of Tonkin (North Vietnam) were faced with serious doctrinal problems centering around the so-called "Chinese rites." These were religious ceremonies forming part of the regional culture of China and of neighboring places influenced by her. The basic question was whether these rites were compatible with Christian dogma or not. The friars working there held several meetings with the bishops of the region to clarify the issues. When their doubts persisted in spite of the meetings, the missionaries decided to refer the matter to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith,

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 729-30; and *The Catholic Directory of the Philippines*, 1986 (Manila: Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 1986), pp. 884 and 898.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 730.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

with headquarters in Rome. They compiled 260 questions and sent them there.¹⁵

Given the quasi-infinite distance between Tonkin and Rome, and given the turtle-pace of communication during that time — when no one even suspected the possibility of airplanes and air mails — the missionaries knew that it would take years before they could get an answer from Rome. But the matter was urgent. They needed, right away, the right norms of conduct regarding those rites. So, they decided, for the meantime, to send those questions to Fr. Juan de Paz who lived “just next door” (from Tonkin to Manila). Aside from the 260 problems referred to above, they also sent him 14 more, which had come up between the time they wrote to Rome and the time they wrote to Manila. The sum-total was 274. With his characteristic speed, Fr. Paz answered them and sent his answers to Tonkin. When, much later, the official reply of Rome came, it turned out that his conclusions were essentially the same as those of Rome. These answers of Fr. Paz to the 274 questions were later published under the kilometric title (*Opusculum* . . .) which is listed as number one in the catalogue of the works of Fr. Paz given below, and whose first words mean “a booklet containing 274 questions.”¹⁶

Life was not all roses for this great moral theologian, however. Several times, he was reported to the king as being a traitor to Spain, because he maintained communications with foreigners. The latter were seeking his advice on moral matters and he was answering them. He had, therefore, to communicate with them. The allegation of treason must have been ignored by the Spanish monarch, because our sources mention nothing about the king's having reacted to it. What they mention is the reaction of the Dominican Master General to whom the book of Fr. Paz, *Consultas y Resoluciones Varias*, was reported to smack of “probabilism.”¹⁷ This is a doctrine which teaches that in choosing between performing an act and performing another, one of which

¹⁵ Retana, *ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.* As will be mentioned later, Fr. Francisco de Acuña wrote part of the preliminary observations of the *Opusculum*. It is strange that the figures he mentioned were not 260 plus 14, but 240 plus 33.

¹⁷ Salazar, *ibid.*, fol. 732-3; Joaquín Fonseca, O.P., *Historia de los PP. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas y en sus Misiones de Japón, China, Tungking y Formosa* (Madrid, tom. 3, pp. 710-11).

is *certainly* good, the other only *probably* good, one may choose the latter. It was a liberal attitude which was not exactly very popular during that era of extreme conservatism.

The Master General summoned him to Rome for an explanation. Promptly, he prepared to go. He embarked on the ship (*nao*) *San José*, which left the waters of Cavite bound for Acapulco. A few miles away from Manila Bay, they were shipwrecked and many of the passengers, including those who knew how to swim, perished in the sea. Others died on land. Being then a septuagenarian, Fr. Paz found it impossible to swim. He simply held tightly on the mast (*mástil*) of the ship. And when everybody believed that he was among the fatalities, they found him after a few days, alive, and still clutching the mast. Parts of his body bore the swollen, discolored marks of having been hit by cables and wood. He looked so pitifully smashed that people thought he would die in a few days. But he lived for six more years. And his book, instead of being publicly burned in the College of St. Thomas in Seville, as had been originally ordered by the Master General, turned out to be, like his other writings, universally accepted and eagerly sought after. And, finally, on 17 November 1699, this *fraile dominico*, who had come to the Philippines unobtrusively, and had done wonders here unobtrusively, died unobtrusively in the convent of Binondo. But the epithet which his contemporaries had given him, and which he deserved to the nth degree, stuck: Juan de Paz, "the Oracle of Asia" (*el oráculo universal del Asia*).¹⁸

The key dates in the life of Friar Juan de Paz given by our sources are conflicting,¹⁹ but the two most probable ones are those given by Medina (date of baptism: 4 April 1622) and Ocio (date of death: 17 November 1699). If we accept them, we can say that Juan de Paz died at the age of seventy-seven years and seven

¹⁸ Ocio, *Reseña*, pp. 460-1; *Compendio*, p. 177; Velasco *ibid.*, p. 119; Salazar, *ibid.*, 733-4; Fonseca, *ibid.*, pp. 706-11; and Retana, *ibid.*

¹⁹ Salazar (*ibid.*) says that Paz was shipwrecked in 1692 and lived six more years afterwards, and that "he died around 1689 must have been born around the year 1618. For his part, Cardinal Ceferino González (*Historia del Colegio de Santo Tomás*, II, 181, quoted in Retana, *ibid.*) says that Fr. Paz was shipwrecked in 1694. If he lived for six more years after that, he must have been born around 1620.

months. Furthermore, if we are given the not-unreasonable freedom to imagine that he was baptized six days after his birth, we can say that his age, when he died, must have been seventy-seven years and seven months and seven days. Then, he rested.

HIS WRITINGS

The latest published enumeration of the works of Juan de Paz appeared in 1980 in an article by Ma. Carmen Molina.²⁰ Admitting that hers was just a preliminary survey, she expressed the need for somebody else to do a more exhaustive job.

Earlier, in 1965, a list had been published by Fr. Victoriano Vicente, O.P.²¹ Like Molina, Fr. Vicente did not seem to have enough time to comb through all the sources available in the local Dominican repositories before drawing up a catalogue.

The present writer, however, was more fortunate. He was more fortunate because the Very Reverend Pablo Fernández, O.P., pumped the local Dominican archives dry of all possible materials and handed them to him in "silver cups", that is, through xerox copies. And the result is the list of the writings of Juan de Paz given here — a list which hopefully approximates the exhaustive.

These works can be divided into two: (a) the published; and (b) the unpublished. Those belonging to the first category are listed below as numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Number 6 possibly belongs to this class. The unpublished manuscripts are listed as number 7 through number 18. Some of these eighteen units were seen by this writer; others were not. For the titles of the writings which were not available to him, he consulted two authors: Mariano Velasco and Wenceslao E. Retana.²²

²⁰ Ma. Carmen Molina, "The Dominican Fr. Juan de Paz as a Source of Historical Information through his Writings," in *Unitas* (a quarterly for the arts and sciences published by the University of Santo Tomás), vol. 53, nos. 3 & 4, September-December, 1980, pp. 313-49.

²¹ Victoriano Vicente, O.P., "Apuntes para la Historia de la Teología en Filipinas," *ibid.*, vol. 38, no. 2, June 1965, pp. 233-47.

²² Velasco, *ibid.*, fol. 122-4; and Retana, *ibid.*, vol. 1, nos. 143 & 159; and vol. 2, no. 1061. Velasco got his informations from Retana and others, while Retana got his from Fr. Hilario Ma. Ocio in person. See footnote no. 3.

Here, now, is the catalogue:

1. Opusculum in quo ducenta et septuaginta quatuor quaesita a RR.PP. Missionariis Regni Tun-Kini proposita, totidemque Responsiones ad ipsa continentur, Exposita per Adm. R.P. Fr. Ioannem de Paz, Regalis Conventus S. Pauli Cordubensis Ordinis Praedicatorum Filium, Insignisque S. Thomae Aquinatis Hispalensis Collegii Maioris quondam Alumnum, Philosophiaeque Cathedrae in eo Moderatorem, In Illustri eiusdem S. Thomae Aquinatis Manilensi Collegio atque Universitate eiusdem Cathedrae iterum, itemque sacrae Theologiae Vespertinum, indeque quondam Primarium Lectorem, Insuper Regentem studiorum, ac semel ac iterum olim eiusdem Collegii atque Universitatis Rectorem et Cancellarium, Manilensis Nationis quondam etiam Vicarium Provinciale, Vicariumque S. Telmi de Cavite, ac nunc demum Conventus S.P.N. Dominici Manilensis Priorem, secundo. Edit in lucem P. Fr. Franciscus de Acuña, eiusdem Ordinis Auctorisque addic-tissimus Filius, atque Discipulus, et sui Magistri nomine, Reverendissimo Patri nostro Fr. Antonio de Monroy totius Ordinis Magistro Gener. humillimus offert.

This book was published in 1680 in Manila, then in 1682 in Seville, and, thirdly, in 1687 also in Seville. The Manila edition is described by Retana in his *Aparato Bibliográfico*.²³ The Seville edition of 1687 was what the present writer saw personally in the Dominican archives of Manila. There is a slight difference in the wordings of the title between the two, namely:

1680	1687
expeditae	exposita
philosophie	philosophiae
cathedre	cathedrae
ord.	ordinis
totius predicti ordinis	totius ordinis
magistro generali	magistro gener.

The 1687-edition has 239 pages, aside from 21 more, which are unlabeled and which contain introductory materials, namely: (1) the title; (2) a table of contents, 2 pages; (3) letter of Fr. Francisco de Acuña, O.P., to the Dominican Master General Antonio de Monroy, 16 May 1680 (12 pages); (4) approval for publi-

²³ Retana, *ibid.*, vol. 1, no. 143.

cation given by the Order, signed by the provincial prior, Baltazar de Santa Cruz, Sto. Domingo Convent, 19 May 1680; (5) favorable comment by Francisco Pizarro de Orellana, Manila, 4 June 1680; (6) approval by the archbishop-elect of Manila, Msgr. Felipe Parde, 27 May 1680; (7) favorable comment of Fr. Tomás de Andrade, S.J., Colegio de San Ignacio, Manila, 1 June 1680 (4 pages); (8) permission given by the government, Manila, 3 June 1680; (9) favorable comment by Baltazar de Egues, S.J., prior, Sevilla, 7 Feb. 1682; and (10) approval for publication given through Dr. Gregorio Bastan y Arostegui, vicar general, by Archbishop Ambrosio Ignacio Spínola y Guzmán, Seville, 13 Feb. 1682.

In the above-mentioned letter (in Latin), Fr. Acuña, a former student of Fr. Juan de Paz, narrates to Fr. Monroy the circumstances that led to the writing of the book. Orellana, for his part, calls attention to the author's mastery of the Sacred Scriptures, moral theology and canon law (*"praeter eruditissimam sacrae paginae intelligentiam, non solum scholasticae ac moralis theologiae scientiam, sed et iuris canonici peritiam quivis agnoscet"*).

The Jesuit Fr. Andrade's comment (in Spanish) is interesting. It reads:

"Partly because of its great writers, the Order of Preachers is universally acclaimed as a living fountain of eternal truths, possessing the richness of a river and the depth of the ocean. And so, the mere fact that this book was written by a Dominican is more than enough to guarantee its orthodoxy. However, inasmuch as I was enjoined to read it as a censor, I willingly did so out of obedience and also out of an eagerness to take my share of the rich treasures of doctrines coming from the author of this book (*estos tratados*). His conclusions are widely accepted as the safest, even by the most learned, be they foreigners or natives, not only in the Philippines, but also in the neighboring kingdoms of Tonkin, Siam, and the wide empire of China. His long experience in counseling, plus his wisdom, are so known far and wide that he is consulted — in moments of serious doubts — by everyone as an oracle of this archipelago...

"...The extreme importance of the topics discussed here is well-understood by all those who have even a little knowledge of

the situation in newly-Christianized communities, especially in countries where doubts concerning our holy Faith are often presented to the missionaries for them to resolve. These moral problems were so difficult and so serious that even the well-informed had a hard time solving them. It was not enough to read the current literature on morals and cases of conscience, because most of the authors wrote their books in faraway Europe and had little knowledge of what was happening in the new world. They practically had no idea of the local customs here, the rites, the ceremonies and the laws of the natives. There was a lot of study and explanation to be done by the missionaries who were in immediate contact with these people.

"... I cannot but admire the author's ardent zeal for the good of souls manifested by his having undertaken the writing of this book, not only because the subject-matter and purpose are related to the salvation of souls, but also because I know full well that he is a very busy man. Aside from his commitments as a religious, he has his obligations as teacher, preacher and superior — assignments which his Order had very wisely given him. He continually assisted his neighbors. He looked after the poor and consoled those in sorrow. He was a father to everyone in this country. He kept on helping, so that he hardly had any time for himself during the day. He practically had no time to rest."²⁴

So, Juan de Paz had no time to rest during the day, according to Andrade. But the whole truth, according to Vicente de Salazar, was that, even during the night, Juan de Paz often had no rest. "He worked day and night, neglecting the needs of his body."²⁵

2. Consultas y Resoluciones varias, Theológicas, Jurídicas, Regulares y Morales, Resueltas por el M.R.P.M. Fr. Juan de Paz, de la Sagrada Religión de Predicadores, Regente que fue de los Estudios del Colegio Y Universidad de S. Thomás de la Ciudad de Manila, en la Provincia de Filipinas, Dedicadas a los Muy Reverendos Padres del insigne Colegio Mayor de Santo Thomás de la Ciudad de Sevilla, donde fue Colegial dicho Autor. Año 1687. En Sevilla por Thomás López de Haro, Impressor y Mercader de Libros.

²⁴ As mentioned above, this long quotation is part of the unpaginated preliminary observations of the *Opusculum*. See also Retana, *ibid*.

²⁵ Salazar, *ibid*.

This book has 736 pages preceded by unpaginated preliminary portions that cover a space equivalent to 35 additional pages and followed by an alphabetical index of subject-matter covering 41 unlabeled pages.²⁶ The preliminary part is composed of: (1) the title page; (2) (3) introductions of Fr. Francisco de Acuña entitled "*Carta Dedicatoria*" and "*Protesta*", respectively; (4) general outline of the book; (5) royal decree (*cédula*) approving its publication, signed *Yo el Rey*, Madrid, 8 June 1687; (6) short, partly illegible paragraph entitled "*Tassa*," most probably indicating how much each copy of the book should be sold; (7) corrections of typographical errors; (8) approval by the *Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás* of Seville, 16 April 1687, signed by five *maestros*; (9) approval by the Dominican Order, 1 June 1687, signed in the Convent of San Pablo, in Seville, by Fray Manuel de Santo Tomás, provincial prior; (10) approval by the Carmelite provincial superior of Andalucía, examiner of the Holy Office, as commissioned by Dr. Lorenzo Folch y Cardona, Vicar general of the archdiocese of Seville, [day, month?] 1686; and (11) approval by Dr. Blas de Torrejón, vicar general, as commissioned by the archbishop of Seville, Msgr. Jaime de Palafox y Cardona, 22 April 1687; (12) approval by Friar Francisco Blanco, O.P., as commissioned by the king, signed in Madrid, 5 June 1687; (13) table of contents, 16 pages; and (14) glossary.

The "*Carta Dedicatoria*" of Acuña can be paraphrased this way: My former professor, Fray Juan de Paz, dedicates this book to the priests who are presently running his alma mater, the *Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás* in Seville. Many people have been suggesting for quite a time now that he should publish his answers to the moral questions of his correspondents. He wanted to, but he had no time. So, I offered myself to do the work, and he agreed. He gave me all his notes. Of these, I did not touch the very many loose pages. What I worked on were the four bound bundles, thick and full, which contained miscellaneous matters up to then unprocessed. Come to think of it, we Dominicans in Asia have not published any book yet, except of course, the *Opusculum* touching on Tonkinese questions. This is because, first, the print-

²⁶ Retana (*ibid.*, no. 159) differs from this description of the book in some minor details.

ing presses here are inadequately equipped; secondly, because we lack money to finance the printing; and, thirdly, because our friars here are too few, even for the pastoral ministry alone, which entails a lot of work and time, that there is no one available to edit extant writings worthy of publication, such, for example, as the manuscripts left behind by Fr. Domingo González and Fr. Sebastián Oquendo, which are slowly being eaten by insects. We are requesting the *Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás* of Seville to sponsor the publication of this work of Fr. Paz (Convent of Sto. Domingo, Manila, 20 May 1682).

That was what Acuña says in the "*Carta Dedicatoria*". Now, in the "*Protesta*", he declares his readiness to submit this book to the judgement of church authorities. He also informs the reader that, although Fr. Paz had given him the freedom to make major changes in his writings, he has not done so. The only thing he did in this regard, he says, was to hide the identity of persons behind commonly-used names like Juan or María.

The above-mentioned letter of approval given by the *Colegio Mayor de Santo Tomás* in Seville and signed by five professors, including the regent, gives the following comment about Fr. Paz:

"The depth of judgement and the solidity of teaching of this author, joined to a vast knowledge of moral theology, canon law and civil laws of Spain is not unworthy of consideration. If we look to him as to a theologian, we will find him at each step grasping the shield of the Angelic Doctor's teachings; if we see him as a canonist, no one with greater dispatch unravels the texts of canon law and the Papal Bulls; if we take him as a jurist, he gives the impression of one who has dedicated himself to no other study, that he has at his fingertips the civil laws of Spain, with a clear understanding of them, such that with just reason rather complicated cases were presented to him by that supreme Senate (the Royal Audiencia of Manila) for his resolution — with such solid foundation that there seemed no one could wish for anything more"

A revised edition of the book came out in 1745 in Ambers. To the ten parts (called *clases*) into which the original had been divided, this second one added an eleventh, which contained fifteen

more entries taken from manuscripts in the archives of the Philippine Procuracion in the Convent of the *Pasion de la Villa y Corte*, Madrid.²⁷

The other works of Fr. Paz are:

3. Life of Saint Rose of Lima. Published around 1670, it had more than 315 pages. It was a Spanish version by Fr. Paz of a book written in Latin by Fr. Leonardo Hansen.

4. Pastoral Letter of Msgr. Francisco Gaínza, O.P., Bishop of Nueva Cáceres. (Manila: Imprenta de Santo Tomas, 1864). Section VI of the document presents the views of Fr. Paz.

5. [Three Moral Questions Answered] in *Boletín Oficial del Arzobispado de Manila*, 12 de abril de 1892, pp. 126-8; and 30 de abril de 1892, pp. 265-8.

6. *Libro de Confesion*. Unknown date.

7. Sermons.

Three words are prominent in the titles from no. 8 to no. 18. They are *consulta*, (nos. 13 through no. 18); *parecer* (nos. 8, 9, 10); and *tratado* (no. 11 & no. 12). Within the context of the writings of Fr. Paz, *consulta* means a question, a doubt, a problem being presented for the purpose of getting an answer, a resolution, a solution; *parecer* means a considered opinion, a view, being given as an answer to a question, a resolution of a doubt, a solution of a problem; and *tratado* means a treatise or just a mere essay or simply a letter of several paragraphs, with which a *consulta* is being answered with a *parecer*.

The three words therefore are intimately intertwined and the use of one rather than of the other in a title is presumably purely arbitrary. In fact, the *Consultas y Resoluciones Varias* carries on top of each page the words "*consultas y pareceres*".

In the above-mentioned Catalogue drawn up by Fr. Vicente, he attempted to define each of those terms trying to distinguish one from the other and attempting to divide the works of Fr. Paz according to those terms so defined. Unfortunately, what he classified as *parecer* was also according to his own definition, a *consulta*

²⁷ Retana, *ibid.*, no. 276. For the sources of what follows, up to no. 14, inclusive, see footnotes no. 3 and no. 22.

and a *tratado*. What he classified as a *consulta* was also a *tratado* and a *parecer*; and what he classified as *tratado* was also a *parecer* and a *consulta*. Before classifying a piece of writing, one should first read it.

The first two *pareceres* listed below were in the archives of Santo Domingo Convent in Manila, while the third one was in Room 18 of the convent. The first *tratado* was described as "long," while the second was described as "very learned" and as containing enough materials capable of being published in "several volumes." Number 11 contains the word *arzobispo* (archbishop) which, however, might have been intended as an abbreviated form of *arzobispado* (archbishop's curia).

8. *Parecer* concerning the idolatry of the Chinese. MS, vol. 275.

9. *Parecer* concerning the dispensation from impediments to marriage due to spiritual affinity. MS, vol. 342.

10. *Parecer* concerning the deconsecration of a church or of a cathedral due to its practically total destruction wrought by a typhoon or an earthquake. MS, loose pages.

11. *Tratado* attacking a rite of the archdiocese [archbishop?] of Manila.

12. *Tratado* concerning the lawsuits filed by Governor-General Vargas against Archbishop Pardo and others.

13. *Consultas*. MS, 960 folios, plus 222 folios containing an alphabetical index, and 8 folios containing the table of contents or *Yndice*.

14. *Consultas*. MS, 514 folios.

The following two entries are parts of two bound bundles of manuscripts the rest of which was not the work of Fr. Paz.

15. *Consultas*. Archives of the University of Santo Tomas, Section "Libros," tomo 61, folios 200v-15.

16. *Consultas*. AUST, Libros, tomo 81, folios 258-65v.

Like the preceding two numbers (15 and 16), the last two entries in this catalogue were seen and read by the present writer. On the first page of tomo 188, a note says: "*Este tomo es copia*

del tomo 23" (This volume is a copy of volume 23). They have the same content, but with the following easily observable differences:

17. *Consultas*. AUST, Libros, tomo 188, folios 1-17, 25v-86v, 163-235v, plus a four-page *Yndice* without *vuelto*. The other folios in this bundle contain materials which are not writings of Fr. Paz.

18. *Consultas*. AUST, Libros, tomo 23, folios 1-494v, with an *Yndice* of eleven unlabeled pages. It has an entry on *Nuestra Señora de Guía* of Ermita, Manila, which the other volume does not have. It has more titles for subtopics than the other. The first page carries the note: "*Este tomo se halla copiado en letra mas clara en el tomo 25.*" What this note is saying is that the contents of volume 23 is also found in volume 25 and that the latter is easier to read than the former. Our sources do not mention volume 25, and the local Dominican archives do not have it.

The topics discussed in the writings labeled above as numbers 15, 16, 17 and 18 are gambling and usury, smuggling and bribery, extra-marital relationships, drunkenness, apostasy, oral defamation, cursing and false testimony, collection of taxes, obligations of clergymen, vows and oaths, sacramental confession, the anointing of the sick, precepts of the Church, government officials, papal documents, and so on.

Among the places from which the questions were sent to Fr. Paz were Bataan, Cagayan, Camarines, Cebu, Manila, Pampanga, Pangasinan and Zambales.

In the *Consultas y Resoluciones Varias* (number 2 in our catalogue), Fr. Paz gives a glossary of 23 words which he describes as "native to the Philippines and China but adopted by the Spaniards, which are found here and there in this first volume."²⁸ His reference to this book as a "first volume" (*primer tomo*) implies that he was preparing a second volume. Was he preparing for it remotely or proximately? If proximately, he must have had the materials ready. Where are they? Are they in the above-mentioned *tomo* 188 and *tomo* 23? If one looks at folios 1-12 of *tomo* 188 and folios 1-29v of *tomo* 23, he will find out that the topic being

²⁸ Tabla y explicación de algunos vocablos indios y chinos españolizados, que se hallarán esparcidos en muchos de los pareceres deste primer tomo y van puestos según nuestra corrupta pronunciación.

discussed there is the Chinese game of chance known then as *metua*, which is also discussed in the *Consultas y Resoluciones Varias* (octava clase, consultas II y III). On the other hand, the latter does not deal with *Nuestra Señora de Guía*, a topic found in tomo 23, folios 445-71v. It is therefore difficult to give a complete answer to these questions.

A total of 327 words arranged alphabetically towards the end of the book (*indice de las cosas notables*) indicates the various topics discussed by Fr. Paz. The entries under letter A are 28. The rest are B(8), C(40), D(25), E(22), F(11), G(6), H(5), J(3), L(11), M(14), N(5), O(16), P(44); Q(6), R(24), S(18), T(20), and V(21). Examples of words under each of these nineteen letters are *amistad* (friendship), *bruja* (witch), *chocolate*, *desfloro* (devirginizing), *esclavos* (slaves), *frutos* (fruits), *guerra* (war), *heredero* (heir), *jurisdicción*, *ladrón* (thief) *madre* (mother), *nulo* (null), *oro* (gold), *prestar* (to lend), *quejas* (complaints), *reo* (culprit), *soldados* (soldiers), *temor* (fear); and *violencia*.²⁹ Each word is followed by an indication of the place where it is found in the text. The word (and concept) which occurs the most frequently in the text is *restituir*, meaning, "to make a restitution."

Although the book is in Spanish, there is one chapter (*clase II, consulta XXII*) which is written in Latin. The title is: *Quantum possit dare religiosus suo filio spurio*. Translated into English, it means: How much may a member of a religious order give to his own child to support it?

One important subject on which Friar Juan de Paz touched was the *omnimoda*. This is a bull issued by Pope Adrian VI on 10 May 1522. This papal document granted all-embracing authority (*omnimodam auctoritatem*) to mendicant friars who were doing missionary work in the New World, excluding only the power to ordain subdeacons, deacons and priests. With this exception, the ordinary mendicant priests could validly, licitly and freely exercise the ministry without the need of asking permission from the

²⁹ The alphabetical arrangement is not accurate. For example, *atención* is placed before *arte*, which should be the other way around. The old spelling is used. For example, *utilidad* (with *u*) is written with *v* and falls under *v*. The same is true with the rest of the book.

bishop, provided that there was no bishop in the diocese where they worked, or provided that, given the existence of a bishop, they lived a distance of more than two days' journey, that is, twenty miles, away from him. While this and other subsequent documents (year 1567) removed the friars from the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) placed them under his jurisdiction. These opposite dispositions occasioned the bitter controversies between these two parties that dragged on throughout practically the entire period of the Spanish regime in the Philippines and in the Americas.³⁰

Did Fr. Paz write a separate commentary *ex professo* on the *omnimoda*? He did, according to Fr. Victoriano Vicente.³¹ To prove this, he gives three instances where later moralists, answering specific questions pertaining to the *omnimoda*, quote Fr. Paz. But this does not necessarily mean that their quotations from Fr. Paz came from one single *opus*. They could have been taken from two or more *pareceres* answering two or more *consultas*, independently of each other. It is true, of course, that one of these later moralists uses the phrase "in the above-mentioned treatise of Fr. Paz regarding the *omnimoda*" (*en dicho su tratado de la omnimoda*).³² But he can very well be using the word *tratado* to mean not a single work *ex professo* on the subject, but one of several answers to several separate questions on specific angles of the *omnimoda*, the way Fr. Andrade uses the plural term "estos tratados" in referring to just one book, the *Opusculum*. Besides, Fr. Vicente who drew up his catalogue in the 1960's was not as close in time to Fr. Paz as was Fr. Hilario Ocio who made his in the 1890's. And Fr. Ocio does not include the supposed commentary in his list.³³

Fried Chicken: An Anecdote

An introductory chapter opens the main text of *Consultas y Resoluciones Varias*.³⁴ Here, Fr. Paz explains the importance of

³⁰ Edilberto V. Santos, *The First Phase of the Secularization Movement, 1767-1826* unpublished masteral thesis (Ateneo de Manila University, 1977), pp. 16-20.

³¹ Victoriano Vicente, *ibid.*, pp. 246-7.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 246.

³³ Ocio died in 1903.

³⁴ *Consulta Unica Proemial*.

seeking counsel. There are times, he says, that even unschooled peasants give wise judgments. And to prove his point, he narrates a story which he says he got from "Juan Andrés y Silvestro" (two authors of a book). The story goes like this:

A certain man entered an inn carrying loaves of bread. That was all that he had: tasteless bread. He noticed that the innkeeper was frying a chicken. The smell made him salivate. He came very near, sat down there, and ate his tasteless bread with great pleasure derived from the sweet smell of the chicken being fried.

When the man finished eating, the innkeeper confronted him and demanded that he pay for having enjoyed the smell of his fried chicken while he was eating his tasteless bread. They argued and argued until they decided to ask an unschooled peasant to act as the judge. His decision was as follows:

Inasmuch as the man enjoyed the smell of the fried chicken, he must pay with his coins. But, inasmuch as he did not actually eat the fried chicken, he does not have to give the coins to the innkeeper. All what he has to do is to rattle the coins near the ear of that innkeeper so that he will enjoy listening to the sound of the coins.

That ended their discussion. And that also ends our discussion of the life and writings of Fray Juan de Paz.

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