

Inventing New Worlds: A Franciscan Perspective

The New World was invented and not ‘discovered’. This was the premise of Edmund O’Gorman’s 1958 work *The Invention of America*, in which he argued that the paradigm of ‘discovery’ was conceptually flawed. He used Heidegger’s argument that ‘only that which has been conceived can be seen; but that which has been conceived is that which has been invented.’¹ Despite this critique, the notion that the ‘New World’ was discovered in 1492 is still an organising principle for much scholarship.² The persistence and depth of the ‘discovery of the New World’ paradigm is elucidated by the work of another Latin Americanist, Carlos Alonso, in *The Burden of Modernity*.³ Alonso looks at the legacy of the notion of the ‘New World’ on contemporary Latin American politics. Forty years after O’Gorman described the New World as a world ‘forever in the making, always a new world’, Alonso argued that concepts of futurity and novelty lead to the ‘permanent exoticization of the New World’; which constitutes an ‘ideological façade sustaining old world power’.⁴ The uncritical persistence of 1492 as a historical coordinate, and its continued impact on historic-geopolitical identities in Latin America, demonstrates the continued need to explore the relationship between history (in particular Eurocentric meta-narratives), the Eurocentric construction of space and time, and the colonial agenda. This problem particularly affects intellectual history as histories of ideas are often teleological and contribute to Eurocentric modernity. Historical time, as represented in European meta-narratives organised by periodising concepts like ‘modernity’, is colonised. Space, including ideas and representation of space and place, is seldom free from a political agenda. Walter Mignolo referred to the link between knowledge, space/place, and politics/colonial power as the ‘geopolitics of knowledge’.⁵ Mignolo has asserted the need to ‘decolonise scholarship’ and ‘decentre the epistemological loci of enunciation’.⁶ Mignolo’s work on the geopolitics of knowledge explored the macronarratives of Western Civilisation,⁷ yet Mignolo has accepted facets of the Eurocentric historical narrative which can be critiqued from the perspective of the late Middle Ages, and from the perspective of Franciscan history. One way to do this is to consider the construction of the paradigm of coloniality during the late Middle Ages, as this provides a way to see the processes and dimensions of this coloniality which continue into modernity by become concealed as hegemonic interpretations go unchallenged. I explore this from a Franciscan perspective in the context of the late medieval invention of the New World as a colonised world.

This thesis explores the alternative historical tradition of the translocal network of the Franciscan Order across the Atlantic world of the late Middle Ages in order to disrupt historicist narratives of Columbus’ discovery of the New World in 1492. 1492 has become emblematic of the start of global world systems, modernity, and European hegemony. This thesis aims to demonstrate that the development of colonial systems in the medieval Atlantic world can challenge the Eurocentric narrative of modernity and its historicist emphasis on

¹ E. O’Gorman, *The invention of America an inquiry into the historical nature of the New World and the meaning of its history* (Westport Connecticut, 1972), p. 72.

² For example D. Abulafia, *The Discovery of Mankind, Atlantic Encounters in the Age of Columbus* (London, 2008), and _____ -Armesto, *1492: the year the world began*, 1st ed. (New York, 2009).

³ C. Alonso, *The burden of modernity: the rhetoric of cultural discourse in Spanish America* (New York, 1998).

⁴ E. O’Gorman, *The Invention of America*, p. 69, C. Alonso, *The Burden of Modernity* (New York, 1998), p. 8 and p. 10.

⁵ The geopolitics of knowledge is a leitmotif throughout Mignolo’s work.

⁶ W. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* (Michigan, 2003), p. ix.

⁷ Mignolo refers to ‘macronarratives’, elsewhere in this thesis I will refer to metanarratives.

1492 as a watershed in the Atlantic world and in Eurocentred time. This work locates 1492 within a continuous Atlantic world context in order to challenge this historicist rupture in time, space, and political identities. The history of the Franciscans in the Atlantic world constitutes an alternative to existing meta-narratives. Their history transcends dominant categories that have organised these existing meta-narratives: they are present in both the Middle Ages and Modernity, they existed within the Atlantic world of the late Middle Ages but their narrative does not represent state-centred narratives nor does it simply represent the narrative of ‘discovery’ and conquest or colonisation.

I question the dominance of the Eurocentric narrative of 1492 and the ‘discovery of the New World’ by considering ways in which the identity and coloniality of the New World was invented in the late Middle Ages. In the first chapter I explore knowledge networks and their politics, and consider the link between politics/colonialism and knowledge/forgetting in depictions of the Atlantic world, focusing on the Canary Islands and then the West Indies. It aims to contribute to our understanding of the role of historical narratives in the geopolitics of knowledge,⁸ which I broadly define here as the link between knowledge, conceptions of space / location and political identities. This thesis focuses on the medieval construction and identity of the “New World”. This is a world in exile, an alterity, and a symptom of colonised time. The notion of the “New World” came to sustain the [colonising] myth of modernity, and one thing that characterises the identity of this modernity is an asymmetry of power known as coloniality.⁹ The term coloniality represents a multidimensional typology of power, whereas the term ‘colonialism’ has become a normative category. The Franciscans, with their complex identity linked to their philosophy of poverty, contribute to the critique of colonialism as a normative category. As Chapter Five will explain, they challenge the colonised/coloniser binary underpinning much colonial history and postcolonial thought. The combination of the perspective of the Middle Ages, the Franciscans, and contemporary Latin American scholars facilitate a critical exploration of the politics and mechanics of the invention the paradigm of coloniality and the New World, with a special consideration of the role of history and language. The Franciscans are important because their historically turbulent philosophy of poverty has caused them to represent an ambiguity within the Atlantic world and this ambiguity can help challenge many dimensions of Eurocentred meta-narratives of the ‘discovery of the New World’ and contribute to our understanding of coloniality.

The Franciscan Order was founded in 1223, when the rule of St Francis, the *regula bullata*, was papally approved, and the Order still exists in some form today.¹⁰ Since their foundation, they proliferated spatially as mission was essential to their collective identity. St Francis wrote that the brothers should go ‘as pilgrims and strangers in this world’.¹¹ They were prevalent in the Atlantic world of the late Middle Ages. They constituted a ‘translocal’

⁸ This term was coined by Walter D. Mignolo, but I want to investigate the parameters of this concept, rather than simply reproduce Mignolo’s definition. See W. Mignolo, ‘The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference’, *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 1 (2002), 57–96.

⁹ See A. Quijano, ‘Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality’, *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, Nos 2-3 (2007), pp. 168-178.

¹⁰ St Francis first submitted his rule to Pope Innocent III for his approval in 1209 or 1210; for the resultant ‘The Earlier Rule (The Rule Without a Papal Seal)’ (*Regula non bullata*), Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellman, O.F.M. Con., William J. Short, O.F.M., eds, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Vol. 1., The Saint* (New York, 1999), pp. 63-86. This edited and redacted and ‘The Later Rule’ (*Regula Bullata*) was approved by Pope Honorius III in 1223; *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Vol. 1*, pp. 99-106. There is also a translation by D. Burr at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/stfran-rule.html> (04.11.07).

¹¹ *Regula Bullata*, Chapter VI, *Early Documents*, p. 103.

network. Ulrike Freitag has indicated that existing meta-narratives of global history fail to ‘establish links between the multitude of connections and flows below the elite level’.¹² The idea of “translocality” emerged from a research context that challenges this shortfall. Translocality is important as it goes further than transnationalism to challenge state-centred approaches to global histories. The Franciscans are not just important because of their presence in the Atlantic world. Franciscan translocality was conditioned by their spatial philosophy which was governed by poverty. The friars were at once required to be dislocated from space, yet their movement was also limited as they were forbidden to ride horses except in extreme necessity.¹³ Franciscan identity was intrinsically linked to anxiety regarding poverty and a struggle to reach poverty and this informed their translocality. Janet Coleman wrote that [from Carolingian times] ‘poverty came to be a synonym for drifting and uprootedness’.¹⁴ As this work will explain, this Franciscan struggle to achieve poverty was problematic and clashed with politics and philosophies within Europe. The Franciscans claimed to be following the model of Christ by rejecting both common and individual property, and controversy regarding the interpretation and implications of this philosophy was at the core of the discourse of the Franciscan Poverty Dispute.¹⁵

The problematic of poverty caused the Franciscans to have an ambiguous history in the Atlantic world. They represent the history of both the colonised and the colonisers, consequently, this thesis aims to demonstrate how a history of the Franciscans can represent an alternative history of Atlantic world colonialism which could perhaps contribute to the strategy of contemporary Latin American political philosophers to locate decolonial options. In this work the Franciscans are not empty vehicles for an alternative historical narrative, their philosophy of poverty translated into translocal experiences and generated a specific philosophy of space and time which means that that their history actively represents an alternative historical narrative. In this thesis I will be exploring these “translocal” and “exilic” dimensions of Franciscan identity, which are linked to their notions of property and poverty. These notions are not just spatial but also temporal. Lesnick’s comment that ‘for Francis, the past was abolished; present and past became antagonistic, present and future became one’ demonstrates how the Franciscans’ philosophy of poverty shaped their sense of history (including the historical projection of the future) which contributed to the their “exilic” nature.¹⁶ In the book *1492: the poetics of diaspora*, John Docker defines diaspora, which is the consequence of exile, as ‘a sense of belonging to more than one history, to more than one time and place, more than one past and future’.¹⁷ The Franciscans, and the exilic identity which was necessitated by their poverty, offered a critical reflection on hegemonic Eurocentred time from within the European Middle Ages. In addition to their philosophy of poverty, this sense of time may have been further conditioned by their associated with

¹² U. Freitag, ‘Introduction: ‘Translocality’: An Approach to Connections and Transfers in Area Studies’ in *Translocality: The Study of Globalisation from a Southern Perspective* (Leiden, 2010), p. 3.

¹³ *Regula Bullata*, Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellman, O.F.M. Con., William J. Short, O.F.M., eds, *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Vol. 1., The Saint* (New York, 1999), pp. 99-106.

¹⁴ J. Coleman, ‘Property and poverty’, p. 626.

¹⁵ Pope John XXII had annotated the Franciscan Rule and a collection of theological and legal consilia on the question of whether it was heretical to assert that Christ and the Apostles owned nothing individually or in common. The study of this issue played an essential role in the fourteenth century phase of the Franciscan Poverty Dispute. For more on John XXII’s marginalia see Patrick Nold, ‘Pope John XXII’s Annotations on the Franciscan Rule: Content and Contexts’, *Franciscan Studies*, Vol. 65 (2007), pp. 295-324.

¹⁶ D. Lesnick, *Preaching in medieval Florence*, p134, cites Francis de Beer, *La conversion de Saint Francois selon Tomas de Celan*, Paris, 1963; cited by Jacques LeGoff, “Franciscanisme et modeles culturels du XIIIe siècle,” in *Francescanesimo e vita religiosa dei laici nel ‘200* (Atti dell’VIII Convegno Internazionale della Societa Internazionale di Studi Francescani [Assisi, October 16-18, 1980]), Assisi, 1981, pp. 83-128, at p. 92.

¹⁷ J. Docker, ‘Preface and Acknowledgements’, *1492: the poetics of diaspora* (London, 2001), p. vii.

mysticism which will be reflected upon in the final chapter. This may contribute to the ambiguous legacy of the Franciscans in the invention of the New World. The Franciscans played an active role in the invention of the New World which was emblematic of the invention of modernity and coloniality (and the Middle Ages). John Dagenais argued that ‘when modernity arrives, it is already postcolonial – and the modern European self that incarnates it is already fragmented and divided against itself along all-too-familiar lines of domination and subjugation – long before the great age of conquest begins’.¹⁸ The history of the Franciscans and their struggle with poverty and authority, which will be depicted in Chapter Three of this work, demonstrates that the Franciscans may also have played a role in the genesis of a postcolonial identity, as well as a critique of the colonised/coloniser binary that continues to appear in some theories of postcolonialism.

The first chapter surveys the different ways in which narratives of the Franciscan role in the discovery of the New World have been formulated, and includes an investigation of the legend of the relationship between Columbus and the Franciscans at La Rábida. In some narratives it is argued that the Franciscans knew of the New World and gave Columbus the support to go, in others they simply encouraged his own plans and used their political influence to help him obtain royal backing. Franciscan political importance in late medieval Castile was pronounced, as Cardinal Cisneros, Queen Isabella’s Franciscan confessor from 1492, had extensive power and eventually became the regent of Castile. It is thought that Columbus visited the Franciscan monastery of Santa María de la Rábida in 1485 and 1491.¹⁹ It is suggested that he was looking for somewhere to leave his son, but the reasons for his visit have contributed to a genre of the mythology of the discovery of the New World.²⁰ At La Rábida Columbus met the Franciscans Juan Perez, a former confessor of Queen Isabella, and Antonio de Marchena, a notable intellectual, who supported his plans and used their Franciscan network to help him reach the ear of the Spanish Queen by using the influence of her Franciscan confessor.²¹ Antolín Pérez begins his history of Franciscan involvement in America with the Franciscans Marchena and Pérez at La Rábida.²² The Franciscan Father Antonio Enríquez wrote that ‘it is with the arrival of Columbus at the Franciscan convent of La Rábida when he entered the history of the discovery of America by the front door’.²³ La Rábida is a powerful symbol of the Franciscan connection to the ‘New World’. As Father Enríquez says, it was ‘formed in the rigor of the Franciscan Rule, forever looking to the

¹⁸ J. Dagenais, ‘The Postcolonial Laura’, *Modern Language Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (2004): 365-389, p. 365.

¹⁹ La Rábida is in the town of Palos, on the Spanish coast of Huelva, Andalucía. The convent was established in 1221, it was part of the Franciscan custody of Seville, in the Province of Castile. Seville became a separate Franciscan Province in 1500.

²⁰ For example see J. Coll, *Colón y la Rábida; con un estudio acerca de los Franciscanos en el Nuevo mundo* (Madrid, 1891).

²¹ For some time Perez and Marchena were confused as one person, Juan Pérez de Marchena, for example in Padre Jose Torrubia, O.F.M., *Cronica de la provincial franciscana de santa cruz de la Españols y Caracas, libro de la novena parte de la Novena Parte de la Crónica General de la Orden Franciscana*, ed. and notes Odilo Gomez Parente, O.F.M. (Caracas, 1972). This confusion was discussed in J. Coll, *Colón y la Rábida*, pp. 98-112. This clarification of the identity of these twom important characters was discussed in English much later, see Francis Borgia Steck, ‘Christopher Columbus and the Franciscans’. *The Americas* 3, no. 3 (January 1947), 319–341, p. 325.

²² Antolín Pérez, *Los Franciscanos en América* (Madrid, 1992).

²³ ‘es con llegada de Colón al convento franciscano de la Rábida, cuando éste entra en la historia por esa puerta grande del Descubrimiento de América’; Fray Antonio Enríquez OFM, ‘Introducción’, en *Los Franciscanos y el nuevo mundo* (Sevilla, 1992), p. XV.

ocean' and it 'occupies a privileged place in the history of the discovery of America'.²⁴ However, the way that the Franciscans influence the discourse of the New World is more complex than this link which appears close to the surface of the hegemonic narrative.

My central claim that the New World was invented before it was discovered and that its identity as a colonized space was already determined by 1492, has been explored in a different way by Luis Weckmann.²⁵ Weckmann looked at the bulls of Alexander VI, particular *Inter Caetera*, as the product of the structures and traditions of the curia. He described the bulls as a link between medieval and modern world, and the epilogue of a longer medieval juridical custom.²⁶ He researched the formation of the colonial identity of America in the Middle Ages and showed that Alexander VI's Bull *Inter Caetera* which invented the Americas as a Spanish possession, was actually part of a long medieval tradition of papal claims to island sovereignty, known as the *doctrina omni-insular*.²⁷ Weckmann looked at the legal traditions of administering islands to indicate that coloniality is merely an extension of this. Muldoon follows a similar path, looking at the legal culture that culminated in the colonial system that prevailed in the Atlantic.²⁸ I explore the broader historiographical context of medieval Atlantic colonialism in the second chapter of my thesis, but it is analysis of Franciscan networks, identities and philosophies that make my approach to this topic unique.

Knowledge, representation, and control of space and ideas of space are important to the paradigm of colonialism. The history of the Franciscans is particularly relevant to the discourse of space, because their identity is based on poverty, or the rejection of property, which is a certain model of space. The Franciscans were involved in the Eurocentered process by which property became the dominant model of space, in this thesis I will argue that the Franciscan poverty dispute of the fourteenth century constituted a critical moment in the construction of the hegemonic notion of property and this had a significant legacy in the construction of the paradigm of coloniality. Chapter Two explores the economic and legal structures of property engineered in the late medieval Atlantic world and their continuation in the Americas. During the Franciscan poverty dispute property became synonymous with rights, and this became a legally codified relationship. This too had implication for the colonial matrix of power. Consequently Franciscan history encompassed the medieval construction of the paradigm of coloniality. Their struggle with poverty contributed to it conceptually, and their translocal networks, driven by their commitment to both poverty and mission, paralleled (and even pre-empted) the spatial map of the proliferation of European colonialism in the Atlantic world.

²⁴ 'en el rigor de la Regla Franciscana, siempre mirando al océano', y 'el lugar privilegiado que ocupa en la historia del descubrimiento de América'; Fray Antonio Enríquez O.F.M., 'Introducción', en *Los Franciscanos y el nuevo mundo* (Seville, 1992), p. XXII.

²⁵ Luis Weckmann, *La doctrina omni-insular, 1091-1493* (México, 1949).

²⁶ Luis Weckmann, *La doctrina omni-insular, 1091-1493* (México, 1949), p. 35.

²⁷ Luis Weckmann, *La doctrina omni-insular, 1091-1493* (México, 1949), p. 33. Although, there are many alternative interpretations of the influence on *Inter Caetera*, which was produced in 1493, after discovery but before 'America' was 'known'.

²⁸ Especially, James Muldoon, *Popes, lawyers, and infidels: the church and the non-Christian world, 1250-1550* (Philadelphia, 1979).

While examining the Atlantic world I have focused on three case studies: the Franciscan monastery at La Rábida on the Atlantic shore of Spain, the Canary Islands, and Hispaniola. This case study selection is designed to transcend the island/mainland binary that has dominated the Atlantic world and the medieval/modern binary that separates the East and West Atlantic. I trace the history of Franciscan networks across these spaces, considering the role that the Franciscans had regarding knowledge of these spaces, their own interpretation of their meaning, and their relationship to the colonial undertakings experienced there. In this context I argue that influence and power was not unidirectional as many histories of colonialism and postcolonial reflections would indicate. Normative histories of power relationships fail to understand the influence exerted by indigenous peoples on European discourses and identities, and also colonial processes that occurred within Europe. This relates to the school of 'New Mission History' which I discuss in Chapter Five. The Franciscans provide a way to problematise our histories of power relationships. Franciscans are thought to have been among the thirteen Catalan missionaries that arrived in the Canaries in 1386. In 1393 these missionaries were killed by Canarians. This event indicates that we should not subscribe to teleological narrative of colonialism, as the assertion of a unidirectional asymmetry of power in the Atlantic world. The first Franciscans who solicited permission to go to the New World from the Vicar General Olivier Maillard were described in the Glassberger chronicle as 'burning for martyrdom'.²⁹ The rhetoric of Franciscan missionaries in the Atlantic world is that they are seeking violence against themselves. This adds a dimension of complexity to narratives of colonialism in the Atlantic world which have focused on European conquistadors as the exporters of violence to passive populations. The Franciscans represent a more ambiguous narrative than conquest and unidirectional colonisation.

Chapter Three surveys the long and problematic history of the Franciscan philosophy of poverty and indicates that the identity of Franciscan poverty was colonised in the fourteenth century phase of the Franciscan Poverty Dispute. This occurred as Pope John XXII issued *Ad conditorem canonum* in 1322 which revoked the arrangement established in 1279 by Pope Nicholas III in *Exiit qui seminat*.³⁰ In 1323 John XXII issued *Quum inter nonnullos* which decreed that it was heretical to claim that Christ and his Apostles owned nothing or in common, which denied both the legitimacy and the religious memory of the Franciscan position.³¹ Yet, despite this legislation the Franciscans maintained their identity of poverty, as a ritual and a performance. The Franciscans were both colonised and entangled in colonial systems as colonial agents. In this way they transcended the colonised/coloniser binary, and reflect a dimension of colonial ambiguity, which is the subject of Chapter Five. This ambiguity cannot be understood without thinking about identity. Identity has many levels, but dress is one way in which identity is performed. Poverty of dress was part of the grammar of

²⁹ Nicholas Glassberger, O.F.M., *Chronica, ad. a. 1500, MS. In the Archives of the Franciscan Province of Bavaria, Munich, folio 270v-270r*, in Rev. Livarius Oligier, O.F.M., 'The Earliest Record on the Franciscans in America', *Catholic Historical Review*, 6 (1920/1921), pp.59-65, pp. 62-65.

³⁰ John XXII, *Ad conditorem canonum*, trans. John Kilcullen and John Scott [Latin text from *Corpus iuris canonici* (Lyons, 1671), compared with Friedberg's edition (Leipzig, 1879). Section numbers in square brackets from the gloss in the Lyons edition.], <http://www.humanities.mq.edu.au/Ockham/wadc.html>, (15.04.2011); Nicholas III, *Exiit qui seminat*, para 2, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/N3SEMIN.HTM>, (14.04.2011).

³¹ John XXII, *Quum inter nonnullos*, (translation has been made from the latin text found in "EXTRAVAG. IOANN. XXII. TIT. XIV. DE VERBORUM SIGNIFICATIONE CAP V [1]", DECRETALIUM CCOLLECTIONES, AKADEMISCHE DRUCK - U. VERLAGSANSTALT GRAZ, 1959, which was published as a second volume of a reprint of the work "*Codex Iuris Canonici*", ed. B. Tauchnitz, Leipzig, 1879), <http://www.franciscan-archive.org/index2.html> (15.04.2011).

Franciscan identity.³² The scarcity of Franciscan dress (compared to an armoured conquistador) made their identity closer to the naked or scarcely clad people of the Atlantic world. They transcended identity distance. The Franciscan historian Antoinine Tibesar claimed that ‘of all the orders, none was closer to the popular classes than the Franciscans’.³³ Franciscans’ philosophy of poverty made them better able to relate to and interact with the indigenous populations in the Americas. Yet, according to the first Franciscan chronicle entry about the New World (written by Nicholas Glassberger c.1500), one of the first acts of the Franciscans in the New World was to spin cotton so that they don’t become naked as their clothes rotted.³⁴ This anxiety regarding clothing perhaps reflects some Franciscan awareness of the ambiguity of their identity.

Chapter Five also argues that Franciscan entanglement in coloniality did not begin in the Americas but within Europe. Volume one of the *Archivo Ibero Americano* contains documents indicating that the Franciscans themselves became owners of the island of Saltes following a donation by the Duke of Medina in 1449.³⁵ They were subsequently entangled in the legal processes of the ownership of this island. Given the Franciscan doctrine of poverty, this colonial entanglement made Franciscan poverty ambiguous, and this ambiguity, and perhaps even anxiety, would have been transmitted from the shores of Huelva to the convents in the Canaries where Franciscan convents were established as part of the Province of Castile around 1413.³⁶

Chapter Four explores other outcomes of the fourteenth century Franciscan Poverty Dispute which had an immediate relevance in the context of Atlantic world colonialism: the colonisation of the meaning of rights, the denial that any rational man could exist outside of the legally regulated regime of rights, and the projection of a history of property into the Garden of Eden. This outcome indicates another way in which the Franciscans contributed (if unintentionally) to the paradigm of coloniality which became part of the identity of the New World. This chapter surveys the implications of the Franciscan and anti-Franciscan poverty discourse, considering the legacy of both the Franciscan William of Ockham and the Dominican and advisor to Pope John XXII, Hervaeus Natalis. It explores this notion by considering the imperial dimension of the discourse of rights that emerged in the New World with Las Casas and the School of Salamanca. It also traces continuities between narrative tropes of the Franciscan Poverty Dispute (such as references to the Garden of Eden as the testing ground for theories of property and rights) and descriptions of Atlantic world rights. Continuities within the discourse of property and rights and the discourse of discovery and

³² *Regula non bullata*, in *Early writings of St Francis, The Saint*, pp. 63-86.

³³ A. Tibesar, *Franciscan Beginnings in Colonial Peru* (Washington, 1953), p. ix.

³⁴ Nicholas Glassberger, O.F.M., *Chronica, ad. a. 1500, MS. In the Archives of the Franciscan Province of Bavaria, Munich, folio 270v-270r*, in Rev. Livarius Oligier, O.F.M., ‘The Earliest Record on the Franciscans in America’, *Catholic Historical Review*, 6 (1920/1921), pp.59-65.

³⁵ Duke of Medina Sidonia, ‘Carta del Duque de Medina Sidonia confirmando la donación de la isla de Saltes al convento de la Rábida’, ed. P. Ángel Ortega, O.F.M., in ‘El Convento de la Rábida. Su origen y primeros progresos, desde la fundación hasta el año 1455’, in *Archivo Ibero Americano (AIA)*, 1914, v 1, pp. 79-99, pp. 90-92; ‘Escritura de arrendamiento de la isla de Saltes’ ed. P. Ángel Ortega, O.F.M., in ‘El Convento de la Rábida. Su origen y primeros progresos, desde la fundación hasta el año 1455’, in *AIA*, 1914, v 1, pp. 79-99, pp. 92-96; ‘Escritura de traspaso en subarriendo de la isla de Saltes’, ed. P. Ángel Ortega, O.F.M., in ‘El Convento de la Rábida. Su origen y primeros progresos, desde la fundación hasta el año 1455’, in *AIA*, 1914, v 1, pp. 79-99, pp. 96-99.

³⁶ The convent of San Buenaventura; Rumeu de Armas, *El Obispado de Telde. Misioneros mallorquines y catalanes en el Atlántico* (Madrid, 1960), p. 129. However, according to Julio Sánchez Rodríguez <http://www.diocesisdecanarias.es/downloads/iglcanarias.pdf>. He cited Cazorla León, Santiago y Sánchez Rodríguez, Julio: *Obispos de Canarias y Rubicón*, Madrid 1997, pp.17-19.

colonisation are suggestive of ideological and justificatory links. It posits that a teleological historical approach has plagued the history of rights and has failed to adequately understand the imperial function of rights. It contributes to Castro's re-evaluation of the historical legacy of Las Casas,³⁷ but expands upon this premise to argue against the historical emphasis on Thomism and the 'School of Salamanca' in the history of rights. It suggests ways in which the Franciscan Poverty Dispute contributed to the Western paradigm of rights in ways that have been overlooked. It suggests that the Franciscan contribution to the discourse of rights may have been overlooked, or misrepresented, because of the historiographical failure to explore the colonial dimension of rights. This chapter also looks at the imperial role of language and the process behind the construction of a hegemonic notion such as rights.

Rights and their Eurocentric histories contribute to the asymmetries of power that characterise the existing geopolitics of knowledge. Chapter Four aims to rethink intellectual history's approach to the history of right by questioning the geopolitics behind European intellectual histories, which are still governed by the notion of a progression from the Middle Ages to Modernity. The notion of rights in Eurocentric modernity represents the culmination of this progress. This chapter explores the way in which Eurocentric history has created a *telos* of rights from a European 'centre' and suggests alternative perspectives. Michel Foucault has observed the importance of the 'institutional site' for the construction of the speaker's authority in the creation of discourse.³⁸ This chapter suggests that geopolitics has contributed to the dominance of the 'School of Salamanca' and that an alternative (translocal) Franciscan narrative can challenge this. The Franciscan Poverty Dispute provides a window into the process of the construction of the hegemonic discourse of rights and its contribution to the paradigm of colonialism. Existing histories of rights have been limited as they have not considered the political agenda of rights and the process of the discourse of rights. This limitation is the consequence of the hegemonic function of modernity.

The final chapter explores the Hispanic Franciscan contribution to the identity of the New World by exploring the Franciscan relationship with mysticism and millenarianism. This chapter seeks to penetrate the culture of prophetic Franciscan mysticism, and explore the potential significance of the Franciscan idea that at the end of the world is a New World; a theological belief which becomes a spatial truth. It argues that the meta-historical framework shaped by the Franciscans played a role in the construction of the New World. Mysticism and prophecy play an important role in the invention of the New World, and even Las Casas's *History of the Indies* has been described as 'indictment and a prophecy'.³⁹ This chapter takes a closer look at religious beliefs which is important as Christianity constituted one of the justificatory frameworks of conquest. Religion is not something that can be partitioned from other categories such as politics, economics and science; it is an active agent behind the psychology of perception. European perceptions and inventions have had a significant impact on the identity of the New World in the Americas.

Chapter Six aims to contribute to our understanding of an alternative Franciscan driven narrative of the New World, and facilitate a re-modelling of global history. It seeks to penetrate the surface of the normative narrative that is shaped by the planted flags of the image of Columbus discovering the New World in 1492, and vague chaos in the 'New

³⁷ Daniel Castro, *Another Face of Empire, Bartolomé de Las Casas, Indigenous Rights, and Ecclesiastical Imperialism* (London, 2007).

³⁸ M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 51.

³⁹ A. Collard, 'Introduction' B. Las Casas, *History of the Indies* (New York, 1971), pp. ix-xxiv, p. x.

World' before Cortés's conquest of Mexico, and Las Casas's critique of slavery.⁴⁰ A Franciscan centred narrative reveals characters and details off the beaten track of the dominant discovery of the New World narrative, and facilitates an investigation of the psychological context of the invention of the New World. Mendieta 'propounded the view that the Discovery of the new world could only be attributed to the providence of God'.⁴¹ In fact the New World was only a New World because of the prophetic culture within late medieval Europe, particularly prevalent amongst the Franciscans.

Columbus tapped into the power of this Franciscan mysticism; in 1500 he wrote 'God made me the messenger of the new heaven and the new earth which he spoke in the Apocalypse of St John after having spoken of it through the mouth of Isaiah; and he showed me the spot where to find it'.⁴² Here Columbus was using an apocalyptic narrative trope typical of the Franciscan tradition to endorse his own power. This is another way in which Franciscan identity was used during the invention of the New World. Columbus's prophetic millennial views are thought to have become pronounced during his third voyage, which ended in him being taken back to Spain in chains, and this could perhaps contribute to a cynical interpretation of Columbus' beliefs.

Chapter Six focuses on the meaning of the *Floreto de Sant Francisco*.⁴³ This book, published in Seville on 24 August 1492, twenty-one days after Columbus set sail to the Indies, is a definitive statement of Spanish Franciscan identity and demonstrates the importance of apocalypticism in Castile.⁴⁴ It is known to have been the main text that the Franciscans took with them to the New World. This importance of Franciscan mysticism to the identity and discovery of the New World has been emphasised in the Spanish historiography,⁴⁵ not least due to the supposed Franciscan influenced millenarian cosmology of Columbus, but has not had an English reception. The *Floreto* demonstrates that the mysticism and millenarian thinking that found roots amongst the Iberian Franciscans became very important to religious identity in the New World, and the way in which the Americas and their inhabitants were perceived. This chapter explores how Franciscan poverty related to a particular conception of time which became linked to an eschatological narrative. It suggests that consequently the Americas had to be constructed as the 'New World', as they were associated with a new age theologically: the age of the spirit ushered in by the mendicants.

This thesis concludes with a reflection upon the continued influence and ambiguity of the Franciscans within Latin America today where St Francis has been used as a symbol of freedom for the theology of liberation movement, but where Franciscans are also

⁴⁰ For an example of this dominant popular narrative see E. Abbot, *Sugar, A Bittersweet History* (London, 2010).

⁴¹ Edwin Edward Sylvest, Jr., *Motifs of Franciscan Mission Theory in Sixteenth Century New Spain Province of the Holy Gospel*, (academy of American Franciscan history, Washington, 1975), p. 20.

⁴² G.B. Spotorno, *Memorials of Columbus* (London, 1823), p. 224; cited in Pauline Moffitt Watts, "Prophecy and Discovery: On the Spiritual Origins of Christopher Columbus's 'Enterprise of the Indies'", *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (February 1985), 73-102, p. 73.

⁴³ Under the title *Este es el Floreto de Sant Francisco. El qual tracta de la vida e miraglos del bienaventurado señor Sant Francisco e de la regla de los frayles menores*.

⁴⁴ *Floreto de Sant Francisco, [Sevilla, 1492]*, *Fontes Franciscani y Literatura en la península Ibérica y en el Nuevo Mundo, Estudio crítico, texto, glosario y notas*, ed. Juana María ArcelusUlibarrena, (Madrid, 1998). An edition appeared in AIA in 1989, Capuchin friar Jose Maria de Elizondo had started the project 80 years previously, noted p. 25. A 1913 Chilean edition and a 1916 Madrid edition are known. The 'Estudio Critico' at the start of the 1998 edition provides a comprehensive history of the text.

⁴⁵ For example see A. Milhou, *Colon y su mentalidad mesianica en el ambiente franciscanista espanol* (Valladolid, 1983).

remembered for their violent implementation of the Spanish Inquisition in the Americas. It considers whether this fragmented picture of the history of Franciscan poverty and Franciscan identity contributes to our understanding of colonialism, the meaning and identity of the New World, the colonial dimension of rights, and the colonial dimension of historical meta-narratives. It also aims to contribute to our understanding of dimensions of colonality, a multifaceted paradigm with many ambiguities, and its role in the identity of modernity and the New World.