

Between *Aemulatio* and Improvement: An Analysis of the Den Haag Edition and Three Translations of Du Halde's *Description de la Chine* (Paris 1735)

Introduction

The full title of the work by Jean-Baptiste Du Halde (1674-1773) this study is based on is *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise enrichie des cartes générales et particulières de ce pays, de la carte générale et des cartes particulières du Thibet et de la Corée, et garni d'un grand nombre de figures et des vignettes gravées en Taille-douce* (hereafter *Description* or "Paris original"), first published in Paris in 1735. The work comprises four volumes and systematically presents a vast amount of knowledge on China assembled by Du Halde's Jesuit confrères over many years of their missionary activities in China¹. The French nation had, in the first half of the 18th century, a major knowledge advantage over other European nations both with regard to anthropological and geographical knowledge on China, especially because French King Louis XIV (r. 1643-1715) had supported the French mission in China, e.g. by sending the 'King's Mathematicians' to China who then played a major role with the mapping projects commissioned by Manchu Emperor Kangxi (r. 1661-1722). This knowledge advantage² represented a major challenge for those nations that had no comparable opportunities at that time to gain the possibly most recent knowledge on 'Things Chinese' and especially the geography and cartography of China. The only way for them to compensate for this deficiency was to have Du Halde's work translated into their own languages.

The first translation of Du Halde's work into English appeared only one year later, in 1736, provided by Richard Brookes (fl. 1721-1763), also in four volumes. A second English edition, in two volumes, appeared slightly later, the first volume in 1738 and the second in 1741. Between 1747 and 1756 a German edition appeared, comprising five volumes. Besides, translations were made into Swedish (6 vols., published 1758-1765), into Portuguese (4 vols., 1762), and into Russian (4 vols., 1774). In 1736 there was also a second French edition of Du Halde's work, published in Den Haag, albeit without the maps, and a further volume, separately containing the maps in a larger format, that appeared in 1737, also in Den Haag³.

The two Den Haag editions and the three earliest translations of Du Halde's work—the two English editions and the German edition—will all be taken as the basis of this study. The focus of my analysis is on the question of how these texts were related to Du Halde's original *Description* in terms of *aemulatio* and improvement, two terms suggested by Susanne Greilich and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink in their introduction to this volume as the central pillars of comparison. The aspect of *aemulatio*, i.e. the attempt to emulate an original work while at the same time surpassing it, will be contrasted to measures taken with the purpose to correct deficiencies of the original edition and to thus improve it, a phenomenon that occurs in these four editions in various facets. In this context, it is interesting to see how the editors/

¹ For a short account of Halde's work as part and parcel of the huge project of knowledge transfer from China to Europe brought about by Jesuit missionaries in the 17th and 18th centuries and the subsequent attempt of systematically re-arranging this knowledge, see Häberlein/ Schaab-Hanke 2024, p. 9f.

² For the term "Gallotropism" used to denote the superiority of France as a point of reference for other European nations in the 18th century, see Lüsebrink 2016.

³ For a list of the various early translations, see Cordier 1904-1906, v. I, p. 45-54. According to B. Szcześniak (1958, p. 374), the Russian translation comprises only the first of Du Halde's four volumes.

translators attempted to adapt the new editions to their own national interests and to transform them along with the enlarged knowledge of their times. And closely related to these aspects, a final glimpse will also be taken at what Greilich and Lüsebrink have denoted as “the translator’s self-fashioning” in their preface.

The Two French Editions and the Three Earliest Translations

Du Halde’s Description published in Paris

The four volumes of Du Halde’s original work comprise altogether more than 2400 pages. The first volume presents mainly an account of the geography of China and the various peoples living within its boundaries. Du Halde also presented the chronology of the emperors of China in this first volume, on almost 300 pages. The second volume deals with various aspects of China, such as the civil and military government, handicrafts and commerce within China, but also with the language, the Chinese script and literature. A large part of the third volume is about religion, referring to the indigenous Chinese “sects”, as Du Halde calls them, and followed by Du Halde’s report on the progress of the Christian religion in China. This is followed by a long essay on Chinese medicine, pulse diagnostics and extracts from the *Bencao gangmu* (Classic of Herbal Medicine). The fourth volume finally focuses mainly on the travel diaries of Jesuit missionaries.

As may be suggested already from the work’s title, maps are of overriding importance in Du Halde’s work. It includes a total of 42 plates of maps: a general map of China, Tartary, and Tibet, a general map of China alone, 15 provincial maps, 12 particular maps of Chinese Tartary, a general map of Tibet, nine particular maps of Tibet, a map of Korea; and a map of the discoveries by Vitus Bering (1681-1741) in Siberia; besides there are 7 plates of city plans and a navigational chart of the inlet to Canton. Work on the maps took altogether eight years. With their realization Du Halde entrusted the young geographer and cartographer Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville (1697-1782). In three stages of the project Du Halde had concluded contracts with d’Anville to make sure that nobody else would have the right to make use of these maps except for this project, the first contract in 1728, the second one in 1729, and the third one in 1734⁴.

The Den Haag Editions of 1736 and 1737

In spite of Du Halde’s attempts to prevent any pirated edition of his work and especially of the maps, it was only one year later that a new edition of Du Halde’s work was published by Henri Scheuerleer in den Haag (hereafter *Description 1736* or “Den Haag edition”). Like the Paris original, it comprises four volumes. The title differs slightly from the Paris original, since Du Halde’s original title is added by: “With an introductory advertisement outlining the main improvements made in this new edition” (“*Avec un avertissement préliminaire, où l’on rend compte des principales ameliorations qui ont été faites dans cette Nouvelle Edition*” ; *Description 1736*, title page). In their preface the editors even speak of innumerable “improvements⁵” that could hardly all be listed in a normal advertisement⁶. At a closer look one will indeed find some differences compared to the original, albeit mostly of a purely formal nature, so that one may

⁴ See Cams 2014, p. 41-44.

⁵ Hereafter, the word “improvement” will be used without quotation marks, even if it is just an improvement claimed by the editors/ translators of one of the works under discussion here.

⁶ Cf. *Description 1736*, v. 1, p. LXVII. The editors’ names are not indicated, but in the preface mention is made several times of “We”, “Us”, etc., which justifies the assumption that there were at least two editors, but of course it might just be the authorial “We” of only one author, as it is still usual today.

ask oneself why the editors put so much emphasis on stating that this edition was an improvement of the original. Some of the changes made in this new edition will be discussed below in more detail. However, a difference that immediately catches the eye but is not even mentioned on the title page is the fact that there are no maps included in this edition.

Instead, the maps were re-engraved and separately published one year later, in 1737, also by Scheurleer in Den Haag, under the title *Nouvel atlas de la Chine, de la Tartarie chinoise et du Thibet: contenant les cartes générales & particulières de ces pays, ainsi que la carte du royaume de Corée; la plupart levées sur les lieux par ordre de l'empereur Cang-Hi avec toute l'exactitude imaginable, soit par les PP. Jésuites missionnaires à la Chine, soit par des Tartares du tribunal des mathématiques, & toutes revûes par les mêmes Peres, Redigées par Mr. d'Anville, Géographe ordinaire de sa majesté très-chrétienne, précédé d'une Description de la Boucharie par un Officier Suedois qui a fait quelque séjour dans ce Pays* (hereafter *Nouvel Atlas*).

Probably due to the somewhat misleading part of the title, according to which the maps were revised by d'Anville, some scholars have mistakenly ascribed the compilation of the new atlas (with the improved maps) to d'Anville himself. However, from a letter by d'Anville that he wrote when asked how he liked that new atlas we may safely conclude that he himself had no share in this new compilation—which is all the more plausible because this is precisely what Du Halde had prohibited him to do per agreement between them⁷. In this letter d'Anville criticized the poor quality of the redrawn maps, saying: “[...] My surprise was great to see almost all these maps, not only much beyond the original maps in terms of their execution, but also badly engraved in every respect.” (“[...] *ma surprise a été grande de voir presque toutes ces Cartes, non seulement fort au-dessous des Cartes originales pour l'exécution, mais fort mal gravées à tous égards.*” ; “Réponse de M. d'Anville” 1738, p. 768)

The General History of China

The first translation of Du Halde's work into English, provided by Richard Brookes, has the title *The General History of China: Containing A Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political and Physical Description of the Empire of China, Chinese-Tartary, Corea and Thibet, Including an Extract and Particular Account of their Customs, Manners, Ceremonies, Religion, Arts and Sciences* (hereafter *General History* or “Brookes' edition”). It comprised, like the original, four volumes and was published by John Watts in 1736⁸. This edition includes only a few maps, namely the general map of China and Chinese Tartary in the first volume and the map of Tibet as well as the one drawn by Bering contained in the fourth volume.

Brookes, who signed by name in his dedicatory prefaces to each of the four volumes, was an English physician and author of compilations and translations on medicine, surgery, natural history, and geography, most of which went through several editions. As Brookes writes in his preface, he had been commissioned to make this translation. One may initially wonder why a physician would be commissioned to translate such a huge encyclopedic work by a French Jesuit, but since Du Halde had included quite much information about Chinese medicine and botanics in his work, this might explain why Brookes had also a personal interest in it and was thus willing to translate the whole work.

As for the maps, the first volume presents one of the only two maps included in this edition, namely the map of China, Tartary, and Tibet (“A Map of China, Chinese Tartary, and the Kingdom of Corea”, inserted before the chapter heading titled “A General View of the Empire of China”). The second map, placed in the fourth volume immediately after the table of contents, is the map of Tibet.

⁷ For more details about the agreements between Du Halde and d'Anville, see Dix 2024, p. 146.

⁸ The work was reprinted in 1741, and a new publication comprising only one volume was made in 1739.

A Description of China

Similar to the Den Haag edition of Du Halde's work, the editor/ translator of the second English edition also already uses the title of the work to indicate the improvements he had made on the original. The full title of this work is: *A Description of the Empire of China and Chinese-Tartary, together with the Kingdoms of Korea, and Tibet. Containing the Geography and History (Natural as well as Civil) of those Countries. Illustrated with General and Particular Maps, and Adorned with a Great Number of Cuts. With Notes Geographical, Historical and Critical, and other Improvements, especially in the cuts, by the Translator* (hereafter *A Description* or "Cave edition"). The translation comprises two volumes, the first of which was published in 1738 and the second in 1741, both by Edward's Cave in London, the first volume comprising 678, the second ca. 384 pages.

Different from the first English edition, this one includes all the cartographic material of Du Halde's original, albeit, as will be discussed in more detail below, in a somewhat modified way. Geographical issues are clearly of major importance to the editor/ translator of this edition, and although he does not mention his name in the preface of the book, this strong emphasis put on geographical issues that one can already see from the title suggests that the translator himself must have been an expert in geography and cartography. Remarkably, most of these (modified) maps included in *A Description* are signed with "Bowen sculpt.", clearly indicating Emanuel Bowen (1694-1767) as the engraver. Bowen was a Welsh cartographer who had been commissioned as "Royal Mapmaker" to draw maps for King George II (r. 1727-1760) and also for Louis XV of France (r. 1715-1774), so that one may safely assume that he was not only the one who had engraved the copper plates of the maps but was also the person who had revised the maps and dedicated them to various persons.

Ausführliche Beschreibung

The translation of Du Halde's work into German has the title *Ausführliche Beschreibung des Chinesischen Reichs und der grossen Tartarey. Aus dem Französischen mit Fleiß übersetzt, nebst vielen Kupfern. Mit einer Vorrede Sr. Hochwürden Herrn Abt Mosheims, darin die neuesten chinesischen Kirchengeschichte erzählt werden* (hereafter *Beschreibung* or "German edition"). It was published by Johann Christian Koppe in Rostock between 1747 und 1756⁹.

The attribute "ausführlich" (comprehensive), as it is added in the title of the German edition, is indeed justified, since by its altogether 5 volumes it even surpasses the scope of the French original. As one can see from the title page of the first volume, there was supposed to be a preface authored by "Abbey Mosheim", dealing with the "newest Chinese Church history". Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1693-1755) was a leading Lutheran Protestant Church historian and had in 1747, just one year before the second volume of the German translation of Du Halde was published (which contained his essay), been appointed Chancellor of the University of Göttingen.

The German translator's name is nowhere indicated in this volume, and it is only from Mosheim's words that we learn that the translator was a "praiseworthy and famous" ("*ruhmwürdig und berühmt*"; *Beschreibung*, vol. 2, p. 3) man who had entrusted him to write this essay. The translator for his part proudly writes at the end of his preface that he would not have been able to find anyone more suitable to write this essay than Mosheim¹⁰. Also in his preface to the first volume, the editor/ translator writes that the translation into German had been the wish of several prominent scholars¹¹. The translator's identity has, however, been

⁹ More precisely, volume 1 was published in 1747, vol. 2 in 1748, vol. 3 in 1749, vol. 4 in 1749 and vol. 5 in 1756.

¹⁰ Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 1, p. 56.

¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 44.

revealed and confirmed by several scholars in the meantime¹², and so we may safely assume that the name of the person publisher Koppe had entrusted with translating the work was the German Protestant theologian Friedrich Eberhard Rambach (1708-1775¹³). As has been suggested, however, probably he did not translate the entire work himself but was supported by one or more translators whom he supervised¹⁴.

Aemulatio Versus Improvement: The Den Haag Edition and The Three Earliest Translations as Compared with Du Halde's Original

That the translator of a work will do his best to transfer the contents and style of the original into the target language is something one would expect from him – in several cases this is exactly what the translator declares in his preface¹⁵—however, what may be more surprising to some is the clearly recognizable desire of the editor/ translator to create a version that is even better than the original. As will be shown in this study, this desire found expression in quite different ways. The improvements made in the four editions under scrutiny will be arranged in three groups. The first group comprises improvements of an either wholly or at least mostly formal nature, the second group relates to improvements made with regard to geographical and cartographical matters, and the third group is about improvements that may be subsumed under anthropological issues.

How important the hint at improvements must have been to the editors/ translators of at least three of the editions analyzed here can already be seen from the ways in which their titles were formulated. As mentioned above, the editors of the Den Haag version had indicated already in its title that it had an advertisement in which the most important improvements of this new edition were summarized. The title page of the Cave edition emphasizes the improvements made (by Bowen) with regard to geographical and other notes as well as improvements especially of the maps, and the German edition advertises already on the title page of the first volume that there will be an essay by Abbey Mosheim on the newest Chinese Church history, although the essay itself is only included in the second volume, where it is proudly indicated again on the title page. This indicates how important Mosheim's essay on the "newest Chinese Church history" must have been to the editor/ translator (Marbach) as compared with Du Halde's original essay on the history of the Christian mission in China.

Changes Regarding Formal Matters

As said before, the editors of the Den Haag version in their preface boast of all kinds of improvements they claim to have made on the original. While Brookes in his preface to the first English edition does not mention any changes made by him in formal matters (although there are some, albeit not pointed out by the editor), Bowen at the beginning of his "Translator's Preface" announces to his readers that it will be made transparent "what we have done on our Side to improve it" (*A Description*, "Translator's Preface", vol. 1, p. 1). In the preface to the German edition Rambach mentions both the Den Haag version and

¹² See Espagne 2016, p. 236f, esp. fn. 100; cf. Schaab-Hanke 2023, p. 114, fn. 77.

¹³ Not to be confused with a person of the same name who was a philologist and writer and lived later, 1767-1827.

¹⁴ Szcześniak 1958, p. 374, assumed that publisher Koppe was also the translator, whereas Hartmann 1949, p. 21, fn. 4, and Espagne 2016, p. 221, were able to identify Rambach as the translator or at least as the mainly responsible person among several translators.

¹⁵ For example, the German translator Rambach proudly explains in his preface that he not only tried to render Du Halde's language as faithfully as possible but that he also strove to imitate his style and to find equivalents for difficult phrases in the source language (cf. *Beschreibung*, "Vorbericht des Uebersetzers", v. 1, p. 47).

the first English edition provided by Brookes. He writes that the English edition was of benefit to him and that he used the Den Haag edition as a basis of his own version. And he adds that he has not only adopted the improvements that had already been made by the Dutch editors but that his new version also surpassed the Dutch version in some formal details¹⁶.

Three aspects of improvements will be more closely scrutinized here, namely (1) changes regarding the layout of the text, (2) changes regarding the transcription of Chinese terms, and (3) changes regarding the topical register and reference works.

Changes Regarding the Layout and Organization of the Text

In their preface to the *Den Haag edition* the editors defend their decision to publish the work for a second time, only one year after the original, among others by hinting at the work's new arrangement¹⁷. While Du Halde's original was organized in two columns per page, the Dutch editors had changed it to a uniform typeface. Besides, the marginal notes (which the original had provided only for the first 40 pages of the first volume) were added throughout the four volumes, so that a reader could see the content of each page at a glance. A further improvement the editors mention is that they have replaced the parentheses that Du Halde used for lengthy comments by putting them in footnotes below the text. Brookes' edition has adapted to the Den Haag version both in that there are also marginal notes throughout that version and also with regard to the text's overall layout in a uniform typeface. The Bowen edition makes use of marginal notes throughout the work – even including the first part of the translator's preface¹⁸. Also in this edition, lengthy sentences formulated by Du Halde have now and then been broken up and less important details been deferred to footnotes¹⁹.

Apart from the fact that the German edition is the only one which from its very size surpasses the original, comprising five volumes, whereas the Paris original has only four, the translator/ editor (Rambach) of the German edition, who knew both the Den Haag edition and the first English edition, adopted several of the formal features of the Dutch version, including the general layout, the marginal notes, and the continuous register at the end of the work. A further novelty of the German edition is that the whole text has been divided into paragraphs, which facilitates the reference to specific sections within the chapters. Besides, many more footnotes (also as compared to the Den Haag edition) have been added to the text of the German edition. All these details justify, as Rambach adds, the somewhat higher price of the work than initially calculated²⁰.

Changes Regarding the Transcription of Chinese Terms

At first sight it might seem that orthography, or more precisely the transcription and pronunciation of Chinese terms, is a formal rather than a geographical issue, and in fact it is something that relates not only to geography but to transcriptions of all terms found throughout the work, but it will be shown that the question of correct orthography, i.e. transcription, was of primary interest for the cartographer who aims at writing the local places on the maps in a consistent—and to the reader of a given nation—easily readable way.

¹⁶ Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 1, p. 44-45.

¹⁷ Cf. *Den Haag 1736*, vol. 1, p. LXVI.

¹⁸ Cf. *A Description*, "Translator's Preface", vol. 1, p. I-IV.

¹⁹ See, eg., *A Description*, vol. 1, p. 228, 534; cf. Schaab-Hanke 2023, p. 111, fn. 67.

²⁰ Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 1, p. 46-47.

Although Du Halde himself had already mentioned the difficulty for a (French) reader to read the Chinese terms correctly, mainly because the French missionaries had initially relied on the Portuguese transcriptions²¹, neither the Den Haag nor Brookes' edition seem to have made any changes regarding the transcription of terms occurring in the text part. As Rambach writes, however, the editors of the *Nouvel Atlas* have changed the names of at least some place names²². By lauding the care with which the editors of the Atlas improved the maps, Rambach also praises the German edition whose maps were based on the *Nouvel Atlas*²³.

However, the question plays a major role for the Cave edition. It is a decisive part of the changes Bowen had made both of Du Halde's original of 1735 and of the Den Haag edition of 1736, as he himself mentions in his comments. This becomes clearly evident from the long table included in the Cave edition where previous attempts to transcribe the Chinese pronunciation in different European languages are compared with the new transcription system²⁴. As one can see when browsing through the text part, Bowen not only strived to create a consistent English transcription for the terms of geographical relevance, but also used the new transcription for all other names and terms throughout his new edition. In his "Translator's Preface" Bowen describes the difficulties he faced by making these changes:

I have taken a good deal of Care to reduce the proper Names from the French to the English Idiom, though in doing it, I met with no small difficulty, chiefly occasioned by the same word being written in diverse ways [...] it appears that the French have not yet one settled manner of writing the Chinese names [...]. I have frequently marked the variation of the Orthography by a Note at the Bottom of the Page, which Course I have taken to supply, illustrate, or correct the Original whenever a proper Occasion offered. (*A Description*, "Translator's Preface", v. 1, p. II)

Changes Regarding the Topical Register and Reference Works

In Du Halde's original, at the end of the third and fourth volumes, there are separate registers of the terms dealt with in the text. As Du Halde concedes at the end of his preface, some Chinese terms have been misspelled in the text, which however, for typereading reasons near the end of the publication process, could not be corrected at the end of the redactional process, and thus a reader should rely on how the terms are written in these registers²⁵. This is why the construction of one common topical register for the whole work at the end of the fourth volume was one of the improvements the editors of the Den Haag version were able to make and which they proudly announced in their advertisement²⁶. Such an all-comprising register, here called "Index", is included at the end of the second volume of the Cave edition and at the end of the fourth volume of the German edition. In his translator's preface Rambach emphasizes that the German edition, following the example of the Den Haag version, increased the amount of entries in this register for more than 50% as compared to the Paris original²⁷.

A further change that may at first sight appear as merely a formal change is the list of reference works we find in all editions except the Paris original. Du Halde himself had, at the end of his preface, listed the names of 27 Jesuit missionaries whose memoirs had

²¹ Cf. *Description*, vol. 1, "Preface", p. LVIII.

²² Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 1, p. 45.

²³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 45-47.

²⁴ Cf. *A Description*, vol. 1, "Translator's Preface", p. VI-VIII.

²⁵ Cf. *Description* 1735, "Preface", vol. 1, p. XLIX.

²⁶ Cf. *Description* 1736, "Avertissement", vol. 1, p. LXVII.

²⁷ Cf. *Beschreibung*, "Vorbericht des Übersetzers", p. 45.

contributed to this work²⁸, but he had not mentioned the titles of published books he might also have consulted when compiling his work. The Den Haag version was the first to have a list of books attached to the end of the preface, of which the editors proudly claimed that Du Halde had used them all and added that in buying this book the readers would at the same time purchase a whole library, and this at a reasonable prize²⁹. Brookes' edition gives the list of correspondents just as Du Halde had provided it, at the end of the preface. Bowen does not seem to have had any interest in adding such a list of books that had (probably) been consulted by Du Halde. He merely expresses his hope in the preface that Du Halde had passed on to his readers the texts written by his correspondents as faithfully to the originals as possible³⁰. The German version has a list of books included at the end of the preface, similar to the Den Haag version. As Rambach proudly adds, different to that version his list has now even been organized topically, arranging the books under topics such as history, government, scholarship etc. of the Chinese. One of these topics assembles works about the disputes between the members of various congregations over central issues of the China mission – materials that enable a critical reader to easily get an overview of the arguments of the congregations competing with the Jesuits³¹.

Changes Regarding Geographical and Cartographical Aspects

The maps d'Anville, who already early in his life received the honorable title of “Royal Geographer”, created for Du Halde added much to his fame in life. But the question if d'Anville was himself wholly satisfied with his work cannot so easily be answered positively, because he must have worked under quite some pressure, especially because Du Halde had demanded him to draw his maps as closely as possible to the maps, reports and calculations sent by his Jesuit confrères, whereas d'Anville himself would have wished to also adduce materials from other sources. As Mario Cams writes, d'Anville in a manuscript account discovered at the Archives départementales de l'Orne explicitly states that the maps were very close to the originals sent from China, and he justifies that this faithfulness to the (Jesuit) originals was a “necessity”. The general maps, however, were not drawn entirely on the basis of the maps sent from China³². Besides, the Paris original contained at least one report along with a map on a travel made by a non-Jesuit, namely of Bering's journey to Sibiria³³. Remarkably, this report is not included in the table of contents of Du Halde's fourth volume, which might indicate a late decision taken by Du Halde to include the material in this volume, but without time left to change the table of contents.

Almost immediately after the publication of the Paris edition there must have been some critical reactions on the work, related primarily, but not only, to the maps, as can be concluded from the editors' preface to the Den Haag version, in which they justified why they had decided to provide a new edition—albeit one that had not been authorized by Du Halde. Because in the agreements signed by d'Anville Du Halde had prohibited the maps to be used for other publications, the editors of the Dutch version entrusted someone with redrawing all the maps of the Paris original and with editing them separately in an atlas with an even larger format, so that they could proudly announce the advantages that both the newly edited four volumes and the atlas had over the original one.

²⁸ Cf. *Description*, vol. 1, “Preface”, p. LI-LII.

²⁹ Cf. *Description* Den Haag 1736, vol. 1, p. LX, LXXIV-LXXX.

³⁰ Cf. *A Description*, “Translator's Preface”, p. II.

³¹ Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 1, p. 47-51.

³² Cf. Cams 2014, p. 42-43.

³³ *Description*, vol. 4, p. 452-458: “Relation succincte du voyage du capitaine Beerings dans la Sibérie”.

Already in their preface to the 1736 edition of Du Halde's work, the editors of the Dutch version discuss at length the deficiencies of some of the maps, especially of the particular maps of provinces, in the French original, in order to point out to the benefits and advantages to the atlas that was published in Den Haag in 1737. Among the improvements they claim to have made on the original they point out to place names that are mentioned in the reports but were nowhere found on the corresponding maps, and they claim that they have even added some of the longitudes and latitudes of important places to the original list provided by Du Halde that were likewise not found on the maps of the original³⁴. This criticism is repeated in the preface to the *Nouvel Atlas*³⁵ – none of these prefaces, however, is signed by name, and thus all the editors both of the *Description 1736* and of the Atlas of 1737 remain in anonymity.

While the first English translation has only two maps in which the titles have been turned into English ones, but without changing any of the place names indicated on these maps in French spelling, Bowen in the second English translation not only provides all the maps of the original edition, but he also does so by drawing all maps anew, adding many changes right onto the maps, as indicated in the title of his English edition, and signing the engravings by name. Remarkably, Bowen partly noted which kinds of improvements he had made directly on his newly drawn maps. For example, on the map entitled "General Map comprising China; Chinese Tartary, and Tibet", which is covered with notes by Bowen, he indicated, among others, on the left that "The Names in this Map are reduced to the English Orthography and some other improvements added by the Editor" (*A Description*, v. 1).

As for the German edition, none of the gridded maps we have both in Du Halde's original and, improved, in the Cave edition, have been included there, except the city maps along with other illustrations. Marbach points out to the reader that the omission is justified by the high costs that a new engraving of the maps would have meant to the subscribers of this edition, all the more so since a bookstore in Nuremberg (Hohmannsche Buchhandlung) had just recently been given the opportunity to buy copies of the *Nouvel Atlas* at a cheap price which the publisher would pass on to his customers.

Changes Regarding the Transcriptions of Place Names on Maps

As mentioned before, neither the Den Haag nor Brookes' edition seem to have made so much fuss about the question of pronunciation. In the Den Haag version of 1736 the transcription used by Du Halde was still fully adopted, in the preface to the Atlas of 1737 the question of transcription is not even mentioned, and in the Atlas itself transcriptions of the geographical terms seem to have by and large remained the same.

While there are, as mentioned before, no remarks made in Brookes' edition reflecting on improvements made to the original, however a closer look at the three general maps added to this first English edition shows that apart from the fact that the three maps included must have been newly made, because each of them bears an English title, and at least some of the terms written onto the maps, have also been turned into English, such as "The Country of Kalkas" on the "Map of China, Chinese Tartary and the Kingdom of Corea" (*General History*, v. 1.), while the place names themselves have remained the same as in the transcriptions provided in Du Halde's original, like e.g. the term "Mongous". In some cases there is a combination of the term used in the Paris original with the English equivalent, as in the lettering "Kao-li Koue or Kingdom of Corea" that on the map extends across the eastern coast of the Korean peninsula.

³⁴ Cf. *Description 1736*, vol. 1, p. LXVI.

³⁵ *Nouvel Atlas*, "Avertissement", p. LXVIII.

While these measures show at least some awareness of the need to deal with the problem of transcription in a translation, especially for a map, it is the Cave edition that has taken a big step forward in the field of transcription. Bowen's dissatisfaction with the transcription of terms as he had found them on the maps of Du Halde's original by far surpasses the question of only transferring them into the English language, as one can conclude from the following remarks: "[...]As to Orthography, the Maps abound more with Faults than the Texts. For [...] many of the Names contained in them are written according to two or three different Orthographies [...]" (*A Description*, "Translator's Preface", v. 1, p. III).

Bowen's approach to solve the problem of a suitable orthography can be seen on the maps that are included in the Cave edition. The very title of his newly drawn general map of China reads:

Map of China, Drawn from those of the particular Provinces made on the Spot by the Jesuit Missionaries: wherein the principal Places are distinguished whose positions have been determined. & the positions themselves inserted, as Vouchers to the Work, the Names also are written according to the English Orthography. (*A Description*, v. 1)

For Rambach, the question of orthography seems to be of only minor importance. Once in his preface he mentions several peoples, using both the French transcriptions as found in the Paris original and the English transcriptions as used by Bowen, but without making any attempt to systematically create a consistent system of transcriptions of Chinese terms for the German edition³⁶. Maybe the question of the correct terminology of geographical terms did not seem so much relevant to him, all the more since, as mentioned before, most of the maps are missing in the German edition and the question of transcription was thus mainly occurring with regard to the foreign terms occurring in the main text.

Adding new geographical details to the maps of the Paris original

A further aspect of improvement relates to the maps included in the Paris original. As mentioned before, there were no maps in the Den Haag 1736 edition, while the *Nouvel Atlas* published in 1737 contains all the maps of the Paris edition, however newly made. And, as the editors of both the preface of the 1736 and the 1737 editions proudly emphasize, the maps even show important improvements over the original. At least one piece of these newly informed maps is already indicated on the title page of the *Nouvel Atlas*, saying that the maps are preceded by the description of Bucharra by a Swedish official who had been staying there for some time.

It is in fact not so easy for a non-insider to find many differences between the maps of the Paris edition and this new edition. To give at least one example, on the 11th of altogether 12 particular maps of Chinese Tartary, a detail that immediately catches the eye is the nice cartouche showing a squirrel on top. And there is an additional inscription on the map, south to the position of Lake Baikal, saying: "All the territory on this map is, by the way, more known by Russia than it is by China" ("Tout le terrain représenté sur cette Carte étant occupé par les Russes, est plus connu par la voye de la Russie, que par celle de la Chine."; *Nouvel Atlas*, "11^e feuille particulière de la Tartarie chinoise").

At least d'Anville himself had, as has also been mentioned before, much to criticize about the redone maps of the *Nouvel Atlas*. In his letter he mentions that there is only one

³⁶ *Beschreibung*, "Vorbericht des Übersetzers", vol. 1, p. 45: The names mentioned by him are: "die Mantcheoux, Mongols oder Mongous, die Kalkas, die Kluths oder Calmucken" – it thus seems that even though he was aware of the problem of various ways of spelling he did not undertake anything to tackle this problem.

map in that atlas in which he did not find anything to criticize, namely the map of Bering's travels to Kamtschatka. This map had already been included in Du Halde's original, albeit without any accompanying text, that is likewise found in Brookes' edition. At the end of his preface Brookes mentions the new description of Bering's journey from Tobolsk to Kamtschatka on behalf of the Tsar who was interested to know if there was a land route to North America³⁷. As Bowen writes in a comment written onto his own map of Bering's journey, there were some deficiencies with regard to place names in that map as compared with those in Mr. Kyrilow's map of the Russian empire³⁸. In very contrast, the map of Bering's journey to Kamtschatka is not included in the German edition. Instead we find in the fourth volume, following Du Halde's record of the travel of P. Gerbillon, a comprehensive description of the Japanese empire written by the German physician and explorer Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716³⁹).

Another important cartographical novelty has been made regarding the orientation of the general maps on the grid. Whereas the original maps d'Anville had drawn for Du Halde were all oriented to Beijing, or in other words, with the prime meridian (zero longitude) running through Beijing⁴⁰, the maps included in Brookes' edition already show two axes of orientation, namely on the one hand the prime meridian fixed at Beijing and on the other hand a note indicating the "longitude from London" (written on the left lower end of the map⁴¹).

Other than Brookes, Bowen in his redrawn maps combines the orientation toward Beijing with the indication of the distance in longitudes from Paris, thus aiming at precisely reconstructing the way Du Halde and d'Anville would have calculated the data, without orientating the maps at London (Greenwich), as one might have expected from a British cartographer⁴². Indeed, as Bowen writes in his preface,

My Intention was to have remedied the third Defect, by drawing all the Maps anew according to a circular projection, or Dilatation of the Polar Planisphere; but some Gentlemen having been of the Opinion that it was better to engrave them immediately after the French Edition, and much Time having been spent in considering what to do, that Resolution was layed aside: However, I have brought the Orthography of the local Names to the *English* Idiom, and consequently have introduced Uniformity in that Respect between the Maps and the Text, as well as among themselves. (*A Description*, "Translator's Preface", p. III)

But this was a clear understatement, because Bowen in the end had indeed made major changes, even though the main body of the maps as they had been conceived by d'Anville was retained as recommended by these "Gentlemen"⁴³.

Bowen's approach was to record the state of research along with the names of the earlier contributors in combination with their deficiencies and an additional note on the person who was responsible for the latest draft. A good example is the way he proceeded with the map of China, where he wrote in an advertisement placed on the left side that the missionaries had determined the latitudes and longitudes based on their trigonometrical calculations, when exactly the work had been begun, the names of the missionaries who had taken part, and the maps they signed responsible for. "This Map was drawn de Novo and the

³⁷ Cf. *General History*, v. 1.

³⁸ Cf. "A Map of Cap. Beerings' Travels from Tobolskoy to Kamchatka", in: *A Description*, vol. 2.

³⁹ *Beschreibung*, von. 4, p. 53-537: "Beschreibung des japonischen Reichs".

⁴⁰ This orientation, with the zero meridian running through Beijing, is something the Jesuits provided to please their Chinese partners already at Matteo Ricci's times, who drew a map for the Ming emperor based on the Ortelius map he adapted to this Chinese claim to be situated at the center of the world.

⁴¹ See the "Map on China, Chinese Tartary and the Kingdom of Corea", *General History*, vol. 1.

⁴² See eg. "A General Map Comprizing China, Chinese-Tartary & Tibet", vol. 1.

⁴³ However, as Bowen later writes in his preface, at least one of the general maps was redrawn by him on a circular projection, namely the "General Map on China, Chinese-Tartary and Tibet", see *A Description*, vol. 1, p. IV.

Advertisement, Tables, Explanation and other Improvements, mentioned in the Title, were added by the Editor” (*A Description*, “A Map of China”, vol. 1).

Besides, both the lower and the left and right parts of his Map of China are covered with the coordinates of place names, organized according to the Chinese provinces, indicated in longitudes and latitudes, and a remark preceding them, saying: “A Table of the Principal Latitudes observed & Longitudes determined geometrically whereon this Map is grounded” (*ibid.*). Bowen had transferred these data from the list of coordinates Du Halde had added at the end of his preface⁴⁴, probably assuming that this was the right place to let the reader know who had provided the data d’Anville’s map was based on.

Bowen’s method of maintaining the original maps included in Du Halde’s original but using them as the basis for his own comments and corrections he placed directly onto the maps is a unique case of documenting one’s own improvements, but at the same time one can literally feel the immense conflict Bowen, who did not only act as a translator but also as a geographer and cartographer, must have felt when he took over the tasks of both translator and geography expert and made the decision to proceed this way.

Discussing the Merits and Deficiencies of the Paris Edition

Apart from writing his comments directly onto the maps, Bowen also uses his translator’s preface to discuss geographical and cartographical details d’Anville, in his view, had not dealt with correctly. In a separate essay with the heading “A Dissertation concerning Mr. D’Anville’s General Map; wherein the situation given by him to Astrakhan, and his method of graduating the said map, are examined, and shown to be erroneous”, written Sept. 1738, Bowen discusses the possible reasons why d’Anville on his “General Map of China, Chinese Tartary, and Tibet ” had placed Astrakhan too far to the East and argues that d’Anville relied too much on the Jesuit maps of Tartary instead of basing his calculations of longitude and latitude on Mr. Kyrilow’s map of Russia⁴⁵. This is not the right place to go further into detail here, so it may suffice to mention it as a further aspect of how the editor/translator of this second English edition strived for improving on the Paris original.

Corrections and Additions Regarding Anthropological Issues

For the editors of the translated versions, certainly the most difficult question to deal with was how to filter important information on China that was nowhere else to be gained from, or at least not in such a concentrated form, while at the same time getting rid of those details that made it too obvious that the original work by Du Halde was not solely compiled to transmit knowledge on China but also as a work that would demonstrate to the European intellectual community how much they owed to the Jesuit order.

With regard to the works examined here, three ways of how the editors of the various translations dealt with this problem may be listed, namely (a) that they deleted or at least abbreviated those passages that were, in their eyes, too demonstratively part of the Jesuits’ self-justification and propaganda, (b) that in case of a problematic text they added another text that refutes (at least to some degree) the content of the original, (c) that they added comments in footnotes that served the same purpose, namely to refute or at least call into question some of the statements made in the main text.

The method of simply omitting a part of Du Halde’s original that might have seemed problematic to the editor/ translator seems to have been applied by Brookes in his *General*

⁴⁴ Cf. *Description* 1735, v. 4, p. 473.

⁴⁵ Cf. *A Description*, v. 1, “Translator’s Preface”, p. IX-XI.

History, where Du Halde's account of the development of the Christian mission in China that formed part of Du Halde's third volume⁴⁶ is missing. In contrast, in his edition Bowen decided to give a full translation of Du Halde's account⁴⁷ but completed the main text by critical comments from an Anti-Jesuit point of view. This way of proceeding was already announced by Bowen in his "Translator's Preface", where he writes: "If at any time I appear in Opposition to the Missionaries' religious Notions, it is because I judged it not honest to spread their poison in a Protestant Country without the Antidote along with it" (*A Description*, "Translator's Preface", vol. 1, p. II).

What he really meant by this "antidote" becomes clear if one looks at the footnote added after the end of his translation of Du Halde's account on the Christian mission in China, where he adds remarks such as "the Veracity of which it would be in vain to question" (*A Description*, vol. 2, p. 37⁴⁸). He even shows some sympathy for the Chinese emperor who opposed the Roman Church's interference in the internal affairs of the Chinese government, more than for the Pope's interventions against the Jesuits under the influence of the competing congregations, arguing that he well understood that the Emperor of China would not accept any attempt of influencing civil law within China. And he concludes that if European monarchs had been as wise as the Kangxi emperor, the Church of Rome would never have become as insolent in "claiming either an Authority independent of, or inconsistent with the Civil Power." (*Ibid.*)

Critical comments by Bowen added in footnotes can also be found in his translation of Du Halde's account on the indigenous Chinese religions. For example, to Du Halde's pejorative comment on the Buddhists (called "Bonzas" by him), who believed that Buddha had been a spirit rather than a real man, Bowen adds the following footnote:

Could the Bonzes themselves believe any thing more stupid than these Jesuits, who yet are every Moment ridiculing the stupidity of the Bonzas? Or rather is it possible that Jesuits can really be so stupid as to believe such ridiculous Nonsense? (*A Description*, v. 1, p. 650, fn. [c].)

However, certainly the by far harshest criticism of Du Halde's account of the history of Christianity in China is found in the German edition. Rambach did not only invite the Protestant Church historian Johann Lorenz von Mosheim to contribute an essay on the history of the Jesuit mission in China, to counterbalance du Halde's pro-Jesuit account, but also added his own critical comments inserted right after Du Halde's text and combined with documents that also aimed at putting the Jesuits' missionary activities in quite an unfavorable light.

How important this essay by Mosheim was for Rambach cannot only be seen from the fact that it was announced already on the title page of the first volume but also by Rambach's remark at the end of his preface, where he explains to his readers why he had asked this famous scholar to provide an essay on the latest Church history in China, namely because this was a topic that in his view had not yet been dealt with satisfactorily by Du Halde. Besides, Rambach explains why this essay was not included in the first volume, namely because Mosheim informed him that he needed more time for writing the essay than planned. In the end, the essay was included at the beginning of the second volume, where it is announced again on the title page.

In his essay Mosheim refers to many documents he had access to, such as the various bulls by Popes over the generations, and he describes in detail the history of the growing

⁴⁶ Cf. *Description*, v. 3, p. 65-127.

⁴⁷ Cf. *A Description*, vol. 2, p. 1-37.

⁴⁸ Cf. Schaab-Hanke 2023, p. 113, fn. 75.

conflict between the Jesuit order and the competing congregations. In his final conclusion he did, however, not condemn so much the missionary methods of the Jesuits but rather the swaying back and forth of the various Popes. In sum, one can say that other than what might be expected from a Protestant author such as Mosheim, and certainly also other than what Rambach as the translator would have expected from him, Mosheim in his long essay gives a rather balanced account of the Jesuit mission in China, starting from the end of the 16th century and ending with the Papal bull “Ex quo singulari” dated July 11th, 1742⁴⁹.

In the third volume of the German edition, where Du Halde’s full original account of the history of the Christian mission in China is included as a translation, we find many critical comments in footnotes, doubtlessly from Rambach’s hand, and right after Du Halde’s account there follows a more than 40 pages long counter-notification entitled “Addition to the previous history of the mission in China” which cannot be described in any other way than as a poisonous attack against the Jesuit order and its missionary activities in China.

Preceding this addition, Rambach states polemically that now, after Du Halde had decorated himself with a writing on behalf of the Jesuits, it was highly justified that the other side also had its say⁵⁰. It is intriguing to see that these added documents, along with Rambach’s preface, are so clearly meant as an attack against the Jesuits, while Mosheim’s essay may justly be denoted as striving to be unprejudiced, albeit taking a clear distance towards the Jesuit order.

Besides, in the fifth volume of the German version we find some additional material on aspects that Rambach, as he writes in his preface to this volume, believed to be of particular importance but which had been neglected by Du Halde. Rambach speaks of two big revolutions, firstly the conquest of China by the Manchus, and secondly the conquest of China by Genghis Khan. The contents of this volume are divided into two major parts, the first part, dealing with the ‘Tartars’ origin taken from the Manchu⁵¹, a text that, as Rambach writes in his preface to this volume, was taken from an account by Joseph Anna Maria de Moryac de Mailla (1669-1748), and the second part, dealing with the “great Undertakings of the Great Conquerant Zingis Chan” (Genghis Khan) in Tartary and the Chinese Empire⁵², written by Jean-Baptiste Régis (ca. 1664-1738) – both of whom, by the way, as Rambach mentions, being members of the Jesuit order⁵³.

The Reasons Behind the Corrections of Du Halde’s Original: Solely In the Interest of Scientific Progress or Also an Act of National Appropriation?

After having analyzed the various ways in which the here analyzed editors/translators of the editions tried to combine their translations with corrections and additions they regarded as improvements, the question arises for what reasons they made these corrections. Three aspects to find an answer will be shortly discussed here, namely (a) improvements the editors felt to be necessary due to the time gap between the first publication and the date when the respective translated version was published; (b) corrections of a more ideological nature, justified by the fact that the original work was compiled by a Jesuit but the translated version was meant to address a non-Jesuit and mostly non-Catholic readership; (c) apart from the general readership addressed by the newly edited versions, the dedicatory notes of some of these editions demonstrate who were the primary addressees the editor/ translator had in

⁴⁹ Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 2, p. x.

⁵⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 161.

⁵¹ Cf. *Beschreibung*, vol. 5, p. 3-176.

⁵² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 177-304.

⁵³ Cf. *ibid.*, “Preface”, n. p.

mind, and from some of these addressees the reader might gain the impression that by translating such a work as Du Halde's the editor/ translator also pursued some kind of national appropriation of both the work and the information it provided.

The Time Gap between Du Halde's Original and the Later Editions

As already stated at the beginning of this study, the French nation had, in the first half of the 18th century, a great knowledge advantage both with regard to anthropological and geographical knowledge on China. When Du Halde published his great compendium on China, this was certainly the work with the highest degree of concentrated knowledge on China and 'Things Chinese' that had ever been published in Europe. However, the mapping project whose completion took around eight years, from the time when d'Anville had signed the first agreement with Du Halde until its finalization in 1736, was at the time of its publication certainly not quite up-to-date in several respects. As already mentioned, this was one of the reasons why Du Halde's work was not only praised but, as the editors of the Den Haag version mention in their preface, soon after its publication already sharply criticized as a work that added nothing new to what had already been known before⁵⁴. This was the reason, they wrote, why they had decided to publish the maps separately and with many "improvements". A further factor that had also already been mentioned was that Du Halde had requested d'Anville to base his maps in the very first place on Jesuit sources and so prevented him from including other sources of knowledge that would have already been feasible at the time when d'Anville drew his maps.

Thus, it was no wonder that when Bowen as an expert of cartography took over responsibility for the second English edition he did his best to apply the most current information and the best cartographical methods available to the maps contained in Du Halde's original. But precisely because Bowen was requested by some authorities (whom he did not mention by name) not to draw the maps for the English edition wholly anew, he decided to retain the body of the original charts and to write his additions, his corrections and comments right onto the maps. Besides, he documented his changes in his preface and thus provided the basis for a to-be-expected new edition of the maps, which he realized only a few years later in the form of his maps drawn for a work with the title *Complete System of Geography [...] of the Known World* and his *Complete Atlas, or, Distinct View of the Known World*⁵⁵. But although one might say that with regard to geographical and cartographical knowledge Bowen in the first place intended to meet the current scientific state of the time, in other respects his corrections may also be interpreted as striving for national adaption or even appropriation. This may be said with regard to his striving for a consistent transcription in what he called the "English Idiom", so that his readers would be able to read all the terms used in the translated version without greater difficulties, and even much more according to his and other translators' desire to improve the Paris original in all kinds of formal aspects through which they could present the translated version as part of their own nation's intellectual property.

How to Make a Catholic Work Acceptable to Non-Catholic Readers

Apart from the considerable time gap that had opened up between Du Halde's decision to entrust d'Anville with the drawing of the maps for his *opus magnum* and its finalization in 1735, another important motivation for the editors of the translated versions to make

⁵⁴ Cf. Den Haag 1736, "Avertissement", p. 1.

⁵⁵ Bowen et al. 1744-1747; Bowen 1752.

changes and comments on the Paris original was their being aware of the possible confusion some passages or even whole chapters might cause among the readers of these translated versions. This becomes particularly clear in the second English and the German edition. As mentioned above, for Bowen, as he had stated in his preface, it was a matter of honesty to offer to his predominantly Protestant readers a kind of “antidote” wherever he gained the impression from Du Halde’s text that his account on religious matters might come into conflict with the convictions of his readers⁵⁶.

The critical attitude Rambach, as the translator of the German edition, displayed towards Du Halde’s religious commitment became clearly visible, as we have seen, already by his decision to announce Mosheim’s essay on the “history of the Christian mission in China” both in the first and the second volume of the German edition, which way he put emphasis on his attempt to offer the German – also mostly Protestant – readership kind of an “antidote” to Du Halde’s original account of the Christian – and primarily Jesuit – mission in China.

The Addressees of the Dedicatory Notes

In his dedicatory note (“*épître*”), Du Halde had addressed reigning King Louis XV (r. 1715-1774), grand-grandson of Louis XIV, who had sent a group of Jesuits specialized in cartography (*les mathématiciens du roi*) to the Kangxi emperor who with their support conducted the big project of mapping his huge empire. He reminded him to his great-grandfather’s great project, emphasized that he had been able to subordinate all members of his nation under his rule and that his Jesuit confrères had had the unique opportunity to be very close to this mighty person, that he had behaved like a father to his people, and he expressed his hope that his great-grandson would take him as a model.

While the editors of the Dutch version retained the original dedicatory note by Du Halde to the French king, Brookes, the translator of the first English translation, had dedicated each of the four volumes to a different person or group of persons. The first volume was dedicated to Frederick, Prince of Wales (1707-1751), the eldest son of George II of Great Britain. In his dedicatory note, Brookes describes Du Halde’s work as containing the “description of the most potent and flourishing nation of the East” (*General History*, vol. 1, “Dedication”) and thus indeed a subject worthy of the attention of the greatest prince, and he adds that “nothing has the tendency of enlarging the mind more than a view of the manners, customs, policy, and religion of a people who once thought themselves the politest of the world” (*ibid.*). And he concludes his dedicatory letter with the statement that “the lesson to be learnt from China is that Goodness and Mercy are the finest support of the throne and that the chiefest glory of a Prince is to reign in the Hearts of his subjects” (*ibid.*). – In other words, he admonished the Prince to take the Chinese emperor as his model, as Du Halde had taken Louis XIV as his model, and this fits well with the fact that the first volume of Brookes’ edition is mainly focusing on describing the Chinese empire and its long history.

The second volume of Brookes’ edition is dedicated to Arthur Onslow (1691-1768), Speaker of the House of Commons. In his dedicatory letter Brookes addresses the politician as a friend of men of letters, a fact that encouraged him, as he writes, to give this volume to him as a present. And he continues with the words: “Perhaps they [i.e. the Chinese] are the only people in the world among whom men of the lowest as well as the highest birth are advanced to offices in the state in proportion to their progress in literature [...]” (*General*

⁵⁶ Cf. *A Description*, “Translator’s Preface”, vol. 1, p. II.

History, vol. 2, “Dedication”) This, in turn, fits well with the fact that the second volume sets out with the civil and military offices of the Chinese government and then continues with topics such as Chinese literature.

The third volume is dedicated to the famous physician Richard Mead (1673-1754). Brookes justifies his decision to dedicate the volume to him with the argument that the pulse diagnostics are the greatest among the Chinese merits in medicine. He writes:

Sir, as there is nothing for which the Chinese have hitherto received greater encomiums than for their skill in the pulse, I have taken the liberty of prefixing your name to this volume, which contains a translation of one of their own treatises on this curious subject. And though it requires no great stock of anatomical knowledge to see that they build on a very slender foundation, yet it belongs to such excellent Judges like you to determine, whether the Art of Medicine will receive any great advantage from this their so much boasted Science or not. (*General History*, vol. 3, “Dedication”)

Indeed, almost 150 pages of the third volume focus, as they do in Du Halde’s original, on Chinese medicine, more specifically on pulse diagnostics and herbal medicine.

The fourth and last volume was dedicated to the Directors of the East India Company. Brookes addresses them with the words:

Gentlemen, having prefix’d the name of some eminent person to the former volumes of this work, I could not persuade myself to let this pass without doing it the like honour; and as the discovery of foreign countries is owing to Commerce in general, and as also a Communication with China is maintained by your company in particular, I imagin’d I could not dedicate this any more properly than to you. (*General History*, vol. 4, “Dedication”)

And he concludes with saying that those who think that this island might in the future still remain in entire isolation from the rest of the world are mistaken and that thus one should be thankful to those who had endeavoured to bring goods from the remotest places of the world, including the two Indias. So it seems that Brookes used each of the four volumes also to send a message to his own nation, and indeed a completely different one compared to the message Du Halde had conveyed to the King of France.

As for Bowen, he dedicated the whole work he had edited only to one single person, namely to Frederick, Prince of Wales. In his dedicatory note Bowen reminds him to the fact that Du Halde had dedicated his work to the French monarch who had supported the great mapping projects the Jesuits had conducted on behalf of the Chinese emperor, and he emphasizes that such projects can only be achieved with the encouragement of a prince⁵⁷. This may be taken as a hint at the fact that Bowen had at least cherished the hope that the Prince would give him some financial support, but his argument is ultimately that it were a matter of national interest that the Prince should support the translation project.

But Bowen did not confine himself to a dedicatory note at the beginning of his translation. Since each of the maps of Du Halde’s work was, as mentioned above, drawn anew by him, he was able to dedicate each of these maps to one person or another of his choice⁵⁸. As all these persons were of British origin, it will certainly not be too farfetched to assume that these dedications were made with a strong national motivation.

Last but not least, the comments made by Bowen and Rambach on those of Du Halde’s remarks that manifest his strong tendency towards a Jesuit view of the world may also be

⁵⁷ Cf. *A Description*, v. 1, “Dedication”.

⁵⁸ On the “General Map of China” is thus added the note: “To the honourable Edward Vernon Esq., Vice Admiral of the Blue. This map is humbly inscribed, out of public gratitude by the Editor.” The “General Map of China, Chinese Tartary and Tibet” is dedicated to “Charles Wagner WagnerKe, first Lord Commissioner of the Admiral, White Squadron in the Majesty’s Fleet and Privy Chancellor”, and the “Map of Capt. Beerings” bears the remark “inscrib’d to Francis Gashrey Esq”.

interpreted as a matter of national interest, because both editors/ translators were convinced that non-Jesuit, non-Catholic, mostly Protestant readers could not be expected to be interested in dealing with texts such as Du Halde's account on the history of the Christian mission in China without the addition of critical comments or, as Bowen had put it, "without the antidote along with it" (*A Description*, "Translator's Preface", vol. 1, p. II).

Some Final Remarks on the Translator's/ Editor's "Self-Fashioning"

As we have seen, in only one case of the editions of Du Halde's work analyzed here the editor's/ translator's name is clearly indicated, namely in the *General History*, whereas neither the editors of the Den Haag edition nor the editors/ translators of the second English and the first German edition explicitly revealed their identity to their readers. Having found, as I think, safe evidence for the identities of Bowen as the editor and translator in charge of the Cave edition and Rambach of the German version, one still wonders why the names of the editors/ translators of these two editions were not explicitly mentioned. One possible explanation might be that at that time the translating work was not highly regarded and thus a translator preferred that his name was not mentioned. But from what we have learned so far about the remarks made on the translators (such as the honoring words by Mosheim on the translator or by the translators themselves on their respective translation works), it does not really seem plausible that the translators' names were not mentioned because their work was not highly regarded. So, a more plausible explanation would be that both Rambach and Bowen were so famous at their times that they could be sure that contemporary readers would know their names anyway.

Be that as it may – modesty does not seem to be an attribute one would be inclined to give the editor/ translators after a close reading of their comments and additions. Just take as an example the editors' remark in the preface of the Den Haag edition that this edition has a "degree of perfection that the previous one lacked" (*Den Haag 1736*, p. LXVI)? Where did a "translator" at that time take the self-confidence from to add such critical comments to his translations, as we have seen it in both the second English and the German edition? What gave Rambach the authority to entrust Mosheim with a treatise that aimed at putting the activities of the members of the Jesuit congregation in the China mission in the "right perspective"? And even more, what justified that Rambach added several documents to Du Halde's account that were intended to contradict or even deny the veracity of Du Halde's report? Probably there is not one common answer. In the case of the Den Haag edition, the editors must have been under pressure because, as it says right at the beginning of their preface, not only was Du Halde's original edition criticized severely immediately after its publication but the planned new edition was criticized even before its publication⁵⁹. As for the second English and the German edition, on the other hand, it seems that the two translators, Rambach and Bowen, who at the same time also acted as editors of the translated and corrected versions, indeed felt personally responsible for presenting a content that was filtered so as to present their readers with what was then conceived as the current state of knowledge, yet in a way the compatriots of their own nations would not feel offended by some of its contents for ideological reasons.

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⁵⁹ Cf. *Den Haag 1736*, p. LXV.

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