



The De Bry Collection of Voyages (1590-1634): Early America reconsidered

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Abstract

The De Bry collection of voyages, published in Frankfurt and Oppenheim between 1590 and 1634, has traditionally been regarded as dispensing a Protestant iconography of the New World. But for the analysis of the translated travel accounts in the collection, too long considered of secondary importance to the monumental copper engravings, a fundamentally different interpretation of the editors' objectives is in order. This article studies the Latin and German versions of the narratives, which offer a mosaic of variations disclosing a careful editorial strategy. While the German volumes were aimed at a predominantly Protestant readership, their Latin counterparts were adjusted to meet the demands of Catholic customers and humanists wary of religious polemic. Hence the first comprehensive set of images of early America reached readers across the Old World, regardless of their confessional allegiance. Commercial motives rather than the desire to spread a Protestant iconography determined the collection's representations.

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Keywords

De Bry, America, representations, editorial strategy

Introduction

On July 19, 1593, the Antwerp bookseller Jan Moretus sent several crates of books to his old friend Benito Arias Montano in Seville.¹ Many recently published titles, which Moretus had purchased at the Easter Fair in Frankfurt, had arrived in his office only a few days earlier, and before his regular

¹ This essay is based on research for my forthcoming book *The Representations of the Overseas World in the De Bry Collection of Voyages (1590-1634)* (Leiden and Boston, 2008). I wish to thank the anonymous reviewer of this journal for his criticisms and suggestions on the first draft. For Arias Montano's list of purchased books: Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp, Arch. no. 70, f97v.

customers could come to the *Golden Compasses* to enjoy the new supply, those who had made their wishes known before the fairs, like the Spanish humanist, were sent the titles they had ordered. The printed material that was shipped to Seville—a mixture of theological treatises and botanical works—neatly reflects what one would consider to be the core interests of a learned reader in late sixteenth-century Europe.

Inconspicuous if not for its relatively high price of fourteen Brabant guilders was a work to which Moretus referred as ‘Virginia, Florida et America fol’. The sequence of New World provinces, in combination with the format and the price, enables us to identify it as the first three volumes of the *America*-series published by Theodore de Bry and his two sons Johan Theodore and Johan Israel in Frankfurt-am-Main. This collection had quickly made an impression on booksellers and their customers alike after its first volume appeared in 1590, combining translated travel accounts with high-quality copper engravings newly introduced to the German book market. Moretus, after purchasing his first copies rather tentatively, was clearly persuaded of their saleability when he visited the Easter Fair in 1592, buying no less than eight copies of each of the first three volumes. At the September Fair, he obtained a further six copies of each, as the books were selling with a considerable profit in Antwerp. Arias Montano is one of many customers whose purchase of the De Bry collection of voyages is documented in the records of the *Officina Plantiniana* in Antwerp.²

More than four centuries since Moretus dispatched the crates to Spain, the collection has lost little of its appeal, and is still well-known to anyone interested in early America. Its wonderful copper engravings formed the cornerstone of pictorial representations of the New World for the best part of two centuries after the voyages’ initial appearance between 1590 and 1634. Traditionally, the collection has been thought of as both reflecting and shaping a Protestant representation of early America, and the procuring of the books by a Catholic scholar like Arias Montano may come as a surprise. When he placed the order for the De Bry volumes, after all, he was still responsible for cataloguing the library of King Philip II at the Escorial and purging its books according to inquisition guidelines.³

² Museum Plantin-Moretus, Arch. nos. 969-1029 for Moretus’ purchases at the Frankfurt fairs; Arch. nos. 67-75, 171-80, 216-27 for the copies customers bought in the Antwerp bookstore in the period 1590-1620.

³ Ramiro Flórez, ‘Felipe II, Arias Montano, y fray José Sigüenza en la ordenación de los

Bernadette Bucher, whose *Icon and Conquest* was long the only monograph on the collection, used the American iconography to develop her Levi-Straussian argument working from the assumption that it aimed to disseminate a Protestant agenda. While recent studies by Anna Greve and the participants of the University of Basel-based research project *Translating Seen into Scene*, led by Susanna Burghartz, have been less categorical, they have not discarded the idea of the collection's anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish nature.⁴ Scholars writing more general studies of the representations of early America, from Anthony Grafton to Benjamin Schmidt, have ensured the wider dispersion of this perspective on the De Bry collection.⁵

One can easily see where this assumption acquired its persistent strength. The collection's conception was inspired by the Oxford minister and Tudor court geographer Richard Hakluyt, who provided Theodore de Bry with the Virginia watercolors by John White in the late 1580s. De Bry made White's material available for an international readership, translating Thomas Harriot's *A briefe and true report* into Latin, German, and French, before publishing the accounts alongside twenty-eight copper engravings, thereby reinforcing English claims to the province of Virginia, and circulating the Protestant belief in a type of colonialism that was at the same time morally

saberes de El Escorial" In: *Felipe II y su época. Actas del Simposium* (5 vols.; San Lorenzo del Escorial, 1998) II, 549-91; Bernard Rekers, *Benito Arias Montano 1527-1598* (Groningen, 1961) 193-97.

⁴ Bernadette Bucher, *Icon and Conquest. A Structural Analysis of the Illustrations of the De Bry's Great Voyages* (Chicago, 1981); Anna Greve, *Die Konstruktion Amerikas. Bilderpolitik in den "Grands Voyages" aus der Werkstatt de Bry* (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna, 2004); *Inszenierte Welten. Die west- und ostindischen Reisen der Verleger de Bry 1590-1630 / Staging New Worlds. De Brys' Illustrated Travel Reports, 1590-1630*, ed. Susanna Burghartz (Basel, 2004).

⁵ The list of publications depicting the De Bry collection as reflecting and conveying an essentially Protestant message is of course more extensive. The studies mentioned here are two of the most influential works in the field: Anthony Grafton, April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts. The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge MA and London, 1992) 128-29, and Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad. The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670* (Cambridge, 2001) 40, 44. Other studies exploring the Protestant achievements of the De Brys include: *L'Amérique de Théodore de Bry: une Collection de Voyages Protestante du XVI^e siècle*, ed. Michèle Duchet (Paris, 1987) and Pol-Pierre Gossiaux, "Hiérarchie du monde sauvage et eschatologie protestante selon l'Iconographie des Grands Voyages des de Bry" In: *Protestantisme sans frontières. La Réforme dans la duché de Limbourg et dans la Principauté de Liège* (Aubel, 1985) 99-169.

pure and economically fruitful.⁶ After publishing Harriot's text and White's images in combination for their opening volume, the De Bry family continued the *America*-series with the accounts of Huguenot expeditions to Florida and Brazil, written by René de Laudonniere and Jean de Léry, and attached to the former the illustrations of the London-based Huguenot artist Jacques le Moyne de Morgues. Hans Staden's gruesome testimony on cannibalism in Brazil, and Girolamo Benzoni's canonical condemnation of Spanish cruelties in Peru completed the first six volumes of De Bry's *America*.⁷

The De Bry Publishing House

A closer look at the collection, however, presents us with an alternative interpretation closer aligned to the objectives of a contemporary publisher like De Bry. Having been trained as goldsmiths in Liège and Strasbourg, the Reformed De Brys had specialized in making prints during an eight-year stay in Antwerp at the time of the Calvinist Republic (1577-1585),

⁶ Among the numerous publications on the earliest Elizabethan expansion in the New World, see the recently published exhibition catalogue of the British Museum: *A New World. England's first view of America*, ed. Kim Sloan (London, 2007). Older publications include *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590: Documents to illustrate the English Voyages to North America under the Patent granted to Walter Raleigh in 1584*, ed. David Beers Quinn (2nd ed.; London, 1967); *America 1585: the Complete Drawings by John White*, ed. Paul Hulton (London, 1984), and Shannon Miller, *Invested with meaning. The Raleigh Circle in the New World* (Philadelphia, 1998).

⁷ These first six volumes have received disproportionate attention, their representations consequently being considered representative of the *America*-series as a whole. On the shortlived Huguenot settlements in the New World, see Laura Fishman, "Old World Images encounter New World Reality. René Laudonniere and the Timucucans of Florida", *Sixteenth Century Journal* XXVI-3 (1995) 547-59, Andrea Frisch, "In a Sacramental Mode: Jean de Léry's Calvinist Ethnography", *Representations* 77 (2002) 82-106, John T. McGrath, *The French in Early Florida: In the Eye of the Hurricane* (Gainesville, 2000), and, most importantly, the numerous excellent studies by Frank Lestringant, including *Le Huguenot et le Sauvage. L'Amérique et la Controverse Coloniale, en France, au temps des Guerres de Religion (1555-1589)* (Paris, 1990) and "Geneva and America in the Renaissance. The Dream of the Huguenot Refuge 1555-1600", *Sixteenth Century Journal* XXVI-2 (1995) 285-95. On Hans Staden, see Franz Obermeier, "Hans Stadens Wahrhaftige Historia 1557 und die Literatur der Zeit", *Wolfenbütteler Notizen zur Buchgeschichte* 27-2 (2002) 43-80. Few scholars have focused exclusively on the three De Bry volumes devoted to Benzoni's account, but see Ilaria Luzzana Caraci, *La scoperta dell' America secondo Theodore de Bry* (Genoa, 1991).

and had subsequently introduced to Germans the technique of including copper engravings into printed books. The collection of voyages, twenty-five folio volumes comprising the *America*-series and the lesser known, but largely similar *India Orientalis*-series, was the first of many illustrated publications of the De Bry firm. The voyages were crucial for the publishing house's prosperity right after its foundation in 1590, and for decades continued to be the backbone of the family's business strategy. Despite other impressive publications, like Jean-Jacques Boissard's compendium of Roman antiquities (6 vols.; 1597-1602) and Robert Fludd's hermetical treatises on the microcosm and macrocosm (4 vols.; 1617-1621), and smaller, cheaper works like emblem books, the voyages consistently accounted for more than half of the firm's revenues, even in the 1610s when few new volumes were added. For such an essential product, ideological considerations took a back seat to commercial incentives.⁸

Frankfurt, as a city at the crossroads of traditional trade routes, twice annually attracted merchants from all over Europe to the fairs, where they purchased and sold their newest produce. From 1560, when the trade in printed books started to professionalize, until the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, the fairs became crucial dates in the calendar for anyone who liked to read, regardless of his religious background. An ever increasing number of booksellers from Germany and beyond made large number of works available wholesale. The local magistrates issued catalogues listing the newly published books to create even more interest. For the De Brys, settled in Frankfurt after leaving their temporary domicile in London in 1588, the fairs were highly meaningful events, judging by their efforts to finish each of the volumes of voyages just in time to have them included in the fair catalogues. The wide distribution of these fair catalogues was particularly important for the sale of De Bry's Latin versions of the accounts, which were aimed at an international readership.

Since the practice of translating the narratives into French and English had been abandoned after the first volume, and all subsequent parts were printed in German and Latin only, the volumes in Latin were to serve readers from Portugal to Poland, and from England to Venice. Such a large

⁸ Van Groesen, *The Representations of the Overseas World*, Appendix 1, includes a full list of the family's publications between 1590 and 1623. For the only surviving catalogue of the De Bry publishing house, see Günter Richter, *Verlegerplakate des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden, 1965) no. 20.

and diverse potential market required careful editing on the part of the publishers. In order to sell the voyages in the Southern Netherlands, in parts of France and the Holy Roman Empire, throughout Italy, and even on the Iberian peninsula, overemphasizing the Protestant nature of early modern Europe's overseas expansion would be ill-advised. The De Brys, then, decided not to alienate a large number of prospective customers, and modern claims that the collection of voyages formed a vehicle of Protestant representations are therefore not only wide of the mark, but also to some extent counter-intuitive.

Contemporary scholars did not need reminding of a publisher's habit of making the contents of books subservient to commercial imperatives. Jean-Jacques Boissard, who issued almost all his works in co-operation with the De Brys, complained about their lack of interest in the way in which he wanted to see his material published. The De Brys, he wrote repeatedly to the botanist Carolus Clusius, turned his manuscript of ancient Roman inscriptions into six separate volumes, which undermined the work's cohesion. They also exaggerated the significance of engravings, and made mistakes that more educated publishers would not have committed. What Boissard did not know, and what would have certainly infuriated him further, was that the De Brys attempted to get Justus Lipsius to contribute to the volumes to enhance the status of the antiquarian work in the Republic of Letters. Clusius, himself a close friend of the De Brys who co-operated on the first three volumes of voyages, was embarrassed when, on behalf of the publishers, he had to ask Lipsius for this favor. His letter at least enabled him to voice his own opinion of the De Brys. To his scholarly friend Clusius complained that "you know these Germans: money is the only thing they care about". Lipsius, understandably, rejected the chance to contribute to Boissard's books.⁹

⁹ Michiel van Groesen, "Boissard, Clusius, De Bry and the Making of 'Antiquitates Romanae', 1597-1602", *LIAS. Sources and Documents Relating to the Early Modern History of Ideas* 29-2 (2002) 195-213. The original set of six letters can be found in the University Library in Leiden, ms. Vulc. 101. Many years later, in 1615, another author, Johan Jacob Wallhausen, echoed Boissard's complaints, stating that his book had not turned out to be the way he wanted because Johan Theodore de Bry had been too occupied with other matters to oversee the printing and the making of the engravings to his book; see Johan Jacob Wallhausen, *Kriegskunst zu Fuss. Darinnen gelehret und gewiesen werden: I. Die Handgrieff der Mussquet und dess Spiesses, jedes insonderheit...* (Oppenheim, 1615) [](4r). On Clusius' letter to Lipsius, see Jeanine de Landtsheer, "Justus Lipsius and Carolus Clusius: a flourishing

The Case of Jean de Léry's 'Histoire'

Who needs enemies with friends like these? But personal incongruencies aside, the reputation of the De Brys as shrewd booksellers was undisputed. The collection of voyages, as the most valuable asset of the firm, required exactly this type of commercial astuteness and, more urgently still in a religiously sensitive era, a sense of prudence. Calculations based on the archival material at the Museum Plantin-Moretus show that the collection accounted for roughly sixty per cent of the Moretus spending at the De Bry bookstore in Frankfurt for the period between 1590 and 1623,¹⁰ even in years when the De Brys produced no new volumes of the collection. Publishing testimonies of activities overseas, moreover, could easily cause offense around 1600. After the initial dominance of the Iberian monarchies, Protestant rivals like the Dutch, the English, and the French Huguenots had entered the fray, and had not hesitated to report of their overseas successes in bellicose terms, at the expense of the Spanish and the Portuguese. Inevitably these accounts, often best-sellers in Northern Europe, were used as pamphlets in the ongoing religious controversy, and were subsequently placed on the Index of Forbidden Books by the Holy Office in Rome, or by inquisitors in Spain and Portugal who were especially sensitive to Protestants reporting from Africa, Asia, and the New World. Although the effectuation of this form of censorship was problematic, an entry on the Index could significantly hamper a publisher's chance of selling his copies in Catholic territories.

Meanwhile Protestant readers expected a monumental collection like the *America*-series to include the most popular narratives which were not readily available in a familiar language. Jean de Léry's *Histoire d'un voyage*, describing his mission to 'Antarctic France' in the late 1550s, was one such example. Printed many times after its first edition of 1578, the report had gathered momentum in Protestant circles when the Genevan theologian Urbain Chauveton had added sharp polemic commentary. Hence the Latin version of the account, issued in 1586 in Geneva, was placed on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* by the Portuguese Inquisition, ever alert to reports

friendship", *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 68 (1998) 273-295, and *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, ed. Jeanine de Landtsheer et al. (multiple vols.; Brussels, 1997) VII, 241, 293.

¹⁰ The years 1590 and 1623 mark, respectively, the first publication of the firm and the death of the last of the De Brys, Johan Theodore. After 1623 the firm was continued by two sons-in-law, Matthaeus Merian the Elder and William Fitzer.

on their colony in Brazil. Six years later, in 1592, the De Brys nonetheless relied heavily on this very edition for Volume III of their *America*-series. Since an unchanged Latin version would automatically have resulted in a further ban, they modified the text—common practice before incorporating accounts into their collection. The passages that Catholics would consider most aggravating were mitigated or simply omitted. The German edition of 1593, not recognizable as different from the Latin version on the outside, did not receive the same amount of editing. Intriguingly, however, despite retaining more of its antagonistic character than the corresponding Latin edition in the editorial process, the most controversial passages were also omitted from the German translation. Clearly both translations were carefully adjusted and censored by the De Brys, but in different ways, taking into account the difference in what they estimated to be the most likely group of customers.

A few examples taken from *America* III should demonstrate this point. The Geneva edition of De Léry's *Histoire*, or *Historia* in Latin, had opened with a substantial number of poems, psalms, and other preliminary material. Several of the most momentous alterations took place here. One of the most visible elements of De Léry's preface was Psalm 107, under the heading "To have experience is better than to have money and goods". The psalm was one of the underpinnings of Calvinist theology, elaborating on Divine providence and on the need for all humans to respect and fear God. Its seventeen verses occupied no less than five pages in the German De Bry edition, but were absent altogether from the Latin volume, almost certainly considered too partial for inclusion.¹¹

All multi-page excerpts included in the German edition, yet omitted from the Latin translation, have in common an aggressive Reformed tone. Another text withheld from readers of the Latin volume was a letter from Nicolas Durand de Villegagnon, the colony's leader, to Calvin, written in Brazil in 1560.¹² After a group of fifteen Huguenot ministers, including De Léry, had arrived at Fort Coligny near Rio de Janeiro in 1557, Villegagnon, initially a Huguenot sympathiser, had denounced Genevan beliefs, calling Calvin a 'frightful heretic'. De Léry had used the letter

¹¹ De Léry, *Historia navigationis in Brasiliam, quae et America dicitur. Qua describitur autoris navigatio, quaeque in mari vidit memoriae prodenda...* (Geneva 1586) [****6r-****7r]; *America* III (Ger) [D1r-D3r].

¹² De Léry, *Historia*, [**4r-**6v]; *America* III (Ger) [A4r-B1v].

in his preface to substantiate his claim of Villegagnon's tyrannical and fraudulent rule, and thus to support the Reformed efforts in the New World. Here and elsewhere in *America* III, in the main body of De Léry's account, references to Villegagnon's rejection of Calvinism were left out of the Latin version, ranging from a sentence on Villegagnon's brutal murder of three Huguenots to the better part of a paragraph which contained the observation that Villegagnon had "abandoned the pure [i.e. Calvinist] religion".¹³

Other careful omissions in this volume corroborate the confessional reasoning behind the editing process. In the first few pages of his report, De Léry paid ample attention to the sending of missionaries from the 'Genevan church' to Brazil, devoting some five pages to the religious objectives of the operation in which he took part. The German De Bry translation copied this statement of intent, the Latin volume did not.¹⁴ A little further on, Chapter Six of the Huguenot's account was missing in its entirety in Latin. This chapter discussed the growing rift between Villegagnon and De Léry's party, included a prayer by the colony's leader, and recorded a detailed theological debate between the Genevan ministers and Villegagnon, who, according to De Léry, was then still in the fold of the Reformed Church:

And not long hereafter, [Villegagnon et al.] started disputing several matters of religion, particularly regarding the Last Supper. For they [the colonists] rejected Papist transubstantiation, and also totally discarded the consubstantiation: they were however, of a wholly different opinion, as they had been trained by ministers of God's word. Namely that bread and wine could by no means be changed into the body and blood of Christ, and also that the body and blood of Christ could not be one with bread and wine, but that Christ's body was in heaven.

¹³ De Léry, *Historia*, 103-104; *America* III (Ger) 149, half a paragraph was omitted from *America* III (Lat) 174, including the phrase "... wo nicht der *Villegagno* von der reinigkeit der Religion abgefallen were". The single sentence on the murder on one of the three Huguenots: De Léry, *Historia*, 155; *America* III (Ger) 176: "denn er deren einer war, die der *Villegagno*, wegen der Bekandtnuß der Reinigkeit deß Worts, liesse in das Meer werffen" / (Lat) 198. Villegagnon, according to De Léry and modern historians like Frank Lestrinant, had converted to Calvinism before returning to Catholicism while in French Brazil; but see for a different point of view: John T. McGrath, "Polemic and History in French Brazil 1555-1560", *Sixteenth Century Journal* XXVII-2 (1996) 385-97, esp. 385-91.

¹⁴ De Léry, *Historia*, 2-6; *America* III (Ger) 93-96 / (Lat) 145.

Still on the same page, De Léry then drew a personal conclusion, based on these theological disputations, that: “Doctor Calvinus is the most learned person since the age of the Apostles, and I have never read a teacher who better and more purely explained the Scripture”.¹⁵

Confrontational commentary like this, so divisive throughout the sixteenth century, was not available to readers of the Latin *America*-volume. Yet controversy dictated De Léry’s treatise. The De Brys consequently must have spent long hours in order to prepare the text for the presses. Another large chunk of text withheld from the Latin edition was voted to the Bartholomew’s Day Massacre of 1572. Although De Léry did not hurl abuses at Catholics using the stinging rhetoric which many other Protestant authors had employed in the 1570s, he could not or did not avoid—and probably did not want to avoid—references to the confessional tension which had resulted in the Parisian bloodbath. The description of the massacre and the confessional hostilities in France filled no less than nine pages in German.¹⁶

Adding up all the omissions, some twenty-two ‘German’ pages of De Léry’s preliminaries and report were missing from *America* III in Latin, making this volume significantly less hefty than its counterpart in the vernacular.¹⁷ The addition of nine extra engravings only partly compensated

¹⁵ De Léry, *Historia*, 42-71; *America* III (Ger) 118-133 / (Lat) 162. Both quotes from the German De Bry volume, 123-24: “Und nicht lang hernacher, fiengen sie an umb etliche Puncten der Religion, insonderheit vom Nachtmal, zustreiten, Denn ob sie wol die Papistische Transsubstantiation verwarffen, und improbieren auch gantz unnd gar die Consubstantiation: Jedoch waren sie weit einer anderen meynung, denn sie von den Ministris auß Gottes Wort gelehret wurden, Nemblich, daß das Brot unnd Wein in den Leib unnd Blut Christi in keine weiß könne verwandelt werden, Und widerumb könne der Leib und Blut Christi nicht im Brot und Wein eyngeschlossen werden, sondern Christi Leib sey im Himmel”; (Ger) 124: “Es ist Doctor Calvinus der gelehrtsten einer, so je nach der Apostel zeit gewesen sind, Und ich hab keinen Lehrer jemals gelesen, der besser und reiner die Schrifft außgelegt hatte”.

¹⁶ De Léry, *Historia*, 206-219; *America* III (Ger) 204-12 / (Lat) 220.

¹⁷ For De Léry’s anti-Catholic dedication to William of Hesse, see *Historia*, [*2r-*4v]. It was missing entirely from both Frankfurt translations. Only the final six pages of the Huguenot’s ‘praefatio’—forty-two pages in the Geneva edition (*Historia*, [**1r-****5v])—were re-issued in the Latin De Bry version, and not in their entirety: *America* III (Lat) 141-143. The Latin edition, markedly, picked up the preface where the focus switched from anti-Catholic to anti-pagan. Hence the first words of the Latin De Bry caption read “Religionem inter ea quae diligenti observatione digna censentur primum obtinere locum nemo unquam negavit” (141). The German edition contained passages excluded from the Latin

for this, the plates merely being second printings of illustrations already featured elsewhere in the book. The De Brys, although not exclusively for this reason presumably, therefore decided to add to the Latin volume another narrative, written by another traveller. Hence the Latin collection incorporated two letters by the French navigator Nicolas Barré, first published in Paris in 1557, and translated into Latin by Carolus Clusius.¹⁸

Barré was a member of the order of Minim friars, an order closely related to the Franciscans which had a sizeable following in sixteenth-century France. Barré's version of events in French Brazil in the late 1550s substantiated the claims made in Villegagnon's omitted letter to Calvin of the same period, thus neutralising the bitter criticisms of De Léry that were printed elsewhere in the volume.¹⁹ In the Latin version of *America* III, then, and in contrast to the German volume, the De Brys not only watered down the strong Calvinist nature of De Léry's report on French Brazil, but also decided to include the testimony of a Catholic traveller who put the credibility of De Léry's claims under serious scrutiny.

There were also parts of the Huguenot's original account that the De Brys regarded as too contentious for both translations. Although many potential buyers of the German editions were probably Lutherans or Calvinists, and the publishers must have been well aware of this, the De Brys did not want to spoil the market for their books in Southern Germany, where many affluent people had remained loyal to Rome. With this diversity in mind, and possibly with an eye on the pending censorship by the Frankfurt magistrates—not always a mere formality as the De Brys

edition on [A3r-C3v], and [D1r-D3r]. The German preface also omitted the most fiercely anti-Catholic passages, for instance: De Léry, *Historia*, [**1v-**2r], [**7v-**8v], [***2v], and many selected single phrases.

¹⁸ *America* III (Lat) 285-95. Clusius' name is mentioned on the separate title-page, *America* III (Lat) 285. The letters, written in 1555 and 1556, were originally published as: Nicolas Barré, *Copie de quelques lettres sur la navigation du cevallier de Villegaignon es terres de l'Amerique oultre l'Aequinoctial, iuseques soubz le tropique de Capricorne: co[n]tenant sommairement les fortunes encourues en ce voyage, avec les meurs & façons de vivre des sauvages du pais* (Paris, 1557), re-printed in 1558. The De Brys applied the same editorial method for *America* VI, where they added to the Latin edition a report by the French carpenter Nicolas le Challeux. Both additions may be further explained by a large estimated readership of the Latin volumes in France after the ambition to also publish the collection in French was shelved in 1591.

¹⁹ McGrath, "Polemic and History," 391.

would find out only three years later when one of their books did not receive the stamp of approval by the authorities and had to be issued elsewhere—the publishers opted to be prudent and erase the most strongly phrased anti-Catholic rhetoric from the German edition as well. While in preparing the introduction to their Latin edition of De Léry's narrative in 1592, the publishers had omitted as many as thirty-six of the original octavo-volume's preliminary pages, several of these passages were considered just as unacceptable for the German edition. The explicitly religious climax to one of De Léry's rhetorical outbursts, occupying almost two full pages in the Geneva version for example, was omitted entirely. The subsequent juxtaposition of "the Roman Church" and "we the Reformed" was also deemed too strong for inclusion into the German edition.²⁰

The Success of the Editorial Strategy

The success of the De Brys in avoiding the wrath of the Catholic readership can be determined by looking at the collection's entry on the Spanish and Portuguese Indices. The Iberian inquisitorial tribunals, unlike the Holy Office in Rome, were not only in the position to forbid books altogether, but could also impose the expurgation of selected passages in order to allow the sale of the books. While the De Brys managed to include narratives such as De Léry's *Histoire* without inflaming Rome's Congregation of the Index to the point where *America* III, or even the collection as a whole, was forbidden, the Iberian friars were more alert to works describing their colonies. The Portuguese *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* proscribed De Léry's *Histoire* in the Geneva edition of 1586. The corresponding version issued in Frankfurt did result in the expurgation of selected passages, but, crucially, not the harmful prohibition of the entire work. The textual modifications made in the De Bry workshop successfully neutralised the unacceptable excerpts to achieve a more lenient inquisitorial assessment, in both Portugal and Spain.²¹ Hence the sale of the volumes in the Iberian monarchies—to customers like Arias Montano—remained possible, albeit

²⁰ De Léry, *Historia*, [**7v-**8r]: "Ecclesia Romana" vs. "nos reformatos".

²¹ *Index librorum prohibitorum et expurgatorum* (Madrid, 1612) 2nd section, 49-52; *Index Auctorum da[m]natae memoriae, tum etiam librorum, qui vel simpliciter, vel adexpurgatione[m] usque prohibentur, vel deniq[ue] iam expurgati permittuntur* (Lisbon, 1624) 226-29.

conditionally. At the same time, the Iberian Indices attracted a different type of attention north of the Pyrenees, where Northern European readers were eager to find out which passages had angered inquisitors in Madrid and Lisbon. Identical editions of the Indices re-appeared in Protestant strongholds like Geneva and Oxford, dedicated to champions of Protestantism like the Elector Palatine and 'Winter-King' Frederick V.²² Thus the De Brys had the best of both worlds. Their books remained on the shelves of the Iberian bookstores, while those harboring anti-Spanish sentiments were even more prepared to buy the controversial literature.

So who purchased the volumes? The pattern of the De Bry collection's readership can be established in the records of Jan Moretus, the Antwerp bookseller, as many affluent people—a blend of humanists, merchants, noblemen, magistrates, and Counter-Reformation clerics—bought the De Bry volumes in his bookshop. Handwritten testimonies of ownership in surviving copies of the volumes and contemporary library and auction catalogues complement the archival material, and confirm that Catholics and Protestants in other parts of Europe were just as eager to possess the collection. Hence we can trace the voyages to the private libraries of Protestants as well as to prominent Catholics such as cardinal Francesco Barberini, the nephew of pope Urban VIII, and the long-time Spanish ambassador to England Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar. Several priests and bishops in the Southern Netherlands also possessed copies, as did the libraries of the Jesuit colleges in Paris and St. Omer. Likewise, public libraries in Catholic areas like the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome also contained the De Bry collection. Some copies, like the one in the monastery in Huerta in northern Spain, were expurgated according to the rules of the Spanish Index.²³

The confessional diversity of the international readership in early modern Europe also presented the De Brys with a problem concerning their

²² *Index librorum prohibitorum et expurgatorum illmi. ac R. D. D. Bernardi de Sandoval & Rexas Card. [...] auctoritate et iussu editus...* (Geneva, 1619) 52-56; Th. James, *Index generalis librorum prohibitorum à pontificiis, una cum Editionibus expurgatis vel expurgandis juxta seriem Literarum & triplicem classem. In usum Bibliothecae Bodleianae, & Curatoribus eiusdem designatus* (Oxford, 1627) [A4r]. See: Georges Bonnant, "Les Index prohibitifs et expurgatoires contrefaits par des Protestants au XVI^e et au XVII^e siècle", *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance* 31 (1969) 634-38.

²³ Van Groesen, *The Representations of the Overseas World*, Chapter 10, presents an analysis of around 150 owners of the De Bry collection in the first half of the seventeenth century.

engravings. Copper engravings were expensive, as their addition to printed books required a second pressing using a different type of press. A strategy of variation according to the different expectations of different readerships, in line with textual adjustments, was therefore out of the question. The De Brys found a solution to this problem by emphasizing the alterity of the overseas peoples, and paid particular attention to the heathen rituals performed abroad in an effort to enhance the contrast with Europe's shared Christian traditions. The construction of new engravings of pagan practices can be observed throughout the *America*-volumes. I shall illustrate the diversity of the additions with three examples.

In the first volume of the collection, based on John White's watercolors of the lost colony at Roanoke Island, one illustration was not based on the original drawings of Virginia. The De Brys designed an engraving of the pagan idol named Kiwasa, whose distinctly Floridian outlook suggests that the publishers may have derived their composition from an illustration by Jacques le Moyne also in their possession (ill. 1).²⁴ The addition of this pagan idol to a travel account conceived by Harriot and Hakluyt to attract English settlers to the New World was a clear break with the original iconography. Some Protestant readers may even have recognized familiar features of unreformed Christianity in the engraving of the idol. This composition and others betray the artistic education of Theodore de Bry and his two sons in the Netherlands and in Strasbourg, where Protestant influences were rife. Yet the engraving was certainly acceptable to a Catholic audience as well, and the publishers stressed the pagan nature of the Algonquians by giving Kiwasa a prominent place on the title-page of the first volume, his feet resting on a buffalo skull (ill. 2). Two natives were added in humble veneration of the idol, ensuring Kiwasa's status as a representational instrument for pagan beliefs in Virginia. The inclusion of a pagan idol on the collection's first frontispiece was a significant decision in terms of marketing. Booksellers used title-pages to attract customers to their publications, and the beautifully engraved title-pages of the voyages almost certainly served this purpose.²⁵ The De Brys made paganism an instrumental part of their commercial strategy.

²⁴ *America* I, ill. xxi.

²⁵ For an analysis of the De Bry title-pages, see: Maïke Christadler, "Die Sammlung zur Schau gestellt: Die Titelblätter der 'America'-Serie" In: *Inszenierte Welten. Die west- und ostindischen Reisen der Verleger de Bry, 1590-1630 / Staging New Worlds. De Brys' illustrated travel reports, 1590-1630*, ed. Susanna Burghartz (Basel, 2004) 47-93.

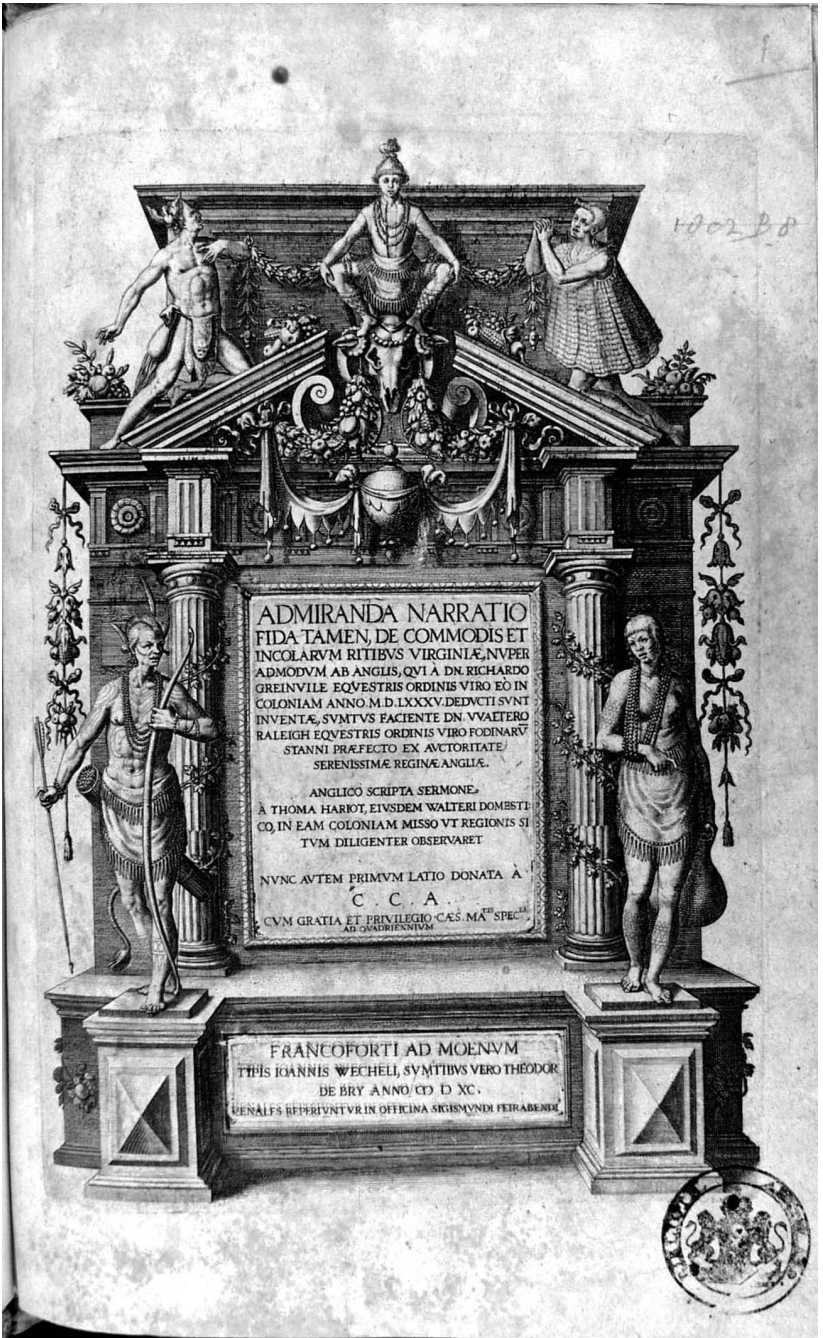
Idolum Ki Wafa.

XXI



IDOLUM habent huius regionis incolæ KI W A S A appellatum, è ligneo trunco elaboratum, quatuor pedes altum, cuius caput Floride incolarum capita refert: facies carneo colore depicta est, pectus albo, reliquum corpus nigro, crura etiam pictura alba variegata: è collo torques pendunt spherulis albis constantes, quibus intermixtae sunt aliae teretes ex ære, magis ab illis aestimato, quam aurum vel argentum. Est illud idolum in templo oppidi S E C O T A repositum, tamquam custos Regiorum cadauerum. Bina interdum habent in templis huiusmodi idola, nonnunquam tria, non plura: quæ cum obscuro loco sint reposita, horrenda apparent. Aliam non habent isti miseri Dei notitiam, tametsi existimem eius cognitionis esse admodum cupidos: nam cum nos in genua procumberemus ad preces ad Deum fundendas, nos imitabantur, & labra mouere nos obseruantes, idem faciebant: quare verisimile est istos facile ad Euangelii notitiam perducì posse. Deus illis hanc gratiam concedat.

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ADMIRANDA NARRATIO
 FIDA TAMEN, DE COMMODIS ET
 INCOLARVM RITIBVS VIRGINIÆ. NVPER
 ADMODVM AB ANGLIS, QVI A DN. RICHARDO
 GREINVILE EQVESTRE ORDINIS VIRO EO IN
 COLONIAM ANNO. M. D. LXXXV. DEDVCTI SVNT
 INVENTÆ, SVMTVS FACIENTE DN. VVALTERO
 RALEIGH EQVESTRE ORDINIS VIRO FODINARV
 STANNI PRAEFECTO EX AVTORITATE
 SERENISSIMÆ REGINÆ ANGLIÆ.

ANGLICO SCRIPTA SERMONE
 A THOMA HARIOT, EIVSDEM WALTERI DOMESTI
 CO, IN EAM COLONIAM MISSO VT REGIONIS SI
 TVM DILIGENTER OBSERVARET

NVNC AVTEM PRIMVM LATIO DONATA A
 C. C. A.
 CVM GRATIA ET PRIVILEGIO CAES. MA^{TI} SPEC.
 AD QVADRIENNIVM

FRANCOFORTI AD MOENVM
 TTPIS IOANNIS WEHELLI, SVMTIBVS VERO THEODOR
 DE BRY ANNO MD XC.
 VENALIS EFFRIVIT VR IN OFFICINA SKVSMVNDI FEYRABENDI.



Another type of iconographic rhetoric suited to enhance the otherness of the New World inhabitants can be found in the final engraving to Volume IV of the *America*-series.²⁶ The illustrations to every volume except *America* III and the abridgements of the late 1620s were attached to the translated account in a separate segment, after the text had finished. Hence the cycles of illustrations can be read as illustrated summaries of the travel accounts they accompany, with captions that were taken from the original narratives. In this sequence, the first and last engravings were of prime importance as they offered a first impression and a potentially lasting climax of European experiences respectively. *America* IV was the first of three volumes devoted to Girolamo Benzoni's critical account of Spanish brutalities in the New World, but the De Brys reserved the final slot in the cycle of twenty-four engravings for an illustration under the rather indiscriminate title "The religion of the Indians". The plate, invented by the De Brys in Frankfurt, showed a parade of half-naked native Americans worshipping unattractive idols in the shape of a five-headed deer with two tails, and two images with unmistakably diabolical features (ill. 3). Once again, the volume's title-page featured these native beliefs rather than the more numerous depictions of Spanish conquistadors elsewhere in the account. A gruesome idol, combining and expanding the characteristics of the three pagan statues in the final plate, was meant to capture the attention of potential customers across Europe (ill. 4).

The fourth volume of the *America*-series is also instructive for understanding the prudence of the De Brys when compared to other German translations of Benzoni's report which appeared at the same time. The last German edition to be published before the De Bry volume of 1594 had come off the presses in Helmstedt in 1590. A comparison with the De Bry volumes immediately reveals the more vigorous anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic rhetoric of the Helmstedt edition, introducing readers in its foreword to "the Catholic, Spanish outrage" and its inspiring force, "the whole anti-Christian, devil-founded Papism".²⁷ The preface as a whole was thoroughly anti-Catholic, much more condemnatory than De Bry's

²⁶ *America* IV, ill. xxiv.

²⁷ Girolamo Benzoni, *Novae novi orbis historiae, Das ist Alles Geschichten, So in der neuen Welt welche Occidentalis India, das ist India, nach Abendwärts genent wird, und etwa Anno 1492. von Christophoro Columbo gefunden worden. . . sich zugetragen* (Helmstedt, 1590) [A3v]: "die Catholische, Spanische unthaten", and [A2v]: "des gantzen antichristischen, vom Teuffel gestifften Babstumbs".

Indorum Religio.

XXIII.



VIEDVS de Indorum Occidentalium Religione agens: nullam in illis nationibus picturam aut sculpturam antiquiorem vidisse ait, aut maiore reuerentia cultam, horrenda cacodemonis effigie deformi specie facta. Eum pro Deo agnoscent, petentes ab eo quidquid desiderant. Quum autem Cacicorum Hispaniola aliquis suo numini sacrum & festum diem celebrare instituebat: omnibus subditis tam viris quam feminis, diem ad conveniendum dicebat: qui ubi ad solenne illud confluxissent, omnes apte in ordinem sese disponebant. Cacicus ipse agmen antegressus princeps templum inibat, ubi sacerdotes adorando idolo intenti erant. Ingressus ut confederat, tympanum pulsabat: mox sequebatur uniuersam multitudinem praeuntibus viris, qui nigro, rubro, & flauo distincta corpora, versicoloribus etiam pistacorum & aliarum auium pennis ornauerant: colla, brachia, crura, coronae, torquibus atque armillis ex concharum marinarum testis redimiti: femina puro corpore & nullis pigmentis fucata, virgines quidem prorsus nude: quibus virierant peplus muliebria velata. Tali habitu saltantes & patria quadam carmina in laudem idoli canentes templum subibant. Cacicus tympani sonitu ingredienti salutabat: mox demisso in guttur bacillo vomitum ciebat: ut Idolopalam ostenderent, nihil se in pectore mali occultum gerere. Huius ceremonie peractis, omnes complicatis peccinatis cruribus humi confidentes, alios quosdam hymnos cum murmure quodam lugubri concinebant: ac tum superueniebat aliud feminarum agmen canistrum gestantium panibus plena, & rosis floribusque odoratis conspersa: ille ceteris canentibus circumfusis, orationes quasdam illis insursurabant: Alij vi inuicem responderent, sese erigebant: donec cantionibus peractis, mutato concentu nouam quandam in Reguli sui laudem in ordinem postremo panem Idolo offererent.



interpretations which, both in Latin and in German, were unmistakable attempts to steer the collection away from unwelcome political controversy and from possible repercussions among censors across Europe. Several fragments of the preface in fact tried to lift some of the supposedly inherently Spanish defects like tyranny and greed from the shoulders of the conquistadors and put the blame on the broader Christian realm. Theodore de Bry warned his readers that

... in order to have nobody attribute these vices as dishonourable and slanderous to the Spanish people, everyone should think for themselves what other people in other nations do. [...] Therefore we should not readily rebuke the Spaniards, but instead question ourselves if we are any better than they are, for I know many God-fearing and devout Spaniards, no fewer than in any other country. [...] For who does not know how gruesome the French, the Germans, the Walloons, and others have behaved in all expeditions and wars?²⁸

In this light the version in the Frankfurt collection was anything but judgmental, mitigating rather than exacerbating the report's Black Legend tendencies. It certainly had a clear eye for other themes in Benzoni's account, like heathendom and disagreements among the Spanish.

Volume IX of the *America*-series, finally, offers an example of the remarkable selectiveness the De Brys applied to their collection. One of the two accounts included in this volume was the well-known *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590), written by the Jesuit friar Jose de Acosta. Acosta comprehensively described the natural world, and used the work to launch his land-bridge thesis to explain the oriental roots of the native American population. Four of the work's seven books were devoted to naturalia and

²⁸ *America* IV (Ger) [A4v]: "Aber doch damit nit jemand dieses dem Spanischen Volck zur unehr und schmachheit uffhebe, betrachte ein jeder bey im selbs, was ander Leut in andern Nationen thun [...] Derwegen wir nit so schnell lauffend seyn sollen die Spanier zuschelten, sonder uns zuvor selbs wol prüfen, ob wir besser seyen, weder sie, denn ich viel unter den Spaniern kenne, Gottsförchtige und fromme Männer, nit weniger als in einiger andern Nation [...] Denn wer weiß nit, wie greuwlich gehandelt haben, und noch täglich handeln die Frantzosen, Teutschen, Waalen und andere beynah in allen Zügen und Kriegen?" / (Lat) []:(3v): "Veruntamen ne quis haec in Hispanicae gentis ignominiam trahat, expendat unusquisque quid ab aliis aliarum nationum hominibus fiat. [...] Ne simus ergo tam praecipites in damnandis Hispanis, quin prius non ipsos serio examinaverimus, num ipsis meliores simus. Multos enim inter Hispanos novi viros pios & probos non minus quam in ulla alia gente. [...] Quis enim ignorat quam multa crudeliter patrata sint atque etiamnum hodie patrentur a militibus Gallis, Germanis, Italis, & aliis in omnibus fere expeditionibus ac bellis".

to the land-bridge thesis. Since the original version and its first translations did not include illustrations—the De Brys used the Dutch translation of 1598 prepared by Jan Huygen van Linschoten and Bernardus Paludanus—the Frankfurt publishers had to construct the treatise's iconography solely based on the text. Of the cycle of fourteen engravings they made, not a single image referred to passages in the first four books. Instead, the De Brys chose to focus once again on the alterity of the Amerindian populations, depicting the human sacrifices of the Aztecs and other brutal and violent pagan rituals (ill. 5).²⁹

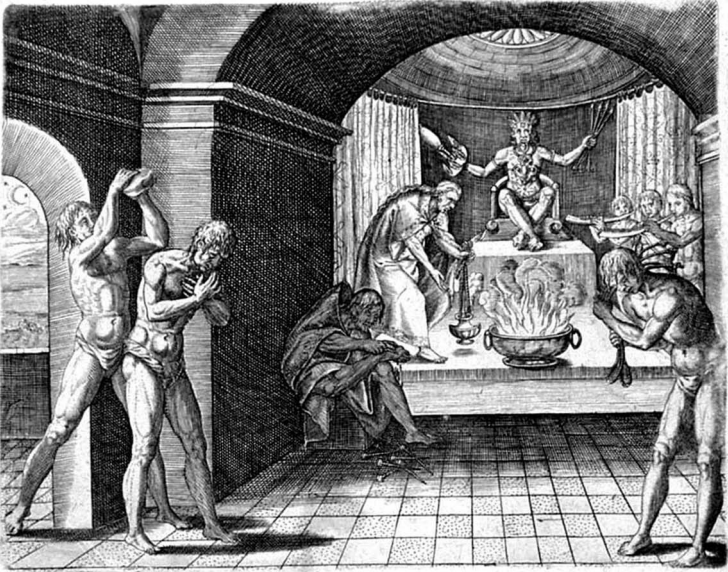
The adaptation of Acosta's account also discloses the expansion of (near-) nakedness in the De Bry collection. The fourth illustration of the cycle of fourteen portrayed the relationship between humans and llamas in Peru, depicting the natives as barely dressed, supposedly based on the Jesuit's observations (ill. 6).³⁰ Acosta had nevertheless noted that these same llamas yielded wool, and that "the Indians made stuffs of this wool, which they used to clothe themselves". The contrast between the original account and the illustration construed in Frankfurt was enhanced by the caption in the De Bry volume, which truthfully reported that the Inca manufactured wool products, before skipping the rest of the sentence that did not suit the objectives of the publishers.³¹ The potentially complicating statement that the llamas favoured cold areas and were sometimes covered with ice and frost did not survive the De Brys' editorial methods either, as this could have alerted knowledgeable readers to the textual discrepancies. Modifications to the texts and to the illustrations clearly reveal a co-ordinated effort to alter the representations of the New World. Readers of the collection, in this case, were left with the impression of nearly naked Andeans. Since nakedness, like paganism, was easily recognizable to all Europeans as uncivilised—and un-Christian—the adjustments to the original account eased the sale of the collection's volumes throughout early modern Europe.

²⁹ *America IX*, ill. vii.

³⁰ *America IX*, ill. iv.

³¹ Jose de Acosta, *Historie Naturael ende Morael van de Westersche Indien*, transl. Jan Huygen van Linschoten (Enkhuizen, 1598) f209r: "De Wolle wordt van d'Indianen bereyt, ende gewaet af ghemaeckt, daer sy haer mede cleeden"; *America IX*, ill. iv (Ger): "... diese dienen in Indien [...] daß [...] auß der Wollen Tuch gemachet wirdt" / (Lat): "... ex lana panni texantur".

VII.
 QVO PACTO INDORVM SACERDOTES PRO POPVLI PEC-
 catis poenitentiam agant.



DIES quidam ordinarij peculiareſq; ſunt, quibus Indorum in Mexico ſacerdotes, Idolo ſuo Viſticipuſteli ſacra faciunt. Eorum aliquo appropinquante, collecti illi & congregati idolum accedunt, & ante faciem eius litui, & tibis, ſimilibuſq; inſtrumentis Muſicis ludunt. Ab hiſ, ſacerdotum Princeps, iburibulum ſerens, ingreditur, atque ex cacabo, in quo ante Idolum ſtante perpetuus ignis ſouetur, igne deſumpto idolo thure ſucceſſo ſuffit. Poſtea in locum quendam templi, hunc in uſum deſtinatum, ſecedens, arrepta framea (cuiuſmodi plurima paſſim in templo deſixa ſunt) coxam uel crus ſibi perforat, exceptoq; qui ex uulnere ſudat ſanguine, frontem ſibimet illinit: frameam uero, ſanguini uniuerſam prius inunctam & madefactam, in certo loco ſuffigit, ut ea publice conſpecta, uulguſ uideat, quam ſeriam & doloroſam poenitentiam pro populi peccatis egerint. Sua quoque in anno prinata tempora habent, quibus populuſ ſe ipſum flagellis cedit, & aut funibus inſortis, aut incuſis ſaxis corpus ſuum percutit: ſicut tum ex hac figura, tum ipſo hiſtoria contextu planius uidere licet.

IV.
DE INDICIS OVIBVS, METAL-
LA EX MONTANIS EXPOR-
tantibus.



PROVINCIA Peru peculiare quoddam ovium genus, ab Indis llamas dictum, habet. Harum, praterquam quod carnes pro cibo sint, & ex lana panni texantur, usus quoque insignis in hoc est, quod eorum a sinorūve vice portandis oneribus admodum comoda sint. His enim quicquid oneris peregrè transportaturi sunt, imponunt. Illedem ex fadinis argentum efferunt, quod à Potosi Aricam usque, quod intervallum septuaginta miliarium est, transportant. He gregatim ambulant, recentis aut quadringentis vno numero coactis. Custodiis aut a Foribus adeo multis non opus habent: vnoque die miliaria fere quatuor promeant. Istis animalis suis dominis minimè sumptui sunt. Nam nec ephippia gestant, nec frenis, ferresive solis opus habent, nec quoquam alio pabulo, quam quod in campestribus carpunt, vescuntur. Has tamen qui agunt, accurata diligentia cauent, nequam illarum fors aliqua iniuria offendant. Quod si enim indignabunda vna in humum decumbat, tum nec vllis minis, nec additis plagis rursus ad iter excitari potest: sed necesse omnino est, ut ex comitibus quidam iuxta animal in humum se prosternat, hocq; habitu ad horas vel binas vel interdum ternas suavisibus verbis ei adblandiatur, dum se attollens, viæ reliquum conficiat. Quod si verò fors quaedam alicubi in montes excurrat, tunc illius inde abducendi, nulla medela, nullum medium superest aliud, quam ut excussa sclopeti glante figatur, & hoc pacto de montium iugis deturbetur.

Conclusion

The combination of modifications, both to the texts and to the iconography, distinctly shaped the representation of the New World in the accounts published by the De Bry family. They enhanced the alterity of native Americans in various ways, by zooming in on topics such as nakedness and often gruesome pagan rituals. Hence the De Bry engravings can and should not be used in scholarly literature on early America in an uncritical fashion or, as so often happens, as attractive illustrations of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century New World, without paying proper attention to the editorial strategy and to the changes made in the Frankfurt workshop. Likewise, to present the De Bry engravings as part of an anti-Spanish or anti-Catholic iconographic tradition recognized and embraced by Protestants across Europe misses the point. The De Brys were prudent publishers who relied on the sales figures of their *magnum opus* for the prosperity of the family firm, and thus attempted to meet the demands of a highly differentiated European readership. This balanced editorial strategy, fuelled by the estimated expectations of potential customers in early modern Europe, conditioned their representations of the New World. These publishing objectives and the resulting textual variations should therefore be taken into account when discussing the De Bry engravings or using them to illustrate scholarly contributions on early America.