

## **RARE BOOK ANALYSIS**

### **1. Description and Purpose**

The [first] assignment of this course is an analysis of a rare book dealing with overseas travel in the early modern period. For the first half of Seminar #4 (Exploring the South Sea), David Fernández will guide you through a series of printed works at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. As you carefully handle, inspect, and leaf through these valuable treasures, you need to imagine that you are a European reader with no travel experience outside your local province. Remember that cross-cultural encounters in the Spanish Pacific were primarily communicated to European audiences through books. Your task, then, is not to read the contents of the book but to “read” the book itself. Think about the material of the cover, the type of paper, the style of typography, the organization of the text, how it is bound, and its overall format. What type of information is being conveyed on the title page? Where was it printed and are there any signs of ownership? Are there any engravings or maps in the book? If so, why were they included? Where would this book have been read and under what conditions? The purpose of this assignment is to think about how books (as physical objects) influenced early modern understandings of cross-cultural encounters.

### **2. Important Details**

**Due Date, Time, and Medium:** To be determined

**Length:** XX pages (double-spaced, 12-font, Times New Roman)

**Sources:**

- Rare books available for consultation in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library