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Alexandre Coello de la Rosa**

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Resumo

Este trabalho pretende analisar as complexidades da missão Jesuíta nas Ilhas Marianas através de dois campos de análise. Por um lado, explora a relação transoceânica entre o arquipélago e o Vice-Reino da Nova Espanha (que incluía as Filipinas). E, por outro, destaca a dimensão local, ao analisar as formas como os agentes nativos resistiram e se adaptaram ao que lhes foi imposto pelos missionários, construindo, a longo prazo, novas identidades. Embora a historiografia eclesiástica tenha geralmente aceite narrativas de conquista e sucesso absoluto na evangelização das Marianas, neste artigo adopto uma posição teórica («glocalização») que considera que a Companhia de Jesus desempenhava, à escala global, um papel de vanguarda na produção e disseminação do conhecimento missionário.

Palavras-chave: cosmopolitismo, glocalização, história do Pacífico, Ilhas Marianas, imperialismo, Jesuítas, missões.

Abstract

This work studies the complexities of Jesuit missionisation in the Mariana Islands. On the one hand, it grounds the analysis in the trans-oceanic relationship of the archipelago and the Viceroyalty of New Spain, which included the Philippines. And on the other hand, it brings the local dimension to the fore by analyzing native agency in resisting and adapting to impositions from the missionaries, thereby constructing new identities in the long run. While canonical historiography has generally accepted narratives of utter conquest and successful evangelization of the Marianas, I adopt a theoretical position (“glocalization”) who sees the Society of Jesus as a vanguard in a context of production and dissemination of missionary knowledge on a global scale.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism, glocalization, Pacific History, Mariana Islands, imperialism, Jesuits, missions.

* This article contains the main ideas of my forthcoming book to be published by Routledge, 2016.

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Jesuits at the margins: missions and missionaries in the Mariana Islands (1668–1769)

Alexandre Coello de la Rosa

Introduction: from the *res nullius* to missionary knowledge

In the past decades historians have interpreted early modern Christian missions not simply as an adjunct to Western imperialism, but as a privileged field for cross-cultural encounters.¹ Placing the Jesuit missions into a global phenomenon that emphasizes economic and cultural relations between Europe and the East, I want to analyze the possibilities and limitations of the religious conversion in the Micronesian islands of Guåhån (or Guam) and the Northern Marianas. While colonial authorities depicted the Marianas as isolated spots in a vast ocean, this article falls into line with some scholarship that challenges the simple application of deterministic notions, such as their geographic (isolation), economic (poverty and lack of mineral resources), or demographic (low population) conditions. Frontiers are not rigid spatial lines separating culturally different groups of people but rather active agents in the transformation of culture. The Marianas were not entirely autonomous, self-enclosed, or isolated from the rest of the Pacific islands. Early transactions between Chamorro society with mainland Asian and Micronesian cultures, and the later, more regularized trade with European vessels after Ferdinand Magellan's initial landfall in Guam on March 6, 1521, constitute different phases in the economic and cultural history of the Marianas archipelago.²

Drawing from a world history of Christianity within the framework of global history, this essay does not align with some historiographical conception that simply reduces the natives of the eighteenth century Mariana

1 Joan-Pau RUBIÉS, "Missionary Encounters in China and Tibet: from Mateo Ricci to Ippolito Desideri," *History of Religions*, Vol. 52, no. 3, 2013, p. 267. See also Frank QUIMBY, "The *Hierro* Commerce: Culture Contact, Appropriation and Colonial Entanglement in the Marianas, 1521–1668," *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 46, no. 1, 2011, pp. 1–26; *Idem*, "Islands in the Stream of Empire: Spain's 'Reformed' Imperial Policy and First Proposals to colonize the Mariana Islands, 1565–1569," paper presented at the 1st Marianas History Conference. *One Archipelago, Many Stories* (2012).

2 On this regard, see Kayako KUSHIMA, *Historiographies and Discourses of Isolation: Canonical and Alternative Historical Narratives*, M.S. Thesis in Micronesian Studies, University of Guam (2001); DON FARRELL, *History of the Mariana Islands to Partition*, Public School System, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Saipan; F. QUIMBY, art. cit., pp. 1–26.

Islands to fervent Catholics or “peonized peasants.”³ It also did challenge the core-periphery model that perceives the Chamorros as passive recipients of core innovations.⁴ On the contrary, they survived by “playing an active role in the historical development of their islands and on the history of the Pacific.”⁵ In addition, this essay does not reiterate the Marianas’ alleged remoteness and isolation as a way to justify Jesuit permanency,⁶ but emphasizes an ongoing interplay between the preexisting local conditions, and imported attitudes and morals, which were finally imposed onto the Chamorros. By bringing this local dimension to the fore, I adhere to a process of missionary “glocalization” which allowed Chamorros to enter the international community as members of Spain’s regional empire and the global communion of the Roman Catholic Church.⁷

In the last two decades or so, Atlantic history emerged as a cultural, geographic and historical paradigm that led scholars to focus primarily on transoceanic connections, empire-state building, and cultural difference.⁸ By exploring the interactions and economic and cultural exchanges between the peoples of Western Europe, West Africa and the American territories, the Hispanic Pacific history would also benefit analyses of core-periphery

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- 3 ALKIRE (1977), CAMPBELL (1989) and ROGERS (1995) cit. in David ATIENZA DE FRUTOS, “Priests, Mayors and Indigenous Offices: Indigenous Agency and Adaptive Resistance in the Mariana Islands (1681–1758),” *Pacific Asia Inquiry*, Vol. 5, no. 1 (2014), pp. 31–48.
 - 4 Immanuel WALLERSTEIN, *The Modern World-System*, Vol. I, (“Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century”), New York, Academic Press, 1974.
 - 5 D. ATIENZA, art. cit., p. 31.
 - 6 As Clossey points out, “any vastness of space corresponded to a vastness of time, often to permanency” (LUKE CLOSSEY, *Salvation and Globalisation in the Early Jesuit Mission*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 104).
 - 7 Ines G. ŽUPANOV, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth Century India*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1999; Paolo ARANHA, “‘Glocal’ Conflicts: Missionary Controversies on the Coromandel Coast between the XVII and XVIII centuries” in Michela Catto, Guido Mongini, Silvia Mostaccio (eds.), *Evangelizzazione e globalizzazione. Le missioni gesuitiche nell’età moderna tra storia e storiografia*, Italy, Società editrice Dante Alighieri, 2010, pp. 79–83.
 - 8 Bernard BAILYN, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours*, Harvard, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2005; Bernard BAILYN and Patricia L. DENAULT, “Introduction: Reflections on Some Major Themes” in Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault (eds.), *Soundings in Atlantic History. Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500–1830*, Cambridge, Massachusetts – London, England, Harvard University Press, 2009, pp. 1–8; Jorge CAÑIZARES-ESGUERRA, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550–1700*, Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2006; John H. ELLIOT, *Empires of the Atlantic World. Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2007; J. H. ELLIOT, *España, Europa y el mundo de ultramar (1500–1800)*, Madrid, Taurus, 2009, pp. 21–6. Fermín del Pino has pointed out that the “Atlantic reply” has constituted an alternative to the post-colonial current that highlights the “deculturation” of Christian imperialism (F. DEL PINO, “Imperios, utopías y márgenes socio-culturales (Josef de Acosta y las élites indianas)” in Javier Burrieza, Alexandre Coello and Doris Moreno, *Jesuitas e imperios de ultramar (siglos XVI–XX)*, Madrid, Sílex, 2012.

relations in the Spanish imperial space as a result of the modern process of globalization.⁹ As a result, a “Pacific world” of great diversity and territorial dispersion would equally allow us to transcend nationalistic, longitudinal and teleological structures and write a “horizontal,” trans-national (that is, comparative) and trans-imperial history on one of the most dynamic regions of the *Hispaniarum Rex*.¹⁰

The 1961 *The Jesuits in the Philippines (1581–1768)* of Jesuit Father Horacio de la Costa (1916–1977) continues to be the definitive study on the activities pursued by the Society of Jesus in the Philippines. Unfortunately, it contains few references to the missions in the Mariana Islands.¹¹ In the last fifty years or so, scholarly production of seventeenth century Christianization of the Marianas has mostly focused on the intertwined histories of colonial Church and the Crown, paying special attention to emerging hostilities, military involvement, and demographic decline to the definitive resettlement of the scarce Chamorro population from eight northern Mariana islands (known as Gani) to several “church-villages” of Guåhån in 1699. Historian Marjorie G. Driver (University of Guam & Micronesian Area Research Center) produced some of the most important monographs on the history of colonial administration of the Marianas. The first one, *El Palacio: The Spanish Palace in Agaña. A Chronology of Men and Events, 1668–1899*,¹² was published in 1984 as a political survey of Guåhån during 230 years of Spanish administration. In the second one, *Cross, Sword, and*

9 M. CATTO and Guido MONGINI, “Missioni e globalizzazioni: l’adattamento come indentità della Compagnia di Gesù” in Michela Catto, Guido Mongini, Silvia Mostaccio (eds.), *Evangelizzazione e globalizzazione. Le missioni gesuitiche nell’età moderna tra storia e storiografia*, Italy, Società editrice Dante Alighieri, 2010, pp. 1–16; Charlotte DE CASTELNAU-L’ESTOILE and François REGOURD, *Connaissances et Pouvoirs. Les espaces impériaux (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles) France, Espagne, Portugal*, Pessac, Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2005, pp. 17–22.

10 B. BAILYN and P. L. DENAULT, op. cit., p. 2; Pierre-Antoine FABRE and Bernard VINCENT, *Notre lieu est le monde. Missions religieuses modernes*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 2007, pp. 1–2; John H. ELLIOT, “Las Américas y el mundo atlántico: vínculos y comparaciones,” IV Conferencia Acadèmica Anual Ernest Lluch, Feb. 11, 2010, Auditori de la Pedrera de Caixa de Catalunya.

11 Horacio DE LA COSTA SJ, *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581–1768*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press 1989 [1961]. His eighteenth century confreres, such as Juan José Delgado, SJ (1697–1755), and Pedro Murillo Velarde, SJ (1696–1753), had included ethnographic, historical, and ethno-botanical information data on the Mariana archipelago in their Philippines history treatises. At the end of the nineteenth century, Pablo Pastells, SJ (1846–1932), gathered 116 notebooks on general Philippine natural and social history—included in the *Colección Pastells*—which also contained information on the Mariana islands. Antonio ASTRAIN SJ, used these sources in his monumental *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la Asistencia de España*, Madrid, Razón y Fe, 1902–1925) (José ARCILLA SOLERO, SJ, “Los cronistas jesuitas de Filipinas” in Florentino Rodao (eds.), *España y el Pacíficos*, Tomo II, Madrid, AECE – AEEP, 1989, pp. 377–96).

12 First published in 1984 by MARC – University of Guam, this text was reedited in 2004 by Marjorie G. DRIVER and Francis X. HEZEL SJ, *El Palacio: the Spanish Palace in Agaña, 1669–1898*, Mangilao, Guam, Richard F. Taitano & MARC.

Silver. The Nascent Spanish Colony in the Mariana Islands,¹³ Driver analyzed the archipelago's dependence on the royal *situado* during the administration of Governor Damián de Esplana (1674–1694). Driver showed that although Manila and Acapulco constituted the two poles of the transpacific axis, the Marianas acted as a sort of technical stopover, which most corrupted governors, such as Esplana, used to obtain handsome profits from contraband. While the exploitation of the native population was fundamental to this lucrative business, the Jesuit's missionary efforts often conflicted with the Spanish governors' lucrative businesses.¹⁴

Jesuit historian Francis X. Hezel, also linked to the Micronesian Area Research Center, examined the evolution of Spanish colonization and missionisation of the Mariana Islands. In his first work, "From Conversion to Conquest: The Early Spanish Mission in the Marianas" (1982), Hezel rejected Laura Thompson's Manichean viewpoint of a perpetrated genocide against the Chamorro people through the intervention of brutal Spanish soldiers and rapacious governors of a Spanish Catholic regime.¹⁵ Instead, the scourge of brought diseases and epidemics was more responsible for the dramatic Chamorro depopulation, according to Hezel, than did internecine warfare during the so-called "Spanish-Chamorro Wars" (1671–72; 1684; 1690). However, in managing the problems of conquest warfare in intercultural contexts, other scholars, such as Augusto V. de Viana (2004), have emphasized how native Filipino soldiers—and loyal Chamorros as well—proved to be essential allies of imperial expansion. Not only were they servants and assistants of the Spanish administration but also soldiers and officers of the mission.¹⁶

Recently the anthropologist David Atienza has questioned the lack of "authenticity" of the Chamorros as well as the "Spanish genocide" that took place during the "Spanish-Chamorro Wars", which led to a mixed Hispanized population. These ideas overshadow the capacity of Chamorros to exert

13 Marjorie G. DRIVER, *Cross, Sword, and Silver. The Nascent Spanish Colony in the Mariana Islands*, Mangilao, Guam, Micronesian Area Research Center & University of Guam, 1987.

14 Other historians have conducted studies on the different ships, Spanish or from other nations, which periodically arrived at the Marianas, providing interesting descriptions on the live and customs of the Chamorros. See especially Glynn BARRATT, *The Chamorros of the Mariana Islands. Early European Records, 1521–1721*, Saipan, Division of Historic Preservation & MARC, 2003.

15 Laura THOMPSON, *The Native Culture of the Marianas Islands*, Honolulu, Hawai'i, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1945, p. 20.

16 Augusto V. DE VIANA, "Filipino natives in seventeenth century Marianas: Their role in the Establishment of the Spanish mission in the islands," *Micronesian Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, no. 1–2, 2004a, pp. 19–26; *Idem, In the Far Islands: The Role of Natives from the Philippines in the Conquest, Colonization, and Repopulation of the Mariana Islands, 1668–1903*, Manila, University of Santo Tomas Press, 2004b.

an effective agency and to manipulate the message that the Jesuit missionaries brought to them, providing for the continuity of the Chamorro cultural experience.¹⁷ Historians and anthropologists Vicente M. Diaz and Anne P. Hattori have also criticized this and other canonical visions of the past, such as Robert F. Rogers' *Destiny's Landfall* (1995), that deny the Chamorros' agency in the (re)construction of their own history.¹⁸ Colonialism is an ambivalent and fluid process that involves appropriation, cultural borrowing and effective resistance on the part of the colonised.¹⁹ As a result, Chamorros' cultural patterns not only survived after the arrival of Spanish colonizers: they were integrated, adapted or reinterpreted to the new Christian symbols and codes as a way to preserve their own customs and traditions in a wholly Chamorro syncretism.²⁰

The present work contributes to understanding the role of the Jesuits' global mission and the origins of global modernity in Iberian colonial empires from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.²¹ One of the primary tasks in writing about the global consciousness of the Jesuit's enterprise is determining the geographic limits of the territories of Spanish Asia that were part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain.²² If the Captaincy General of the Philip-

17 D. ATIENZA, "The Mariana Islands Militia and the Establishment of the 'Pueblos de Indios,'" 2nd Marianas History Conference, Mangilao, Guam, University of Guam, 2013, p. 2.

18 See Anne P. HATTORI's review of Robert F. Rogers, *Destiny's Landfall*, in *Contemporary Pacific*, Vol. 9, no. 1, 1997, pp. 275–7; Vicente M. DIAZ's review in *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies*, Vol. 4, no. 1, 1996, pp. 179–99.

19 V. M. DIAZ, *Repositioning the Missionary: Rewriting the Histories of Colonialism, Native Catholicism, and Indigeneity in Guam*, Honolulu, Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i Press, 2010, p. 8.

20 Vicente M. DIAZ, "Pious Sites: Chamorro Culture Between Spanish Catholicism and American Liberal Individualism" in Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (eds.), *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1993; V. DIAZ, "Grounding Flux in Guam's Cultural History" in Emma Greenwood, Klaus Neumann and Andrew Sartori, *Work in Flux*, Parkville, University of Melbourne History Department, 1995, pp. 159–71; V. DIAZ, op. cit. See also David ATIENZA DE FRUTOS and Alexandre COELLO DE LA ROSA, "Death rituals and Identity in Contemporary Guam (Mariana Islands)," *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 47, no. 4, 2012, pp. 459–73.

21 On the origins of modernity in the Catholic world, see Louis CHÂTELLIER, "Conclusions" in P. A. FABRE and B. VINCENT, op. cit., pp. 381–7.

22 Miguel LUQUE TALAVÁN and Marta M. MANCHADO LÓPEZ (coord.), *Un océano de intercambios: Hispanoasia (1521–1898). Un homenaje al profesor Leoncio Cabrero Fernández*, Tomo I, Madrid, Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional, 2008, pp. 13–5. The importance that the Mexican Pacific coast, with its center in Acapulco, had in the economic system of Spanish Asia is unquestionable. A regular route was traversed since 1593 by two galleons which brought 300 tons of eastern merchandise in exchange for 500,000 silver *pesos fuertes*. This rate was changed in 1702, with 300,000 pesos worth of eastern products delivered in exchange for 600,000 silver pesos. In 1734 it changed again, 500,000 pesos worth of merchandise from Manila for an allowance of up to one million silver pesos from Acapulco (William Lytle SCHURTZ, *El Galeón de Manila*, Madrid, Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1992 [1939]). See also Carmen YUSTE, "El Galeón transpacífico. Redes mercantiles alrededor de especias, textiles y plata" in *Un océano de intercambios: Hispanoasia (1521–1898)*. Vol. I, Madrid, Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional, 2008, pp. 202–5.

pires were at the rearguard of what was for a time known as the “Spanish lake” (1513–1607),²³ the Marianas appear as marginal spaces, a transit point between New Spain and Manila that some French intellectuals would have no qualms about referring to as a “non-place.”²⁴

Recent scholarship, particularly by Charlotte de Castelneau-L’Estoile, Marie-Lucie Copete, Aliocha Maldavsky, Ines G. Županov and Guillermo Wilde, has paved the way for analyzing the early modern missions not merely as the key in the frontier system of territorial occupation,²⁵ but as a link in a chain of circulation of (missionary) knowledge.²⁶ The Jesuit missionary vocation cannot be reduced to a simple moving to distant places (“the Indies”), but it was a pastoral strategy that allowed the missionaries, as active agents of global religion, to spread their apostolic strategies all over the world.²⁷ My own studies on the Marianas open up several inter-related questions: first, what role did the Spanish-Asian Empire play in the design of missionary projects in Rome? Second, what role did the missionaries play in a period of intensified global interconnections between early modern Europe, America and Asia? Third, how did missionaries collaborate with governors, military commanders and soldiers in the project of empire-building in the Marianas? Fourth, how did Chamorro people resist the onslaught of Western colonialism and death? And last but not least, how did they benefit from cross-cultural exchanges and ethnic mixing with many oceanic foreigners, including the Spanish soldiers and Jesuit missionaries?

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- 23 William L. SCHURTZ, “The Spanish Lake,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 2, 1922, pp. 181–94; O. H. K. SPATE, *The Spanish Lake*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1979. See also Salvador BERNABÉU ALBERT, *El Pacífico Ilustrado: del lago español a las grandes expediciones*, Madrid, Colección Mapfre, 1992; Carlos MARTÍNEZ SHAW, “La exploración española del Pacífico en los tiempos modernos” in M.^a Dolores Elizalde, Josep M. Fradera and Luis Alonso Álvarez (eds.), *Imperios y naciones en el Pacífico*, Vol. I, (“La formación de una colonia: Filipinas”), Madrid, CSIC & AEEP, 2001, pp. 7–17.
- 24 Michel DE CERTEAU, *L’invention du quotidien. I. Arts de faire*, Paris, Gallimard, 1992, pp. 186–7; Marc AUGÉ, *Non-Lieux, Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité*, Paris, Seuil, 1992.
- 25 María Fernanda GARCÍA DE LOS ARCOS, “¿Avanzada o periferia? Una visión diacrónica de la situación fronteriza de Filipinas” in Marta María MANCHADO LÓPEZ and Miguel LUQUE TALAVÁN (eds.), *Fronteras del mundo hispánico: Filipinas en el contexto de las regiones liminares novohispanas*, Córdoba, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Córdoba, 2011, pp. 47–69; Antonio GARCÍA-ABASOLO, “Filipinas. Una frontera más allá de la frontera” in Marta María Manchado López and Miguel Luque Talaván (eds.), *Fronteras del mundo hispánico: Filipinas en el contexto de las regiones liminares novohispanas*, Córdoba, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Córdoba, 2011, pp. 71–88.
- 26 Charlotte DE CASTELNAU-L’ESTOILE et al. (eds.), *Missions d’Évangélisation et Circulation des Savoirs, XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle*, Madrid, Casa de Velázquez, 2011, pp. 1–22; Guillermo WILDE, *Saberes de la conversión. Prácticas jesuíticas y escrituras de la alteridad en los confines coloniales*, Buenos Aires, Editorial SB, 2012, pp. 15–27.
- 27 P. FABRE and B. VINCENT, op. cit., pp. 1–2.

The arrival of the Jesuits to the Philippines

By the middle of the sixteenth century, the Spanish Crown had established an overseas empire of colossal dimensions. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the idea of the Christian mission became synonymous with the expansion of European science and “civilization.”²⁸ The mission was “a frontier institution that sought to incorporate indigenous people into the Spanish colonial empire, its Catholic religion, and certain aspects of its Hispanic culture through the formal establishment or recognition of sedentary Indian communities entrusted to the tutelage of missionaries under the protection and control of the Spanish state.” This “joint institution of indigenous communities and the Spanish church and state” was developed to stop or at the very least decrease the power of “enterprising civilians and soldiers” on the expanding frontier, which too often resulted in the abuse of the natives and “a heightening of antagonism.”²⁹

In the context of creating new imperial spaces,³⁰ the Society of Jesus, the first religious organization with a global character, became the protagonist in the cultural and religious assimilation of the Iberian Eastern realms—both Spanish and Portuguese.³¹ The few Jesuits that arrived at the Philippines in 1581 via New Spain—and eventually to the Marianas—became agents of transformation *vis-à-vis* the cultures that they came into contact with. Schools or *colegios* were the Jesuit starting point; from them the members of the Society organized their so-called “flying missions,” which were soon followed by the “long missions” that superiors sent to the groups of infidels across the Philippine territory.³² To attend to these multiple open fronts, Jesuit General Claudio Aquaviva (1581–1615) sent twenty-five priests to the Philippines under the auspices of Phillip II, who, at that time, promulgated a Royal Decree that divided the missions territory of those *finis terrae*

28 Adriano PROSPERI, “L’Europa cristiana e il mondo: alle origini dell’idea di missione,” *Dimensioni e problema della ricerca storica*, Vol. no. 2, 1992, pp. 189–92; J. P. RUBIÉS, art. cit., p. 267.

29 Robert E. WRIGHT, OMI, “Spanish Missions,” *Handbook of Texas Online*. Texas State Historical Association [Accessed on 15/03/2012]. Available from <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/its02>.

30 My understanding of “empire” has much to do with “webs of trade, knowledge, migration, military power, and political intervention that allowed certain communities to assert their influence and sovereignty over other groups” (Tony BALLANTINE and Antoinette BURTON, “Introduction: Bodies, Empires, and World Histories” in Tony Ballantine and Antoinette Burton (eds.), *Bodies in Contact. Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2005, p. 3).

31 L. CLOSSEY, op. cit., pp. 1–19.

32 For an analysis of the different mission “types,” see Aliocha MALDAVSKY, *Vocaciones inciertas. Misión y misioneros en la provincia jesuita del Perú de los siglos XVI y XVII*, Sevilla and Lima, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas and Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos and Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya, 2012, pp. 71–124.

into four areas of influence: Pampanga and Ilocos were to be ministered by the Augustine order; Camarines and Tayabas, by the Franciscans; the Visayan Islands by both the Augustine and Jesuit orders; while Dominicans were in charge of the evangelization of the Chinese population in the Manila Parian and the provinces of Pangasinán and Cagayán.³³ The lion's share went to the Franciscans and Augustines, while the Jesuits received the poorest and least populated areas.³⁴

The Marianas' as part of the Jesuits' universal Christian project

In the Philippines and elsewhere in the Spanish empire, the care and control of the population—in Aristotelian terms, the “matters of police”—were built upon the subjection of the native populations to their parishes from a new global perspective in Christianity. The Jesuits, like the rest of the clergy, did not only act as ministers of God, but as political and economic administrators of the missions in their care. In theory, their objectives were pervasively efficacious: natives were evangelized, thus transforming the identity of the Asiatic peoples through missionary action. But in practice, Jesuit identity was also deeply transformed by processes of indigenous resistance, borrowing, appropriation, and accommodation over the course of years.³⁵

To evaluate the limits of the “cultural dialogue” established between moral universalism, on the one hand, and local natural and cultural diversity, on the other, it is necessary to look at case-studies that reveal the missionaries' objectives and the results that they obtained.³⁶ Specifically, this essay analyzes the Mariana Islands during the missionizing of the Society of Jesus

33 On 1605, not long after the first Chinese rebellion (1603), fourteen Augustine friars arrived in Manila, soon after followed by the Brothers Hospitallers of San Juan de Dios, although the latter did not undertake missionary tasks (M.^a Fernanda GARCÍA DE LOS ARCOS, *Estado y clero en las Filipinas del siglo XVIII*, Mexico, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana/Iztapalapa, 1988, pp. 50–1).

34 John Leddy PHELAN, *The Hispanization of the Philippines. Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565–1700*, Madison, Milwaukee and London, University of Wisconsin Press, 1967 [1959], pp. 49–50; Lucio GUTIÉRREZ, *Historia de la iglesia en Filipinas*, Madrid, Fundación Mapfre América, 1992, pp. 71–3 and 204; *Idem*, “The Formative Years of the Archdiocese of Manila (1565–1850),” *Philippiniana Sacra*, XLVI, no. 137, 2011, p. 471.

35 “Accommodation” can be defined as a specific character of the Society of Jesus, namely, a process of flexibility that allowed the Jesuits to accept all that could be acceptable from various cultures (M. CATTO and G. MONGINI, op. cit., cit. pp. 1–16). On the evangelizing strategies of Italian Jesuits Alessandro Valignano (1539–1606), Michele Ruggieri (1543–1607) and Mateo Ricci (1552–1610) in China (Nicolas STANDAERT, SJ, “Jesuit Corporate Culture as Shaped by the Chinese” in John W. O'Malley, SJ, et al., *The Jesuits. Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, Vol. I, Toronto and Buffalo and London, University of Toronto Press, 2000 [1999], pp. 352–63).

36 J.-P. RUBIÉS, “The Concept of Cultural Dialogue and the Jesuit Method of Accommodation: Between Idolatry and Civilization”, *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, Vol. LXXIV, no. 147, 2005, p. 242.

(1668–1769) as a continuum of cultural encounters—a “contact zone,” in the words of Marie Louis Pratt—where different power-holders enjoyed great local autonomy, establishing asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination.³⁷ From the very beginning, the conquest and colonization of the islands was not a very profitable enterprise. Initially they did not depend on the Philippines, but on the Viceroyalty of the New Spain. The lack of precious metals would have justified their abandonment, especially in comparison with the opulence of the American continent. The island’s topography was broken by “ravines and gullies” and its coasts were of difficult access for the galleons of the Acapulco route.³⁸ But despite these inconveniences, the Jesuits wanted to go. They were clearly not guided by a desire for profit or adventure, but by a manifest aspiration to their own salvation in some scattered islands of the Pacific, which had been barely evangelized. It was in the very act of preaching the gospel to distant souls living in a cluster of islands in the Pacific’s vastness that the Jesuit missionaries worked out their concern for the souls least distant, their own.³⁹ This powerful motive, pointed out by Pierre Chaunu,⁴⁰ questions the opinion of those scholars like Cynthia Ross who recently referred to the Jesuits as simple agents of the Spanish colonial empire.⁴¹

In this essay I want to deconstruct the belief that the Marianas constituted a *res nullius* under Spanish sovereignty. If in the seventeenth century

37 Unlike the Eurocentric perspective of “colonial frontiers,” the notion of “contact zone” is “an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect” (M. L. PRATT, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London and New York, Routledge, 1997 [1992], pp. 6–7). See also J. H. ELLIOT, *Empires of the Atlantic World. Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2007.

38 “Informe del padre Luis Pimentel, Provincial de las islas Filipinas de la Compañía de Jesús de las conveniencias e inconveniencias que puede tener la reducción a nuestra Santa Fe Católica de las islas que llaman de Ladrones” (ARCHIVUM ROMANUM SOCIETATIS IESU [ARSI]. “Puntos para la Carta Anua de Marianas. Año de 1709,” *Philipp.*, 14, Supplementum ad Historiam, 1584–1750, fls. 64r–68r).

39 L. CLOSSEY, op. cit. p. 134. This can be perfectly appreciated in the *litterae indipetarum* (“indipetae”) of the Fondo Gesuitico housed in the *Archivio della Curia* in Rome. Many Jesuits, especially Germans and Italians, asked the Society’s General to send them as missionaries to the East Indies, particularly to the Philippine and Mariana Islands. Apostolic zeal and abnegation were upheld as the worthiest of virtues by these men of the cloth who hoped to become martyrs and attain sanctity. For a recent study of the *indipetae* sent from the Rhineland and upper Germany, see Christoph NEBGEN, *Missionarsberufungen nach Übersee in drei deutschen Provinzen der Gesellschaft Jesu im 17 und 18. Jahrhundert*, Regensburg, Schnell & Steiner, 2007.

40 Pierre CHAUNU, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des ibériques: XVIe, XVIIe, XVIIIe siècles*, Paris, SEVPEN, 1960.

41 Cynthia Ross WIECKO, “Jesuit Missionaries as Agents of Empire: The Spanish-Chamorro War and Ecological Effects of Conversion on Guam, 1668–1769,” *World History Connected*, Vol. 10, no. 3 [Accessed on 02/2010]. Available from http://worldhistoryconnected.press.illinois.edu/10.3/forum_wiecko.html

the islands represented a significant space for what Manfred Kossok termed a “missionary frontier,”⁴² in the eighteenth century the Bourbon monarchy contemplated Guåhån as a possession of great strategic value—“a useful landfall,” in Rogers’ words—in the Manila-Acapulco galleon route, placing it within a global framework of colonial expansion and overgrowth.⁴³ There is no doubt that the Philippines were in the periphery of the Spanish Empire since the sixteenth century, but in relation to the islands to the southern islands of Mindanao, Sulu, Mindoro, and Micronesia, especially, the Caroline Islands, the Marianas and Palau, the Philippines constituted the political, economic and intellectual center of Spanish Asia.⁴⁴ Madrid was far, and Manila, in the island of Luzon, became the capital of the Spanish Asiatic Empire for two fundamental reasons. The first had to do with the “internal frontiers” established in Luzon itself, where the Spanish separated the subject Malays from those yet unconquered peoples; and the second, with the “external frontiers” situated at the south, where the Muslims of Mindanao, Sulu and Northern Borneo—Muslim Malays, Chamorros, Negritos, etc.—obstinately resisted the presence of Catholic missionaries.⁴⁵



1 Map of Mariana Islands by Scherer.

- 42 Manfred Kossok, *La colonització espanyola d'Àmerica. Estudis comparatius*, Barcelona, Avenc & Sociedad Catalana d'Estudis Històrics, 1991, p. 34.
- 43 R. F. ROGERS, *Destiny's Landfall: A History of Guam*, Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press, 1995, p. 1.
- 44 For a perspective that shows the Spanish Empire as less rigid and centralized, see C. DE CASTELNAU-L'ESTOILE and F. REGOURD, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
- 45 M. F. GARCÍA DE LOS ARCOS, *op. cit.*, 1988, pp. 16–7; *Idem*, *op. cit.*, 2011, pp. 57–8.

However, I do not simply privilege the actions of geopolitics and colonial forces as central factors in Guåhån's history, but instead I emphasize cosmopolitanism and circulation of ideas and knowledge as a reciprocal relation between European, American, Asian and Oceanic people. Upon analyzing the rise and fall of the Jesuit evangelization of the Marianas, I pay much attention to the contradictions and slips of moral universalism, putting the archipelago into the wider picture of the Philippines' politics. In doing so, I have benefited from Rodrigue Lévesque's series *History of Micronesia*, which covered in encyclopedic detail a time period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century in the diverse islands of the Pacific.⁴⁶ The series transcribed a selection of documents from the principal archives and libraries of Europe and the Americas, and it constituted an invaluable source for researchers of the Marianas, including relations, royal decrees, reports, maps, as well as the so-called Annual Letters, written by the provincial superiors and including reports on the activities developed by each Jesuit during the previous year. Most of these letters, written in Latin or in the vernacular, are vital chronicles of events from which historians can retrieve demographic, economic and religious information from the missions administered by the Society of Jesus in the Micronesia.

This work is framed within the process of historiographical renovation of the scholarship on the early modern Christian missions in the Pacific, studying the complexities of Jesuit missionisation in the Micronesian islands of Guåhån and the Marianas. On the one hand, it grounds the analysis in the transoceanic relationship of the archipelago and the Viceroyalty of New Spain, which included the Philippines. And on the other hand, it shows native agency in resisting and adapting to impositions from the missionaries, thereby constructing new identities. While canonical historiography has generally accepted narratives of utter conquest and successful evangelization of the Marianas, dating from the arrival in 1668 of the Jesuit founder of the Spanish mission, Diego Luis de San Vitores, I adopt a theoretical position, well expressed by historians Charlotte de Castelnau-L'Estoile, Marie-Lucie Copete, Aliocha Maldavsky, Luke Clossey and Ines G. Županov, who sees the Society of Jesus as a vanguard in a context of production and dissemination of missionary knowledge on a global scale.⁴⁷ Rather than a

46 Rodrigue LÉVESQUE, *History of Micronesia. A Collection of Source Documents*, Vol. 1, Québec, Canada, Lévesque Publications, 1992.

47 C. DE CASTELNAU-L'ESTOILE et al., op. cit.; L. CLOSSEY, op. cit.; J. Gabriel MARTÍNEZ-SERNA, "Procurators and the Making of the Jesuits' Atlantic Network" in Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault (eds.), *Soundings in Atlantic History. Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500–1830*, London, England, Harvard University Press, 2009, p. 189.

need for protection, there was a need to accumulate information to facilitate the evangelization process on the rest of the Pacific through an extensive network of agents and collaborators.

Colonization and sanctity: the blood of martyrs

In this section I want to discuss the conquest and colonization of the Mariana Islands as an example of imperial history through dispossession. Not only did it reduce the islands to a stage of evangelization and warfare but it also constructed the Spanish frontier—geopolitical, territorial, and religious—in the Western Pacific. First I want to bring critically to the fore the Roman Catholic Church’s discourses about martyrdom as a historical displacement of aggression from Europeans, onto the Chamorros, who were categorized as hostile and personified violence. During the initial evangelization phase (1668–1676), Jesuit Fathers Diego Luis de San Vitores, Luis de Medina and Sebastian de Monroy, SJ, became “illustrious heroes” of the Catholic reform, who died at the hands of Matâ’pang, Hiraó, Aguarin and other “indomitable barbarians” defending the faith. As the utmost culmination of the Jesuit missionary experience, martyrdom transformed those islands not only into a land of frontier and a seedbed of martyrs, but into central reference points, places where missionaries had spilled their blood. Heroes are not defined by their deeds as much as by the legends built around them. The letters and biographies of “heroic” martyred missionaries constitute narratives that were meant to enthuse and edify the faithful, moving them to support the Jesuits’ work and their elevation in the Church’s consideration. They all manifest a self-perception of a “Jesuit Us” that confronts the “Pagan Other” in a liminal, frontier territory.

The natives were constructed as enemies the moment the land was consecrated as Christian territory that had to be protected. The Jesuits’ reports leave no doubt about this. The natives were barbarians who attacked, wounded, and mutilated the missionaries and their assistants, throwing them to the sea after martyring them, in a symbolic act of expelling them from the islands.⁴⁸ The systematic destruction of Jesuit schools, residences and churches; the desecration and damage done to the statues and sacred objects used for worship; the profanation of the consecrated host; and the parodies and mockery of Catholic rituals and beliefs were considered manifestations

48 Such was the case with Fr. Francisco Ezquerro and his five murdered companions, as related by the sixth surviving auxiliary (Luis de MORALES and Charles LE GOBIEN, SJ, *Historia de las islas Marianas*, Alexandre Coello (ed.), Madrid, Polifemo, 2013, pp. 213–5).

of Satan's hatred of Christ earthly representatives. Having embraced the sacred mission of bearing witness to God, they suffered their martyrdom as apostles of Christ with acceptance, knowing that the "tragedy of blood" could not be excluded as a possibility.

Amidst the discourses and policies of Catholic reformation, martyrdom was linked to the exaltation of liberty and the existence of one unique and indivisible faith, a complete and integral faith which a true believer could give his life for. Imitating the "king of martyrs" implied not only spreading His word, but also accepting the persecution and the sacrifice that this could bring.⁴⁹ The harder the torments inflicted upon them, the more deserving they were of entering the category of martyr. Death at the pulpit, while in prison, or in the service of the Church constituted various ways of heroically opposing the apostates or enemies of the faith. At the same time, these torments added merits for their redemption in the afterlife.⁵⁰

In the Marianas' martyr letters, the Jesuit authors constructed dramatic or theatrical representations of their deceased confreres as soldiers of Christ who had fought strenuously to turn the Marianas into a "nursery of spiritual flowers." It is not licit for a missionary father or brother to flee his persecutors or death. After all, he is embarked upon a search for perfection through martyrdom and the voluntary acceptance of torments as the straightest way to God. In their minds, they surely recalled Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, when he told his disciples "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."⁵¹ This was interpreted as a clear call for martyrdom, for Christians' display of heroism and courage in the face of danger, and their resignation to what their acceptance and embrace of Christianity could bring. Moreover, according to St. Matthew (10:32; 39), martyrdom conferred automatic salvation.⁵²

49 L. GREGORY, op. cit., pp. 276–87; Antonio RUBIAL GARCÍA, "'A imagen y semejanza'. La Nouvelle-Espagne dans le miroir apostolique, biblique et paléochrétien" in Nejma Kermele and Bernard Lavallé (eds.), *L'Amérique en projet. Utopies, controverses et réformes dans l'empire espagnol (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle)*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2008, p. 76.

50 For an analysis of martyrdom as a type of suicide to accede to salvation, see Ramón TEJA, "Mortis Amor: la muerte voluntaria o la provocación del martirio entre los primeros cristianos (siglos II–IV)" in Francisco Marco Simón, Francisco Pina Polo and José Remesal Rodríguez (eds.), *Formae Mortis: el tránsito de la vida a la muerte en las sociedades antiguas*, Barcelona, Publicacions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2009, p. 135; Antonio RUBIAL GARCÍA, *La justicia de Dios. La violencia física y simbólica de los santos en la historia del cristianismo*, Mexico, Trama Editorial, 2011, pp. 173–205.

51 MATTHEW 16: 24–26.

52 Renato CYMBALISTA, "Relíquias sagradas e a construção do território cristão na idade moderna," *Anais do Museu Paulista*, 14, 2006, p. 32.

The theatrical discourse is faithfully represented in the iconography which depicts the martyrdoms or martyrologies of Jesuits like Luis de Medina, San Vitores, or Sebastián de Monroy, some of the first Marianas martyrs.⁵³ Undoubtedly, their blood constituted a fundamental element in the galvanization of the future Mariana society, a counter-reformist society that would cannibalize its own dead through a cult to its martyrs. Their relics became precious treasures that circled among confreres as cherished symbols of their sacrifice for the faith.⁵⁴



2 Martyrdom of Diego Luis de San Vitores.



3 Martyrdom of Sebastián de Monroy.

53 Edifying letters, written by a Jesuit confrere soon after the martyrdom of a companion, are the perfect examples of the “theatrical discourse” that characterized the Jesuit correspondence (I. G. ŽUPANOV, op. cit.). On May 14, 1671, Fr. Diego Luis de San Vitores wrote on the exemplary life of Fr. Luis de Medina who had just become the Marianas’ protomartyr (Real Academia de la Historia [RAH], *Fondos Cortes*, 567, 9-2676/13, fls. 1r–7v).

54 A. COELLO DE LA ROSA, “Colonización y santidad en las islas Marianas: la sangre de los mártires (1668–1676),” *Hispania Sacra*, Vol. LXIII, no. 128, 2011, pp. 707–45.

Secondly I want to emphasize the discursive transformation of the Marianas into a theatrical performance of violence (1676–1699) where Spanish forces confronted not only with Chamorros but also among themselves.⁵⁵ However, Jesuit hagiographers often downplayed mutinies of ordinary soldiers and their capacity to put at risk the missionary project from within, and instead they emphasized the violent nature of the native Chamorros. Thus, while they were defined as implacable warriors (*ethos guerrero*) induced by the devil, the Jesuit priests and their auxiliaries appeared as victims of the treason and vengeance of their recently converted “children” (*ethos martirial*). Jesuit hagiographers elevated martyrs to the category of spiritual heroes who died in a cosmic struggle between good and evil, transforming their feats into strong elements of cohesion and identity for missionaries destined in the archipelago. But superiors also wrote reports, memorials and “edifying letters” in which they praised the behavior of the “military heroes” of colonization. These included Don José de Quiroga y Losada, captain and sergeant major of the presidio, and the “faithful Chamorro” Don Ignacio de Hineti, *sargento de indios* and “good Christian” who led military expeditions to correct the “anomaly” of Chamorro resistance.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Spanish *reducción* policies consisted of forced removal of all Chamorro natives from the Northern Mariana Islands of Gani first to Saipan in 1698, and later on to Guam and Rota. Therefore, military incursions should not be seen merely as strategies of defense *vis-à-vis* the Mariana natives’ aggressions, but as indispensable activities in the construction of spatial boundaries in the Marianas.⁵⁶ After the so-called Second Spanish-Chamorro War (1683–86), the Jesuit missionaries assumed the political and religious leadership of the islands, becoming the founders of a “missionary state” in which martyrs were permanent moral referents for years to come.⁵⁷ According to this, martyrs acted as permanent symbols⁵⁸ of an “ideal social body” in which the Chamorros, conveniently grouped in the so-called *reducciones* (resettlements), became subjects of the Spanish king.

55 Stephanie MAWSON, “Rebellion and Mutiny in the Mariana Islands, 1680–1690,” *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 50, no. 2, 2015, pp. 128–48.

56 Christophe GIUDICELLI, “Pacificación y construcción discursiva de la frontera. El poder instituyente de la guerra en los confines del Imperio (siglos XVI–XVII),” in Bernard Lavallé (ed.), *Máscaras, tretas y rodeos del discurso colonial en los Andes*, Lima, IFEA & PUCP, 2005, p. 169.

57 A. COELLO DE LA ROSA, “Colonización y santidad en las islas Marianas: los soldados de Gedeón (1676–1690),” *Hispania*, Vol. LXX, no. 234, 2010b, pp. 17–44.

58 Guillermo WILDE argues that this “mission ethnogenesis” is characterized by four elements: a) concentration of the natives in villages; b) segregation of their residences; c) formation of a political, economic and military regime; d) imposition of a (Western) rational regime of time and space (“Actores indígenas, simbolismo del poder y formas nativas de especialidad en las misiones de frontera.” *XIII Missoes jesuíticas. Jornadas Internacionais. Fronteiras e identidades: povos indígenas e missoes religiosas*, Dourados, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brasil, Aug. 31, 2010).

From the Marianas' Crisis to Salvationist Utopia

In this section I explore the crisis of the Marianas in the context of the discovery of the new spiritual frontiers in the Philippines and Micronesia. At the turn of the eighteenth century the Philippine governors began to consider the Mariana Islands as a cumbersome and expensive burden. Since the arrival of the first Jesuit missionaries in Guam in 1668, its perceived isolation in relation to Manila, its poverty, and its lack of mineral resources meant that the Marianas had to be subsidized by the Empire. The Acapulco galleons had to stop regularly in the archipelago with the royal *situado*, the subsidy funds from the Viceregal Treasury of Mexico. Some merchants and many among the Manila authorities argued that this practice had a detrimental impact on the regular traffic of the Acapulco trade route, and went as far as “recommending” that the galleons go on their way and leave the Marianas’ Chamorros to their own devices. This was the view of Governor Diego de Salcedo (1663–1668), who, according to Fr. Luis de Morales, “had secretly ordered the captains of the ships that went from New Spain to the Philippines not to touch the island of Guåhån [Guam], so that the missionaries in them, left without assistance and at the mercy of the barbarians, die or are forced to abandon the islands.”⁵⁹

While some interim governors, such as Don Francisco de Medrano y Asiaín (1700–1704) and Don Manuel de Argüelles y Valdés (1725–30) recommended its dismantlement in the face of their limited lucrativeness, intellectuals and political philosophers such as Francisco de Seijas y Lobera (1650–1705), refused to abandon the archipelago’s believers, arguing for their repopulation via the optimization of commerce with the Philippine Islands and New Spain. For Father Lorenzo Bustillo, acting commissary of the Holy Office, Spanish sovereignty over the Marianas went beyond economic concerns, for protecting the Christian (Catholic) mission there was a moral imperative.⁶⁰ As a result, Philip V (1700–46) could not simply abandon the Chamorros (and the natives of the other adjacent islands) to their fate, forfeiting the duties of evangelization contracted by his predecessors in virtue of the Spanish *Regio Patronato*. Moreover, the Crown was also concerned about their material well-being, so that it ordered the annual dispatch of a *patache* from Cavite to the Marianas with supplies and provisions, all of which was paid for by the Philippine government.⁶¹

59 L. de MORALES and C. LE GOBIEN, SJ, op. cit., pp. 208–9.

60 ARCHIVO GENERAL DE LA NACIÓN [AGN], *Inquisición*, 543, Ex 49, fl. 435.

61 R. LÉVESQUE, op. cit., Vol. 8, p. 420.

In this context, new social categories (*'mestizo'*, *castizos*, and *criollos*) began to emerge as a result of mixing indigenous Chamorro with foreigners. The not uncommon situation of bigamy among Spanish men has to be understood as a reflection of the transoceanic movements or migratory flows of the archipelago. Bigamy was a consequence of the type of cross-cultural sexual relations and displacements that characterized the late seventeenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries, and the Marianas were not characterized by a static social order, but by a dynamic, mobile and open society. Jesuit commissars incited inquisitorial processes against these Spanish bigamists, mostly soldiers, who were posted to presidio of the island of Guåhån. The accused constituted a sample of the heterogeneity and diversity contained in the notion of Spanishness. Moreover, they reveal how subjects in the Empire, without questioning the operating legal and normative principles, would adapt them to their vital needs, providing an image of familial relations in the frontier spaces of the Spanish Empire that is much more dynamic and fluid than is usually acknowledged.⁶²

Finally, I focus upon the diverse expeditions to Palau and the Caroline Islands and their appearance in the Jesuit imaginary as real spaces where they could implement an ideal society governed by justice and geared towards collective well-being, following the principles of Christian universality, and distinctly opposed to, and free of, the arbitrariness and immorality of the “bad government” of the Marianas. As is well-known, the eighteenth century was the utopian century. The Caroline archipelago represented for the Jesuits the nostalgia of the Lost Paradise where they could “concrete” the Christian-humanist utopias of Thomas More and Tommaso Campanella. These “abstract utopias”—as explained by Ernst Bloch—sought the recovery of the original purity of primitive Christianity in a virgin landscape free of the violence, corruption and greed, where the expansion of Catholicism truly responded to the moral duty of the Spanish Crown overseas.⁶³ Even though many historians have pointed out the strategic importance of the Marianas islands for the Spanish administration,⁶⁴ it was not until the

62 Alexandre COELLO DE LA ROSA, “*Bígamos transoceánicos: reconciliación de abuso y perversión de la 'santidad' del matrimonio en las Islas Marianas, siglo XVIII*,” *Colonial Latin American Historical Review (CLAHR)*, Vol. 16, no. 2, 2007, pp. 117–56.

63 Cited in Salvador BERNABÉU ALBERT, “Las utopías y el reformismo borbónico” in Agustín GUIMERÁ (ed.), *El reformismo borbónico*, Madrid, Alianza Universidad, 1996, pp. 251–4.

64 R. F. ROGERS, op. cit; Omaira BRUNAL-PERRY, “Las islas Marianas enclave estratégico en el comercio entre México y Filipinas” in *España y el Pacífico. Legazpi*, Vol. I, Leoncio Cabrero (ed.), Madrid, Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales & Ministerio de Cultura, 2004; James B. TUELLER, “Los chamorros de Guam y la colonización española: una tercera etapa (1698–1747)” in M.^a Dolores Elizalde, Josep M.^a Fradera and Luis Alonso (eds.), *Imperios y naciones en el Pacífico*, Vol. II (“Colonialismo e identidad nacional en Filipinas y Micronesia”), Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), 2001, pp. 389–90.

failure of the expeditionary mission of Fr. Giovanni Antonio Cantova in 1731 to the Caroline Islands that the Crown decided to reinforce its presence in the Marianas archipelago.⁶⁵

The Baroque representation of power

In this section I examine the public ceremonies that took place in the Marianas following Philip V's death (1747). Despite the islands' poverty and isolation, it was not the first time that the investiture of a Bourbon king was commemorated in Hagåtña. On September 21, 1725, Don Manuel de Arguelles y Valdés (1725–30), Lieutenant Governor of the Marianas, had celebrated the crowning of Luis I, the first-born son of King Philip V, who



5 *Insula Palaos Seu Nova Philippina*. Probst, Palau (1748). Courtesy of the Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC)

65 Charles E. O'NEILL, SJ, and Joaquín M.^a DOMÍNGUEZ, SJ, (dirs.), *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús. Biográfico-Temático*, Vol. I, Madrid – Roma, Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu (IHSI) & Universidad Pontificia Comillas, 2001, pp. 639–40.

had abdicated in favor in January 10, 1724.⁶⁶ A platform with floral decorations symbolizing the young king's virtue was built, and upon it, the governor gave the royal standard to a royal *alférez* (standard-bearer) chosen for the occasion, his own son Don Carlos de Argüelles y Valdés, who raised it in the name of the Marianas in honor of the new king.⁶⁷ A retinue formed by the governor and his relatives, and the colonial officials and *vecinos* was followed by the royal standard-bearer with the royal standard with the royal coats-of-arms on one side and the Hagåtña coat-of-arms on the other. The procession was completed by the military squadron.⁶⁸ Since 1651, when the court was permanently settled in Madrid, monarchs had become even more distant from their subjects.⁶⁹ To compensate for this physical distance or absence, which was more accentuated in imperial or multi-territorial monarchies such as the Spanish, institutional and symbolic resources were developed to guarantee the realm's cohesion.⁷⁰ Proximity to the king—or to the symbols that represented him—marked the status of his subalterns.⁷¹ Governors and viceroys acted as his delegates; the authorities throughout the Empire had

66 Philip V abdicated in favor of his son on January 10, 1724. Luis I was crowned on February 9, but ruled for only seven months, for in of August 31, 1724 he died of smallpox at the age of seventeen and his father resumed his reign. The fact that in the Marianas they heard of his crowning one year after his death confirms the isolation and marginality of the islands. In this regard, see ARXIU HISTÒRIC DE LA COMPANYIA DE JESÚS A CATALUNYA [AHC-JC], “Llegada a las Marianas de dos navíos para anunciar la muerte de Felipe V y coronación de Fernando VI,” Hagåtña, 18/6/1747, FILPAS-093, Doc. 66, fl. 3r. See also Marjorie G. DRIVER, *El Palacio. The Spanish Palace in Agaña. A Chronology of Men and Events, 1668–1899*, Guam, MARC – University of Guam, 1984, p. 21.

67 Marjorie G. DRIVER, *The Spanish Governors of the Mariana Islands, Notes on their activities and the Saga of the Palacio. Their Residence and the Seat of Colonial Government in Agaña*, Guam: Richard F. Taitano & MARC & University of Guam, 2005, pp. 25–6. Although there is no documentary record of it, it can be presumed that there was a commemoration of this sort in 1726. In the funeral ceremony for the death of Luis I held in 1725 in Mexico City, the cathedral housed an astrological tumulus which according to Víctor MÍNGUEZ represented this second monarchical eclipse (the first one having been the death of the last Hapsburg king, Charles II) (Víctor MÍNGUEZ CORNELLES, “Los ‘Reyes de las Américas.’ Presencia y propaganda de la Monarquía Hispánica en el Nuevo Mundo” in Agustín González Enciso and Jesús María Usunáriz Garayoa [eds.], *Imagen del rey, imagen de los reinos. Las ceremonias públicas en la España Moderna [1500–1814]*, Pamplona, EUNSA, 1999, pp. 244–5).

68 AHCJC. FILHIS-061. E-I-c5 [r] Cuadernillo “Muerte de Felipe V y Coronación de Fernando VI (1747) en Agaña Marianas,” fls. 2r–2v. This is translated as “Dossier Upon the Occasion of the Royal Funerary Rites for Felipe V and the Proclamation of the Coronation of Fernando VI in the City of Agaña, 1747,” Mangilao, Guam, Micronesian Area Research Center, 1987.

69 Carmelo LISÓN TOLOSANA, *La imagen del rey (Monarquía, realeza y poder ritual en la Casa de los Austrias)*, Madrid, Espasa Calpe, 1992, p. 131.

70 Agustín GONZÁLEZ ENCISO, “Del rey ausente al rey distante” in A. González Enciso and J. M. Usunáriz Garayoa (eds.), *Imagen del rey, imagen de los reinos. Las ceremonias públicas en la España Moderna (1500–1814)*, Pamplona, EUNSA, 1999, p. 3; Víctor MÍNGUEZ CORNELLES, *Los reyes distantes. Imágenes del poder en el México virreinal*, Castelló de la Plana, Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I, 1995, pp. 23–8.

71 C. LISÓN TÀ, op. cit., p. 148.

portraits, stamps, or small likenesses of the king to celebrate and share in the liturgy of royal power. These reproductions ensured that the monarch was symbolically present in faraway spaces, constituting fundamental elements of his sovereignty according to Alejandra Osorio.⁷² And royal ceremonies completed the representational aspects necessary for the personalistic rule of an absolute monarchy in which the monarch was as far-removed as was the Spanish king from his subjects in the Pacific.

On this second occasion, the governor decided to hold the funerary rites for king Philip V on July 27, and three days later, on Sunday July 30, the coronation celebration for Ferdinand VI (1746–1759). In the margins of the Empire, these complementary ceremonies—Osorio has called them “the two faces of Janus”—meant to represent the figure of the monarch and reinforce the loyalty and fealty of his subjects, needed the collaboration of the Jesuit missionaries.⁷³ The various acts that took place to commemorate the death of king Philip V and the crowning of his heir, Ferdinand VI, offer a window into these practices. Using documents and reports written by captain Don Jorge Eduardo del Castillo, the Marianas Secretary of Government and War, I have analyzed the official funeral and coronation ceremonies as “a panoply of royal power.”⁷⁴ Such commemorations reflected the panegyric character of a monarch so distant, he was practically absent. But these festive events did not act only as organizers of the social system, as Maravall would say; they also allowed social and political tensions to be released in an environment shared by “elite” and “subalterns,” groups in power and the plebe.⁷⁵

From the Crowning of Our Lady of the Light to Jesuit demise

Next I analyze the persecution of certain religious practices associated with the Jesuits, such as the devotion of Our Lady of the Light, popularized

72 Throughout the eighteenth century, portraits were increasingly substituted by stamps which were distributed among the assistants (Alejandra OSORIO, “The King in Lima: Simulacra, Ritual, and Rule in Seventeenth-Century Peru,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 84, no. 3, 2004a, pp. 450 and 471; *Idem*, *El rey en Lima. El simulacro real y el ejercicio del poder en la Lima del diecisiete*, Lima, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, Documentos de Trabajo, 2004, p. 34). However, in the Marianas such portable graphic images had not yet replaced the visual grammar of portraits.

73 A. OSORIO, art. cit., p. 473.

74 A. COELLO DE LA ROSA, “El Fénix en las Marianas (1747),” *Revista de Indias*, Vol. 70, no. 250, 2010a, pp. 779–808.

75 José Antonio MARAVALL, *La cultura del Barroco. Análisis de una estructura histórica*, Madrid, Ariel, 1975, p. 265; *Idem*, “Teatro, fiesta e ideología en el Barroco” in José M.^a Díez Borque (ed.), *Teatro y fiesta en el Barroco. España e Iberoamérica*, Barcelona, Serbal, 1986, p. 87. Maravall argued that baroque culture was centered on an urban social order that needed to be constantly maintained and reproduced, referring to the Baroque as a historical concept that “belongs to the realm of social history” (J. A. MARAVALL, op. cit., 1975, p. 48).

by members of the Society of Jesus during the rule of Ferdinand VI and the first years of Charles III. The story of Our Lady of Light goes as follows. In 1722, a “very devout woman” born in Palermo had a vision of the Virgin holding the soul of a man who was about to be devoured by a Leviathan.⁷⁶ She quickly shared her vision with a Jesuit named Giuseppe Maria Genovesi (1681–1757), who commissioned a painter to capture the image on canvas.⁷⁷ Over her head, the angels crowned the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Heaven. In the painting, she is dressed as the Immaculate Conception, with a white tunic and an enamelled sash at her waist, covered with a blue mantle symbolising her purity and chastity.⁷⁸ While her right hand held the soul that was about to fall into the jaws of a malign monster, on the left an Infant Jesus held a burning heart, the symbol of God’s charity and love.⁷⁹ Ten years later, on the 2nd of July 1732, the image was first moved to the hospice at the Villa de León in the bishopric of Michoacán. It was later solemnly moved to the cathedral church, whereupon its worship extended beyond the limits of the parish. Not only were copies of the Most Holy Mother of Light made, but books, novenaries, devotional texts and papers were also published with the aim of promoting her worship, and then spread all around New Spain (Mexico City, Santa Fe, Puebla, Zacatecas) and the Philippines (1750–1760s).

The cult of Our Lady of Light contributed to social cohesiveness and continuity in the Mexican communities, especially those around the Marian Congregations that were founded close to the Jesuit Colleges in New Spain.⁸⁰

76 Norman NEUERBURG holds that the claim that this woman was a nun is inaccurate (“La madre Santísima de la Luz,” *The Journal of San Diego History*, 41, no. 2, 1995 [Accessed on 02/2010]. Available from <https://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/95spring/laluz.htm>).

77 *El infierno abierto al cristiano* (1701) by the Italian Pablo Señeri, SJ, popularised the images of Hell through engravings and paintings (Abraham VILLAVICENCIO, “Suplicios eternos: El infierno abierto al cristiano de Pablo Señeri, SJ,” in Teodoro Hampe and Alexandre Coello (eds.), *Escritura, imaginación política y la Compañía de Jesús (siglos XVII-XVIII)*, Bellaterra, 2011, pp. 185–209).

78 Modern historiography acknowledges a direct linkage between the cult of Santa Marian Kamalen and a statue brought by Father San Vitores. This image is commonly associated as the referent to *Dulce Nombre de Maria*, which, together with the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, has become linked with the present-day Basilica as the direct descendent of the modest San Juan de Letran chapel built by San Vitores in Saint Ignatius Hagåtña in 1668 (Marilyn Anne JORGENSEN, *Expressive Manifestations of Santa Marian Camalin as Key Symbol in Guamanian Culture*, PhD dissertation, Austin, University of Texas, 1984, pp. 21–2).

79 José de TOBAR, *Invocación...*, cited in Enrique GIMÉNEZ LÓPEZ, “La devoción a la Madre Santísima de la Luz: un aspecto de la represión del jesuitismo en la España de Carlos III” in Enrique Giménez López (ed.), *Expulsión y exilio de los jesuitas españoles*, Alicante, Universidad de Alicante, 1997, p. 218.

80 Juan Carlos VIZUETE, “En las fronteras de la ortodoxia. La devoción a la Virgen de la Luz Madre Santísima de la Luz en Nueva España” in Ricardo Izquierdo Benito and Fernando Martínez Gil (eds.), *Religión y heterodoxias en el mundo hispánico. Siglos XIV–XVIII*, Madrid, Ediciones Sílex, 2011, pp. 256 and 267.

However, despite the popular fervour that accompanied its founding, her worship was soon questioned by the Church authorities because it was deemed inappropriate that the Virgin would intercede directly as a saviour, instead of playing her role as a mediator with her son Jesus, who along with God was the only source of salvation. This is the version that can be gleaned, according to Neuerburg, from a reading of the 1737 Spanish translation that narrates the creation of the original painting: the Virgin not only holds the soul, preventing it from falling into Hell, but also helps it leave the inferno.⁸¹ This aspect of salvation in the worship of Our Lady of Light was already present in some Jesuit works that were widely disseminated in Europe and Mexico, such as *El infierno abierto al cristiano* (1701) by Jesuit Father Pablo Señeri, which also reached the Mariana Islands. In order to avoid eternal condemnation, one had to first call upon the Holy Spirit, but also the Virgin Mary as the “Queen of Angels” and “Helper of Christians.”



6 Images of Our Lady of the Light.

81 Giovanni Antonio GENOVESI, SJ, *La Devoción de María Madre Santísima de la Luz* (1737), cited in N. NEUERBURG, art. cit., note 10. See also E. GIMÉNEZ LÓPEZ, op. cit., p. 214.

Studying the participation of the autochthonous population in this religious brotherhood founded by the Society of Jesus in the island of Guam around 1758 in a “bottom-up” analysis of Jesuit history, will reveal how continuous interactions with the natives transformed the mission projects initiated by San Vitores at the end of the seventeenth century. These projects defined new forms of social organization, which were fully adopted by the local chamorros, who in the end reacted against their initial promoters.

It will also contextualize the anti-Jesuit propaganda that swept the Spanish Empire, and within which Jesuit Father Francisc Xavier (or Franz) Reitterberger, founder of the congregation of Our Lady of Light of St. Ignatius of Hagåtña (1758), was tried by the Inquisition. Most of the Chamorro population that had survived the wars of the late seventeenth century was female; many of these women survived the conquest period and their descendents prevailed over the social and cultural institutions in the archipelago. After the Jesuits were expelled from the Philippines (1768) and the Marianas (1769), Chamorro women accused the deceased Fr. Reitterberger of having abused female members of the Congregation. This was the last yet meaningful chapter of the Jesuit presence in the Marianas. While Jesuit historiography has situated women into marginal roles, historical documentation demonstrates otherwise. Their participation into the Congregation of the Virgin of Light allowed them to preserve the essence of Chamorro culture’s vitality. By denouncing Fr. Reitterberger’s abuses, they challenged Spanish patrilineal standards of reference that contradicted traditional matrilineal bases of Chamorro society. This defies the practice of Western canonical historiography of emphasizing the demise of Chamorro cultural agency, thus approaching Spanish colonialism as an ambivalent process of control and resistance on the part of the coloniser and the colonised.

Conclusion

At the eighteenth century the Spanish nation was defined according to a Christian legal-moral order. Military dominance alone did not guarantee the permanence of Spanish sovereignty, which needed the creation of a political community, and in the racially and culturally diverse colonies, this community was provided by the common Christian faith.⁸² After the failure of the Carolines’ colonization enterprise, the metropolitan authorities had decided to reinforce Spanish presence in the Marianas *vis-à-vis* the dangers

82 Pablo FERNÁNDEZ ALBADALEJO, *Materia de España. Cultura política e identidad en la España moderna*, Madrid, Marcial Pons Historia, 2007, p. 110.

of foreign aggression, thus obviating earlier recommendations to dismantle or reduce the presidio at Guam. The weaker the imperial frontiers became, the more insistent were the Bourbons in ensuring Spanish presence in maritime Southeast Asia, as the advances of rival European powers and their allies increasingly threatened to take these overseas markets and colonies.⁸³

As a matter of fact, by the mid-eighteenth century the Jesuits could not maintain so many open fronts. Procurators such as Pedro de San Cristóbal and José Calvo insistently requested the abandonment of the Mariana archipelago, or in its defect, a significant reduction in the number of missionaries stationed there, so that they could have enough men to go to the Muslim kingdoms of Mindanao and Joló. Using the presidio at Zamboanga as their home base, the Jesuits longed for converting the Muslim populations at the interior of the southern island of Mindanao. However, not enough missionaries were available, so that some prominent procurators, such as Fr. José Calvo, suggested the gradual abandonment of the Mariana Islands because of its scarce population, proposing instead that a relocation of Guam's Jesuits would benefit the spiritual conquest of the new "frontier of Christendom" located down south.

Thus, in spite of the maneuvering capacity and agency that the Jesuits of the "periphery" had *vis-à-vis* the Roman "center" in terms of geopolitical spirituality, in the end the provincials had to obey the Spanish Crown and stay put.⁸⁴ The former "Ladrones Islands," strategic spaces of contention *vis-à-vis* possible English and Dutch incursions into the Philippines, especially after the British occupied Manila from 1762 to 1764, were to remain as Jesuit missions until 1769, when the Society of Jesus was expelled by a royal edict of Spain.

83 For this reason, the Crown ordered Governor Manuel Muro (1794–1802) to build a series of small fortlets or batteries strategically situated on hillocks or promontories that could protect the empire's rearguard (Javier GALVÁN GUIJO (coord.), *Islas del Pacífico: el legado español*, Madrid, Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, 1998, pp. 9–26).

84 I. G. ŽUPANOV, *op. cit.*, pp. 205–18.

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