

Jesuit Presence in the Mariana Islands: A Historiographic Overview (1668-1769)*

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Dedicated to Marjorie G. Driver (†2019)

Abstract

This article is a historiographic overview of the conquest and evangelization of the Mariana Islands (XVII-XVIII centuries). Since the pioneering work of renowned scholars of Micronesian history, such as Marjorie G. Driver and Francis X. Hezel, historians, archaeologists and anthropologists have analyzed Jesuit missions not only as a complement to colonial power dynamics in the Asia-Pacific, but also as a privileged field for analyzing cross-cultural encounters. Faced with essentialist approaches that question the “aboriginal” character of the current CHamoru of the Marianas, other studies question their supposed disappearance, and appeal to their cultural continuity in historical time. It is also a small tribute to Marjorie G. Driver, pioneer in colonial studies on the Spanish presence in Micronesia, who left us on September 20, 2019, at the age of 95.

Keywords: Jesuits, Mariana Islands, 17th and 18th centuries, Pacific Ocean, globalization.

Introduction

The island of Guåhån (or Guam) is the largest and southernmost of the isles and islands that comprise the Marianas archipelago, a set of fifteen volcanic and coral islands that extend from north to south, forming a wide arc of more than 800 kilometers in the western Pacific, between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator (Ciaramitaro, 2018, p. 198). Most of them are very small and practically uninhabited (*terrae nullius*), but the largest, inhabited islands have good aquifers and fertile land as well as bays and coves that make them accessible and safe for navigation.¹ Evidence suggests that

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¹ The archipelago is composed of two sets of islands. The southern islands include Guåhån (also Guajan, Guahan, Guam or San Juan); Luta (also Rota, Zarpana or Santa Ana); Aquigan or Aguiguan (also Santo Ángel); Tinian (also Buena Vista Mariana); and Saipan (also San José). The northern isles, most of which are uninhabited and experience more volcanic activity, are collectively referred to as Gani in the CHamoru language, and include Farallón de Medinilla; Anatahan (San Joaquín); Sarigan or Sariguan (San Carlos); Guguan (San Felipe); Alamagán (La Concepción); Pagán (San Ignacio); Agrijan or Agrigan

the first settlers were probably Austronesians originating from the northern Philippines or Maritime Southeast Asia circa 1500 BCE (Jalandoni, 2011, p. 28; Montón, S., Bayman, J., Moragas-Segura, 2018, p. 309).

The conquest and colonization of the far-off Marianas was never a profitable enterprise for the Spanish Crown. Compared to the wealth promised by the metal-rich American continent, the Marianas' lack of precious metals seemed to justify the minimal attention that the Crown paid them. Their topography, crisscrossed by small gullies and ravines, discouraged large-scale agriculture. Moreover, their coasts were not easily accessible to the galleons en route from Acapulco to Manila.² But none of this deterred the Jesuits, who, led by Father Diego Luis de San Vitores (1627-72),³ wanted to plant the seed of the Gospel in these lands and join the ranks of the martyrs who died for the Catholic faith.

The contemporary historiography agrees that the permanence of the mission was not determined by geographic, economic or demographic factors –the archipelago's isolation; its poverty and lack of mineral resources; or its relatively scarce population. The first transactions between CHamoru society and Micronesian cultures, and the later trade with European ships after the initial landing of Fernão de Magalhães (1480-1521) in Guåhån on March 6th, 1521, probably in Umatac Bay,⁴ constituted different phases of a continuum of regional and global exchanges between Europeans and the inhabitants of the Marianas archipelago (e. g., Kushima, 2001; Quimby, 2011, pp. 1-26; Thomas, 1990, pp. 146-47).⁵ The frontiers, or contact zones, are not rigid lines that separate groups of culturally distinct peoples,⁶ but ambivalent spaces, fraught with contradictions, where the active agents of what Serge Gruzinski (2004) denominated "the first globalization" played a fundamental role in the cultures' transformation (Gruzinski, 2004; Mola, 2018, pp. 181-200).

In the last few decades, historians have interpreted the first modern Catholic missions not only as a complement of Western imperialism, but as a field in which complex intercultural encounters with several logics took place (Rubiés, 2013a, p. 267).⁷ By situating Jesuit missions in a global process that underlines the cultural and economic relations between Europe and the Micronesian islands, recent studies have looked at the possibilities and limitations of religious conversion in Guåhån and the

(San Francisco Javier); Asonson or Sonsong (Asunción); Maug, Mangs or Mangas (San Lorenzo or Las Monjas); and Urcas or Urracas.

² "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 sancta fe católica de las islas que llaman de Ladrones" (ARSI, Philipp. 14, ff. 64r-68r; Reichert, 2014, p. 162).

³ For a brief biography of Diego Luis de San Vitores, see Saborido Cursach, 1985; Baró Queralt, 2010, pp. 16-19.

⁴ Not surprisingly, Umatac Bay is nowadays an important place in the collective memory of the island of Guåhån. See Montón, S., Bayman, J., Moragas-Segura, 2018, pp. 320-21.

⁵ The exact location of Magellan's landing place is still a matter of debate. See Rogers and Ballendorf, 1989, pp. 193-208.

⁶ The concept of "contact zone" was first coined by Adorno, 2007, p. 329. See also Pratt, 1997, pp. 1-11.

⁷ For an analysis of the development of a "mediating contact culture" between Spaniards and CHamoru, see Quimby, 2011, pp. 1-26; Quimby, 2012.

islands north of Saipan (collectively referred to as Gani). There, the *encomiendas*, or the Spanish system of forced labor that characterized most of the Americas and the Philippines, did not prevail. Between 1686 and 1700, after the second Spanish-CHamoru war (1684), Jesuits tried to reduce the native CHamoru—whom they often referred to as *Marianos*—into six parishes of Guåhån.⁸ This period, known as “La reducción” (the Reduction), saw the consolidation of a series of disciplinary and heterotopic technologies on the islands (Moral de Eusebio, 2016, pp. 229-232), which resulted in a system of sociopolitical organization—reductions, schools, haciendas—that guaranteed the functioning and exploitation of native labor in royal haciendas (Driver, 1991; Dixon, Welch, Bulgrin and Horrocks, 2020, pp. 70-71).

At the turn of the century, the native population was dwindling, and some Jesuit missionaries contemplated the possibility of abandoning the Mariana Islands and relocating, with the reduced CHamoru, to the Visayan missions of the Society of Jesus, which were threatened by the continuous razzias sent by the Muslim states of the southern Philippines (Mindanao, Jolo) (Coello de la Rosa, 2019, pp. 729-763). Others wanted to use the Mariana archipelago as a springboard to explore and evangelize other Pacific islands further south (such as Palau and the Carolina Islands). In any case, it was in 1731, after the failure of the reconnaissance mission led by Father Giovanni Antonio Cantova (1686-1731), that the Spanish Crown decided to withdraw exploration missions and bolster its presence in the Marianas. These Oceanic islands continued the spiritual tutelage of the Jesuits until 1769, when the Society of Jesus was finally expelled from the Philippines.

The present essay shows that these imperialist strategies of power and domination have obscured other, local dynamics through which the native CHamoru opposed European normativity and/or submitted to them through transcultural processes. Likewise, it reviews a new historiography of the Marianas, which locates the islands and its peoples within the global history of Christianity. Within this framework, scholars have rejected the notion that the “true” CHamoru disappeared due to their destruction, extinction, and “mixing” with other groups, which had led to the representation of the surviving CHamoru as non-native. Defying the center-periphery model, indigenous peoples are addressed as active participants in the elaboration of politics at a greater scale and not passive, defeated recipients of Western ideas and customs. The relationships established between European, American, Asiatic and Oceanic peoples are seen as historically changing interactions and negotiations embedded in the global circulation of ideas. Instead of emphasizing the supposed isolation and distance of the Mariana Islands, the “new missional history” works from a “glocal” perspective and situates the CHamoru in the international community as members of the Spanish empire and the global Catholic Church.

One of the main tasks when writing on the global conscience of the Jesuit project is determining the geographic limits of the territories of Spanish Asia that were a part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain (Luque Talaván and Manchado López, vol. 1,

⁸ Taitano, Origin of CHamoru as an Ethnic Identifier. Retrieved from <https://www.guampedia.com/origin-of-chamorro-as-an-ethnic-identifier/>

2008, pp. 13-15).⁹ If the Captaincy General of the Philippines was in the rearguard of what once was known as “the Spanish lake” (1513-1607) (Schurz, 1922, pp. 181-94; Spate, 1979; Bernabéu Albert, 1992; Martínez Shaw, *vol. 1*, 2001, pp. 3-25, pp. 7-17) but which should have been known, in Bonialian’s words, as “*un lago indiano*” (Bonialian, 2017, p. 136),¹⁰ the Marianas were a marginal space within that rearguard, a transit point between New Spain and Manila that some French intellectuals would probably represent as a “non-place” (De Certeau, 1992, pp. 186-87; Augé, 1992). As Ulrike Strasser points out, the history of the Marianas constitutes an intriguing exception to the rule of Spanish conquest and expansion, which was officially ended in 1573. While the Spanish monarchy was undergoing a political and economic crisis, the impulse to establish a mission in the Marianas archipelago was taken up exclusively as a Jesuit initiative. The Society of Jesus, and particularly, Father Diego Luis de San Vitores, longed to evangelize the natives who lived there and were entirely indifferent to the islands’ profitability or usefulness for the Crown (Strasser, 2017, p. 212; Strasser, 2020, pp. 113-46).

The Jesuit Arrival in the Philippines

By the mid-sixteenth century, the Spanish Crown had established an overseas empire of colossal dimensions (Schmidt, 2012, pp. 451-66). European trade in the Far East, established since the fifteenth century, wove a network of “articulated” circuits that played an important, if irregular, role in the growing Atlantic trading system (Bailyn, 2009, p. 4). Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Christian missions were key propagators of European “civilization” and its systems of knowledge (Prosperi, 1992, pp. 189-92). Christianity, as a matter of principle, did not tolerate religious diversity. Its universalistic vocation tied the historical and moral unity of humanity with the one true religion. As a frontier institution, the Jesuit mission sought to incorporate the indigenous peoples into the Spanish colonial empire by converting them into Catholicism, which necessitated the adoption of significant cultural norms, after having established formally recognized communities of sedentary converts under the tutelage of missionaries and the protection and sovereignty of the Spanish Crown.¹¹ This joint institution of indigenous communities under the tutelage of missionaries was meant to counter, or at least, check, the power of soldiers and

⁹ Transpacific trade’s importance grew after Chinese traders settled near Manila (Parián, Binondo). Traders were limited to a cargo of 250.000 pesos de 8 reales in merchandise from Manila to Acapulco. On the return trip, galleons could bring to the archipelago 500.000 *pesos fuertes de plata* (8-reales silver coins), out of which came the salaries of government employees, payroll for the soldiers, and stipends for the missionaries (the *situado*) (Yuste López, 1984, pp. 10; 14). In 1702, these quantities were increased to 300.000 “pieces of eight” of products from Asia and 600.000 pesos of silver (Yuste, *art. cit.*, p. 15). In 1734, they were increased again, to 500.000 pesos of merchandise embarked in Manila, and one million silver pesos from Acapulco (Schurtz, 1992; Yuste López, *art. cit.*, pp. 15-16; Yuste López, 2008, *vol. 1*, pp. 195-216; pp. 202-205).

¹⁰ “Indianos” were the peninsular Spaniards who made their fortunes in the Americas and returned to the peninsula. In this case, they moved on to the Philippines.

¹¹ Hausberger, 1997, p. 63, cited in Ciaramitaro, 2018, p. 199.

functionaries in the expanding frontier, who often abused native labor, provoking unwanted antagonisms and discontent (Wright, 2019).

In the context of the creation of new imperial spaces,¹² the Society of Jesus, considered the first global religious organization, led the cultural and religious assimilation of the Spanish and Portuguese eastern kingdoms (Clossey, 2006, pp. 41-58; Clossey, 2008, pp. 1-19). The Jesuits arrived in the Philippines on 1581 from New Spain, where they became agents of transformation of the cultures with which they interacted. Schools or colleges were the starting point, and from there, the members of the Society organized “flying missions”, which were soon followed by the “long missions” sent to groups of “infidels”, most importantly in the Visayas and the southern Philippines.¹³ To deal with these multiple fronts, General Claudio Acquaviva (1581-1615) sent twenty-five priests, under the auspices of Philip II (1556-98), who promoted a royal decree that separated the mission territory in that *finis terrae* into four areas: Pampanga and Ilocos, which were to be under the tutelage of the Augustinians; Camarines and Tayabas, under the Franciscans; the Visayas, whose tutelage would be shared by Augustinians and Jesuits; and the sangleyes of the Manila Parian and the provinces of Pangasinan and Cagayan, entrusted to the Dominicans for evangelization (García de los Arcos, 1988, pp. 50-51). The lion’s share went to the Franciscans and the Augustinians, while the Jesuits received the poorest and least populated areas of Samar and Leyte (O’Phelan, 1967, pp. 49-50; Gutiérrez, 1992, pp. 71-73; 204; Gutiérrez, 2011, p. 471).

In the Philippines and in other parts of the Spanish empire, the notion of “good government” or policing, in Aristotelian terms—*politeia*—entailed the care and control of the population. This was accomplished by submitting the native populations to their parishes, which were founded on the basis of a new global Catholic perspective. As argued by Richard Kagan, “for Spaniards, *policía* signified life in a community whose citizens were organized into a republic” (Kagan, 2000, p. 27). Jesuits, like the rest of the priests and missionaries, were not only acting as ministers of God, but also as political and economic administrators of the missions in their charge. In theory, they tended to reach their goals: natives were evangelized, transformed into Christians by means of the missionary activity. But in practice, the Jesuit identity was transformed by the variegated relations entered into with indigenous peoples and persons during several decades—resistance, negotiation, appropriations, resignifications, and accommodations.¹⁴

¹² My understanding of the concept of “empire” is invested in the idea of “webs of trade, knowledge, migration, military power, and political intervention that allowed certain communities to assert their influence and sovereignty over other groups” (Ballantyne and Burton, 2005, p. 3).

¹³ For an analysis of “different types of misión”, see Maldavsky, 2012, pp. 71-124.

¹⁴ Regarded as a specific characteristic of the Society of Jesus, “accommodation” has been defined as a process of flexibility that allowed Jesuits to accept cultural elements of non-Western societies that they believed did not conflict with Christian dogma (Catto and Mongini, 2010, pp. 1-16). On the strategies of evangelization of Italian Jesuits Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607) and Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) in China, see Standaert, 2000, pp. 352-63.

Spiritual Heroes at the Margins of the Spanish Empire

The Portuguese sailor Fernão de Magalhães named the Marianas *Islas de las Velas Latinas*, or Lateen Sail Islands,¹⁵ but after what can only be characterised as a cultural misunderstanding, he later referred to them as the *Islas de los Ladrones*, or Islands of the Thieves.¹⁶ For many years after this first encounter, the archipelago continued in its relative isolation, with the occasional arrival of ships from other Micronesian islands, Japan, China, or the Philippines, which was sometimes caused by tempests, and had been a recurring phenomenon since before the European presence in the Eastern seas (Farrell, 1991). Not to forget the addition of ships from Spanish expeditions that were still seeking a permanent route to the Moluccas, such as those led by García Jofre de Loaysa and Juan Sebastián Elcano (which arrived at the islands on September 9th, 1526); Álvaro de Saavedra Cerón (December 29th, 1527); Bernardo de la Torre (1543), who was part of Ruy López de Villalobos' expedition (1542); and Miguel López de Legazpi, who arrived at the island of Cebu in May, 27, 1565, and recognizing their value as a strategic transit point in transpacific navigation and commercial routes, took possession of them in the name of the Spanish Crown (Buncan, 2017, p. 22).

Shortly after the successful discovery of the "tornaviaje" (or the return route) in October 8, 1565, king Philip II granted Legazpi the title of "adelantado" of the Ladrones Islands on August 14th, 1569, whose Instructions of government, given on the 28th of August in Madrid, insisted on the islands' occupation and evangelization (Mira Toscano, 2016, pp. 107-122). However, the islands' apparent lack of economic resources, and the consequent indifference displayed towards them by the Philippine governors, under whose jurisdiction they lay, meant that such instructions went unheeded (Peña Filiu, 2019, Chap. 3). In 1596, the monarch insisted, and granted Philippine Governor Francisco Tello de Guzmán (1596-1602) permission to send soldiers and missionaries to the islands. But this also went unheeded, despite the efforts of Franciscan friars Antonio de los Ángeles (1596) and Juan Pobre de Zamora (1602), however, it laid the ground for a new impetus in the process of evangelization (Driver, 1989).

During the second half of the 17th century, Father San Vitores revived the Franciscan project of the western Pacific Ocean as a widespread field for conversion. As Buschmann pointed out, "he envisioned Guam and the Mariana Islands as a beachhead for additional mission activity in the Austral lands" (Buschmann, 2014, p.

¹⁵ The name referred to the great number of ships that came towards Magalhães' ship with what are now known as tanja sails, which resembled lateen sails. See Antonio de Herrera and Tordesillas, 1601, p. 6.

¹⁶ The expedition's chronicler, Antonio de Pigafetta, mentioned this first encounter in his *Relación*, describing how the Spaniards accepted the food supplies brought to them by the natives and offered nothing in return, after which the natives stealthily boarded the ships and took various objects "in such a way that it was impossible to preserve oneself from them" (Pigafetta, 1922, p. 74). The Chamoru even took the skiff that was tied to the poop of the captain's ship (Trinidad). In all likelihood, what they regarded as a reciprocal and ceremonial exchange of gifts, which is commonly performed in many Pacific island cultures between two groups that meet for the first time, was taken by the European expeditioners as an act of thievery.

31). In May of 1665, Father San Vitores wrote a memorial entitled *Motivos para no dilatar más la reducción y la doctrina de las islas de los Ladrones* [Reasons not to delay further the congregation and the instruction of the Thieves' Islands], in which he detailed the political and economic reasons for the archipelago's evangelization. In some parts of the text he spoke of the islands' abundance of resources, while in others he underlined their dearth (Peña Filiu, 2019, Chap. 3). Notwithstanding this ambivalence, San Vitores displayed a "discourse of poverty" meant to show that a complete disinterest in mundane affairs framed the enterprise that he proposed (Baró Queralt, 2010, pp. 20-21; Coello de la Rosa, 2011, pp. 779-808; Atienza, 2013, pp. 13-29).

The colonization of the archipelago started on June 15th, 1668, when San Vitores and five other Jesuits arrived at Guåhan from the Viceroyalty of New Spain with the economic support of Queen Mariana of Austria (1649-65) (Reichert, 2014, p. 161). But the Spanish period per se did not officially start until February 2, 1669, when the Jesuit Father, accompanied and assisted by a small number of soldiers and missionaries, inaugurated San Ignacio de Agaña (or *Hagåtña*, in today's Apra Harbor), the first mission in the island of Guåhan, the site of which is the present capital of the island. The arrival of the Society's missionaries brought about the definitive change in the archipelago's name, which was thereafter referred to as the Mariana Islands, in honor of then regent Queen Mariana of Austria, widow of Philip IV (1621-65) and mother of future King Charles II (1665-1700). Regarded as the "protector of the islands' Christendom", Queen Mariana authorized and financed with 21,000 pesos the establishment of San Vitores' mission in Guåhan (Astrain, 1920, p. 811; De la Costa, 1989, p. 456; Ciaramitaro, 2018, pp. 196-197). Regularly from 1668 on, the annual Manila galleon crossed the Pacific in about latitude 12°-13°N., directly to Guåhan, thereby inaugurating what Thomas Calvo termed as the "Carrera of the Marianas" (Calvo, 2016; Calvo, 2020, pp. 49-80). In 1679, the archipelago was placed under the jurisdiction of the Audiencia of the Philippines and the Viceroyalty of New Spain—on which it depended economically—and remained part of the Spanish overseas territories for more than two centuries.

For their European counterparts, the Jesuit missionaries soon became the "heroes" of the Catholic reformation in the Pacific. From 1670 to 1731, fifteen Jesuits died for their faith in the Mariana Islands and Palau (the present Western Carolinas). As many missionaries saw their activity culminated in martyrdom, others followed suit (Schumacher, 1995, pp. 266-85; Schumacher, 2001a, pp. 287-336; Schumacher, 2001b, pp. 477-85; Mojares, 2000, pp. 34-61; Coello de la Rosa, 2011, pp. 707-45; Strasser, 2015, p. 561; Strasser, 2020).¹⁷ The first martyr was Father Luis de Medina (1637-70), who died on January 29th, 1670, alongside his Philippine catechist Hipólito de la Cruz, in the island of Saipan, where they had gone to resume their preaching.¹⁸ In 2014, Alexandre Coello and Xavier Baró reedited the martyr's first hagiography, the

¹⁷ On the connections between the renowned mystic, Catherine of Siena, and the martyrdom of the German Jesuits in the Marianas, see Strasser, 2007, pp. 23-40.

¹⁸ Hezel, SJ, Retrieved from <https://micronesianseminar.org/in/article/jesuit-martyrs-in-micronesia/> (last visited 2 October 2020).

Relación de la vida del devotísimo hijo de María Santísima y dichoso mártir Padre Luis de Medina de la Compañía de Jesús (Madrid, 1673), written by Father Francisco García (1641-85), SJ, with the object of raising him to the altars (Coello de la Rosa Baró i Queralt, 2014, pp. 9-36). Like Father Medina, Father San Vitores and other Mariana martyrs proved to be motivated not by the desire for profit or adventure, but by a great desire to save their own and others' souls in the islands of the Pacific that were yet to be evangelized.

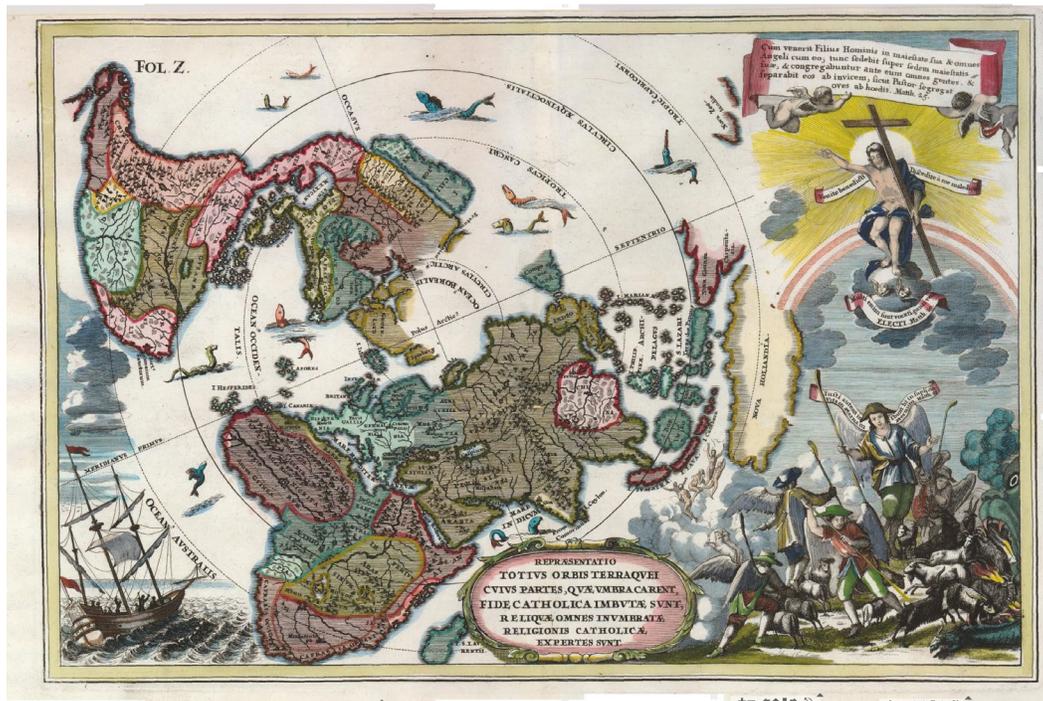
At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Father Charles Le Gobien (1653-1708), SJ, who had promoted the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses, écrites des missions étrangères* (Paris: N. Leclerc, 1707-1776), supervised the composition of the first historical text on the archipelago, the *Historia de las Marianas* (Paris: Nicholas Pepie, 1700). The Jesuits had instructions of sending detailed reports of their pastoral activities in the Pacific islands to their superiors in Rome, and the narrative made use of the reports and letters written by Father Luis de Morales (1641-1716) and other Jesuits on the topography and geology of the islands as well as their flora and fauna, and, most importantly, the culture and social and political organization of the CHamoru (Morales and Le Gobien, 2016). One of the most important sources used by Le Gobien was *The Life and Martyrdom* of his confrere, Father San Vitores, which had been published by his Jesuit companion Francisco García in Madrid in 1683 (an expanded Italian translation of this text had been published in Naples in 1686),¹⁹ but Father García, a publicist of the order in King Charles II's court in Madrid, decided to write a hagiography of Diego Luis San Vitores to promote the beatification of the mission's founder, regarding his life as a re-actualization of that of the Apostle of the Indies, Father Francisco Javier, canonized in 1622 (Ciaramitaro, 2018, pp. 201-202).²⁰

As has been recently pointed out by Joan-Pau Rubiés, García's hagiography contained the first historical text of the Marianas, as is evidenced by the similarities found between it and Le Gobien's book. The second "book" of the *History*, regarded as an ethnographic jewel of the CHamoru people, follows García's writings very closely, and not just the published hagiography, but other texts copied from his narrative, such as the *Vida, y martirio del V. Padre Sebastián de Monroy, religioso de la Compañía de Jesús, que murió dilatando la Fe alanceado de los bárbaros en las islas Marianas* (Sevilla, 1690) written by Father Gabriel de Aranda, SJ (1633-1709). This would prove,

¹⁹ The Italian version, *Istoria della conversione alla nostra santa fede dell'Isole Mariane, dette prima de' Ladroni, nella vita, predicatione, e morte gloriosa per Christo del Venerabile P. Diego Luigi di Sanvitores, e d'altri suoi compagni della Compagnia di Giesù*, translated by Ambrosio Ortiz (Naples, 1686), includes sections that describe the CHamoru revolt of 1684. The modern English translation, *The Life and Martyrdom of the Venerable Father Diego Luis de San Vitores First Apostle of the Mariana Islands, and Events of These Islands, from the Year Sixteen Hundred and Sixty-Eight, Through the Year Sixteen Hundred and Eighty-One*, was edited by J. A. McDonough, SJ, et al. (Mangilao, Guam, 2004).

²⁰ It was not in vain that some authors, such as Baró Queralt, argue that in 1661, while San Vitores was in New Spain, he wrote the monograph on Francisco Javier titled *El Apostol de las Indias y nuevas gentes, San Francisco Javier de la Compañía de Jesús, epitome de sus apostolicos hechos, virtudes, enseñanza, y prodigios antiguos y nuevos* (Mexico: Augustin Santistevan y Francisco Lupercio, 1661), under the pseudonym Matías de Peralta y Calderón (Baró Queralt, 2010, pp. 26-29). Other authors attribute this text to Alonso de Maluenda or Cristóbal Berlanga, SJ.

as argued by Alexandre Coello in the first English edition of the *Historia de las Marianas* (Mangilao, Guam: 2016), that the true authors of the text were Spanish Jesuits, and more specifically, the procurator Luis de Morales, who probably gave Le Gobien the texts that he then used to draft the *Histoire des Isles Marianes, Nouvellement converties à la Religion Chrestienne; & de la mort glorieuse des premiers Missionnaires qui y ont prêché la Foy* (Paris: Nicolas Pepie, 1700). In any case, the attention that Le Gobien paid to the new mission of the Marianas (as Joan-Pau Rubiés points out in the prologue of that 2016 edition) was part of the Society's apologetics for the missionary activity, a propagandistic effort in which Le Gobien was becoming specialized.



Scherer Map, 1702. Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC), Guåhån

At that time, the Jesuits found themselves in a delicate position throughout Catholic Europe. First, Jansenists accused them of lax morals, of following Molinism, and embracing a probabilistic theology. Secondly, by the mid-seventeenth century the Chinese Rites Controversy exploded because Father Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), SJ, had sought to make Catholicism and Confucianism's ethical principles compatible, which increased the Society's problems. Critics of Ricci's methods argued that the ritual reverence displayed by the Chinese towards their ancestors and towards Confucius himself went beyond civil rites of respect, and constituted instead a religious cult, a form of idolatry. A similar controversy arose regarding the fusion of Malabar rites and Catholicism in southern India, and all this contributed to a full-blown questioning of the Jesuit mission and its method of cultural adaptation. Nevertheless, the Society of Jesus increased and prospered in France during the reigns of Louis XIII (1610-43) and Louis

XIV (1643-1715). In line with the order's propagandistic tradition, the publication of a book on the Jesuits' interest in evangelizing a people that inhabited such "marginal, poor and abandoned" islands as the Marianas meant that Le Gobien could better defend the Society's reputation against accusations that it was only interested in working in rich and prosperous societies, such as those in Japan, Siam, and, especially, China. The Marianas' mission showed that Jesuit missionaries were martyrs of the faith with a genuinely universal apostolic vocation (Rubiés, 2016).

Historians and anthropologists such as Francis X. Hezel, David Atienza, Ulrike Strasser, Alexandre Coello and Fernando Ciaramitaro, have written on the martyrial phenomenon in the Micronesian archipelagos. In a brief, unpublished article from 1983, Hezel looked at the Jesuit martyrs of the Marianas and the Carolinas, especially the consequences that their martyrdom brought to the Society of Jesus' missionary projects throughout the eighteenth century, until they were expelled from the Spanish overseas territories.²¹ Ciaramitaro, for his part, analyzed the Jesuit martyrdoms from the imperial Catholic perspective, that is, as titles of legitimation. The Catholic monarchy's devotional vocation was vindicated through a hagiographic and iconographic repertoire that glorified the Spanish conquest of the Mariana archipelago and the foundation of a latter "missionary state" (Ciaramitaro, 2018, pp. 195-225). The monarchical-martyrial exaltation of Queen Mariana of Austria, engraved by Joseph Mulder (1658-1742) in the work written by Father Gabriel de Aranda, *Vida, y gloriosa muerte del V. Padre Sebastián de Monroy...* (Madrid, 1690), does not constitute an exception, but the norm for the penetration of the Catholic and civilizing message into the Western Indies and the Philippines (Ciaramitaro, 2018, pp. 205-225).²²

In her superb book of 2020, Ulrike Strasser recovered a 2015 article to show "how mimesis of Francis Xavier played itself out in the lives of two Jesuits, the Spanish Father Diego Luis de San Vitores and the Bohemian Father Augustine Strobach (1646-1684), who sought to emulate the 'Apostle of the Indies' in the Marianas, long after his death and canonization" (Strasser, 2015, p. 561; Strasser, 2020). She argues that "they were 'virtual copies' of Francis Xavier with a twist: while the original Xavier longed for martyrdom in vain, San Vitores and Strobach were able to shed blood for the faith" (Strasser, 2015, p. 558). It was in the very act of preaching the Gospel to those distant souls that lived in a group of islands in the immensity of the Pacific, that the Jesuit missionaries, according to Strasser, developed a preoccupation for less distant souls: their own (Clossey, 2008, p. 134).²³ These powerful spiritual motives, already

²¹ Hezel also reminded readers that the history of the Jesuits in Micronesia did not end with their expulsion: the region was again "made fertile by the blood" of Jesuit martyrs in 1944, when six Jesuit missionaries and four Palauan auxiliaries were killed by Japanese soldiers.

²² For a study of the iconography of martyrdom in 17th century Catholic Europe, and particularly, the diffusion of the image of Father Diego Luis de San Vitores' martyrdom, see Payo Hernanz, 2015, pp. 51-98.

²³ This can be perfectly appreciated in the *Litterae Indipetarum* ("indipetae") in the Fondo Gesuitico of Rome's Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI). Many Jesuits, especially those of Italian and German origins, asked the order's Superior General to send them as missionaries to the Eastern Indies, particularly the Philippines and the Marianas. Apostolic zeal and abnegation were contemplated as the

pinpointed by Pierre Chaunu (1960), stand in opposition to those considered by scholars such as Cynthia Ross Wiecko, who recently referred to the Jesuits as mere agents of the imperial conquest of Guåhan after 1668.²⁴

Finally, David Atienza and Alexandre Coello have just published a documentary corpus composed of 149 numbered pages, which was destined to promote the beatification of Jesuit martyr Manuel Solórzano Escobar (1649-84). This epistolary is integrated by ten letters that Solórzano sent his father, Cristobal, after he was destined to depart towards the Marianas, with the first dated May 22nd, 1667, in Carmona, and the last letter that the young priest wrote to him before being stabbed in the head and throat during the second Spanish-CHamoru war (June 6th, 1684) (Coello de la Rosa and Atienza de Frutos, 2021). Solórzano's skull had been sent to Spain along with a bundle of letters by his confrere Diego de Zarzosa, to be delivered to the family of the deceased. Since Manuel's father died a few months before he could receive his son's relics, these were given to a paternal uncle of Manuel, Don Juan Ramírez de Solórzano. Upon his death, the skull and letters went to the missionary's nephew, Don Juan Casquete de Prado Solórzano, and the relics were in his family's custody for two more generations until 1984, when Josefa Jaraquemada Tous de Monsalve, deposited them in the Jesuit School of Villafranca de los Barros, where it remains to this day (López Casquete and Oyola Fabián, 2014, pp. 95-108).

Conflict, Evangelization and Local Agency in the Mariana Islands

A few years ago, the Atlantic first emerged as a field for cultural, geographic and historical studies centered on transoceanic connections, the construction of states and empires, and cultural differences (Bailyn, 2005; Bailyn and Denault, 2007, pp. 1-2; Cañizares-Esguerra, 2006; Elliot, 2007). As a unit of historical analysis, the Atlantic perspective was constructed—or invented, as argued by David Armitage (e.g., Armitage and Braddick, 2002)—to encourage erudition on and analysis of transoceanic history. Many European historians focused on the intra-imperial interactions between metropolitan centers and their overseas colonies. Considering both the Caribbean and the broader Atlantic world as a sub-product of European imperialism, the main preoccupations of Atlantic history were reduced to the logic of an exploitative metropolitan system.²⁵

When exploring the cultural and economic interactions and exchanges between the peoples of Western Europe, Western Africa, and the American territories, Atlantic history has adopted a center-periphery perspective addressing the Spanish Empire, which is seen as a result of the modern process of globalization. In the same vein,

most eminent of virtues by these priests who hoped to become martyrs and reach sanctity. For a recent study of the sent from Rhineland and Upper Germany, see Nebgen, 2007.

²⁴ Ross Wiecko, 2013. Retrieved from

http://worldhistoryconnected.press.illinois.edu/10.3/forum_wiecko.html (last visited 2 October 2020).

²⁵ Other scholars, such as Charles Tilly, preferred to address macro-historical processes, particularly the development of the Atlantic world economy and its continually evolving global circuits. See Leonard and Pretel, 2015, pp. 1-2.

addressing a “Pacific world” as a field of study, with its great diversity and territorial dispersion, would allow us to transcend the national, longitudinal, and teleological structures that are not always adequate, and write a kind of “horizontal”, transnational (comparative) and trans-imperial history about some of the most dynamic regions of the *Hispaniarum Rex*.

As Matt K. Matsuda pointed out, however, defining the Pacific is no easy task, but rather an enormous challenge (2006, p. 758). What should be included and what should be left out from this geo-cultural category? Which should be the limits of such an archipelagic (that is, constructed) “Pacific world”? A large part of the recent academic work on the Pacific has been done by historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, linguists, novelists and political activists who question the colonial notions of isolation, impotence and dependence associated with colonial archipelagos. This new interpretative framework regards the Pacific as a “sea of islands”, in the words of Tongan writer and anthropologist Epeli Hau'ofa (1939-2009), where constant encounters—through migration and trade—between peoples generated a “mediating contact culture” across what is today Oceania (1994, pp. 148-61). Instead of analyzing the causes behind the disappearance of certain cultures in lost paradises, students of the Pacific influenced by anthropological methodologies and perspectives, such as Nicholas Thomas, Jay D. Dobbin, David Hanlon, Greg Denning, and Vilsoni Hereniko, among others, pay attention to issues of intercultural contact, colonial exchange, political sovereignty, and the cultural preservation of native groups.²⁶

Having decentered the Euro-American narratives of discovery, these and other specialists seek to recover the history and cultures of the peoples of the Pacific. But, following the work of William H. Alkire (1977, p. 20) and Robert C. Kiste and Mac Marshall (1999, p. 483), which argued that the “pure” CHamoru had disappeared due to their destruction, extinction, and “mixing” with other groups (mostly from the Philippines, New Spain, and the Iberian peninsula), anthropologists such as Nicholas Thomas (2010) and Jay Dobbin (2011) still refuse to regard the CHamoru as native people (Thomas, 2010, p. 24; Dobbin, 2011). And yet, already in 1994 anthropologist Vicente M. Díaz had argued that CHamoru identity could not be expected to remain static and immobile, and that it should be analyzed as partaking of a process of indigenous agency and situational flexibility²⁷. Such interactions were indeed central in the construction of CHamoru cultural adaptation, which is reflected in the present neo-CHamoru culture of Guåhan (Underwood, 1976, pp. 203-209). Moreover, various studies by David Atienza and Alexandre Coello (2012), Atienza (2014) and Francis X. Hezel (2015) argue that CHamoru culture survived the ravages of colonialism, “playing an active role in the historical development of their islands and in the history of the Pacific” (Atienza de Frutos and Coello de la Rosa, 2012, pp. 459-73; Atienza de Frutos, 2014, p. 31; Hezel, 2015, pp. 9-10).

²⁶ On the centrality of anthropologists in the history of the Pacific, see Matsuda, 2006, p. 767.

²⁷ Díaz argued that historiographical understandings of CHamoru culture seem to have been constructed in terms of immutability, which have predefined it as a clearly contained and delimited unity that was at some point characterized by pure and essential qualities (Díaz, 1994, pp. 29-58).

Certainly, by analyzing the interaction between the universal principles of Catholicism, these and other scholars have placed the Marianas into the framework of the global microhistory of Christianity.²⁸ David Atienza (2014, p. 31) and James Perez Viernes (2016, pp. 122-37) have critically assessed the way in which local political actors and actions conditioned the missionaries' work. They reject the reductionist theses of Hans G. Hornbostel (1930), Ian C. Campbell (1989), Don A. Farrell (1989) and Robert F. Rogers (1995), that present the native CHamoru as a Hispanicized people, that is, fervent Catholics and/or "peonized peasants" (Hornbostel, 1930, pp. 73-80; Campbell, 1989, p. 130; Rogers, 1995; Farrell, 2011, p. 189). Others, such as Pedro Cardim, Tamar Herzog, José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez and Gaetano Sabatini (2012, pp. 3-4), challenge the center-periphery model that regards indigenous peoples as passive and silent recipients of Western innovations instead of active participants in the elaboration of politics at a greater scale.

Instead of assuming that the Mariana Islands were isolated and distant, the "new missional history" emphasized cosmopolitanism and circulation of ideas as indicators of the relationships established between European, American, Asiatic and Oceanic peoples. Resistance and/or accommodation vis-à-vis the colonial conflict and actors were significant. As Boyd Dixon, Danny Welch, Lon Bulgrin and Mark Horrocks point out, "archaeological data suggest that CHamoru farmers began (or continued to maintain) the rural farming practice known as the *lancho* not because it was thrust upon them by colonial policy (Hezel, 2015), but to accommodate Spanish repression" (2020, p. 90). The continued interaction and negotiations between the preexisting local realities and the Western attitudes and mores that were finally imposed must not be forgotten. By focusing on this local dimension, other historians have emphasized a process of missional "glocalization" through which the CHamoru entered the international community as members of the Spanish empire and the global communion of the Roman Catholic Church (Robertson, 1997, pp. 25-43; Županov, 1999; Aranha, 2010, pp. 79-204, pp. 79-83).

The book written by Father Horacio de la Costa, SJ (1916-77), *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768* (1961), is still the most comprehensive study on the activities of the Society of Jesus in the Philippine Islands.²⁹ However, said classic monograph contained very few references to the Jesuits in the Marianas, presumably because they were not considered part of the Philippine archipelago even if they were under its jurisdiction.³⁰ Gender issues were also often neglected. Moral suggests that the

²⁸ See the monographic issue edited by Bertrand and Calafat, 2019.

²⁹ For a more recent analysis of Jesuit activity in the Philippines, see Descalzo Yuste, 2015.

³⁰ Eighteenth century confreres of Hezel, such as Juan José Delgado (1697-1755) and Pedro Murillo Velarde (1696-1753), included ethnographic, historic and ethnobotanic data on the Marianas archipelago in their treatises on Philippine history. Near the end of the nineteenth century, Pablo Pastells, SJ (1846-1932) gathered 116 notebooks of Philippine natural and social history—included in the Pastells Collection—that also contained information on the Marianas. One of his assistants, Antonio Astrain, S.J., used these sources to write his monumental *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la asistencia de España* (Madrid, 1902-25). See also Arcilla Solero, vol. 2, 1989, pp. 377-96. The recent dissertation of Descalzo Yuste (2015) has filled the void that Horacio de la Costa left regarding the Jesuit

CHamoru communities openly opposed the Jesuits' evangelizing project because they tried to impose gendered practices and discourses through the transformation of native space and architectural structures. These ethno-sexual conflicts, understood as "the clash between incompatible beliefs and practices related to sexuality", are articulated around constructed spaces, or materialities, considered sinful: the "public bachelor's house" (2016, pp. 229-232; 2020, pp. 50-51). Similarly, Montón (2019, pp. 404-29) explores the early years of the far-flung Jesuit missions in Guåhån to describe how their global policy of evangelization was not only about the expansion, conquest and colonization initiated by Spain, but also a desire to globally propagate a certain ideology and policy around sexuality.

In this way, the missionaries imposed a patriarchal system within indigenous society in an attempt to dismantle the native ways of life in the Marianas. Finally, Strasser's last book raises interesting questions. Drawing heavily from gender studies, she wonders how a remote archipelago in the margins of the Spanish overseas empire turned into a magnet of desire for Spanish and foreign Jesuits, particularly Germans, in the late 17th century. The novelty of her book is the way she links gender history to world or global history in the early modern period. Jesuit missions and missionaries were coded as masculine on Iberian domains where men were seemingly the only actors on stage. However, while patriarchal dynamics marked Jesuit history from the very beginning, missionaries were shaped by gender in different yet allegedly contradictory ways. Emotions (or more accurately, passions), are part and parcel of this study of Jesuit masculinities. As Barbara Rosenwein put it, the Jesuit order was an "emotional community" that gave free reign to stirring emotions and desires for action (Strasser, 2020, p. 31). Missionary men inspired other novices to imitate - *imitatio* - their illustrious forefathers as well as those Jesuit exemplars who died as martyrs of the Catholic faith on the distant missions. Male mimesis facilitated the Society's extraordinary expansion across the early modern world, allowing for new forms of action by working the human passions (Strasser, 2020, p. 32).

In the last fifty years, the output of scholarly analyses on the Jesuit evangelization of the Mariana Islands has focused primarily on the intertwined history of the colonial Church and the Crown, and attention has been paid to emerging hostilities, particularly those related to military participation; the mutinies of the soldiers stationed in the Guåhån presidio (Mawson, 2015, pp. 128-48; Mawson, 2016, pp. 87-125); and the demographic decline that prompted the resettlement of the remaining CHamoru inhabitants of the eight northern Mariana Islands into various parishes/reductions in 1699.

The recently deceased historian Marjorie G. Driver (University of Guam and Micronesian Area Research Center) wrote key monographic texts on the colonial administration of the Marianas. Undergirded by her solid academic background and a personal knowledge of the Hispanic world, thanks to her stays in Puerto Rico, Marjorie G. Driver's work was a touchstone in the studies on the history and culture of Guåhån.

evangelization of the Marianas, basing his work mainly on research carried out by Alexandre Coello de la Rosa.

Her first monograph, *El Palacio: The Spanish Palace in Agaña; A Chronology of Men and Events, 1668-1899*, published in 1984, looked at the political history of Guåhan during its 230 years under Spanish administration. In her second monograph, *Cross, Sword, and Silver: The Nascent Spanish Colony in the Mariana Islands* (1987), Driver analyzed the archipelago's dependence on the royal *situado* during the administration of Governor Damián de Esplana (1674-94). Driver showed that the Marianas were a sort of technical stop in the galleon route between Manila and Acapulco, which, due to scant attention from the Spanish Crown, created opportunities for corrupt officials such as Esplana, who generated a profitable contraband trade with the collaboration of Mexican warehouse owners.³¹ This enterprise necessitated the forced involvement of native labor, which led to conflicts between the governor and other officials and the Jesuit missionaries, who opposed such practices.³²

Jesuit historian Francis X. Hezel, former director of the Micronesian Seminar, a non-profit non-governmental organization seated in Pohnpei (Senyavin Islands), also dedicated much of his intellectual work to examining the dual process of Spanish colonialism and evangelization of the Mariana Islands. In his first text, "From Conversion to Conquest: The Early Spanish Mission in the Marianas" (1982), Hezel rejected the Manichaean theses of Laura Thompson (1945) regarding the genocide perpetrated against the CHamoru people by Spanish soldiers and the heads of the "Spanish Catholic regime".³³ Hezel's second work, "From Conquest to Colonization: Spain in the Mariana Islands, 1690 to 1740" (1988), coauthored with Marjorie C. Driver, looked at the second stage of Spanish colonization in the archipelago, which had been less studied by historians. In 2015 Hezel published a text that complements his first monograph, "From Conversion to Conquest...", under the name *When Cultures Clash: Revisiting the "Spanish-Chamorro Wars"* (2015, p. 10), and which practically restates his initial conclusion, that the scourge of imported diseases was the main cause for the dramatic population decline of the CHamoru. Thus, while Hezel continued to regard the intermittent outbreaks of violence known as the Spanish-CHamoru Wars (1671-72; 1684; 1690) as of secondary importance, other scholars have gone so far as to describe these armed clashes as genuine "civil war" (Dixon, Jalandoni and Craft, 2017, p. 197).

Some other historians have underlined the difficulties and adaptations that went with the construction of imperial hegemonies in intercultural contexts. The work of Augusto V. de Viana (2004; 2005) in particular argued, with compelling evidence, that the Spanish colonial empire could not have been constructed without the effective collaboration and participation of the Philippine's native peoples, the Tagalogs, Visayans, and especially, the Pampanga soldiers of Macabebe. The same goes for some CHamorus, including chiefs Don Andrés de la Cruz, Don Ignacio de Hineti (or

³¹ On Mexican participation in the exploitation of the Marianas, see Yuste López, 1984; Yuste López, 2007.

³² Other historians have unearthed reports and text written by passengers and/or crewmembers of the ships, Spanish and otherwise, that periodically stopped at the Marianas, and which provided interesting descriptions of CHamoru life and customs. See especially, Barratt 2003.

³³ An important and well-read history that adopted Laura Thompson's genocide thesis rather uncritically, was Carano and Sanchez, 1964, p. 86.

Hinesi) and Don Antonio de Ayihi, who collaborated with the Jesuits in the mission's consolidation (De Viana, 2004, pp. 19-26; De Viana, 2004; De Viana, 2005, p. 16; Coello de la Rosa, 2019). These essential allies not only served and assisted the Spanish administration but also acted as effective soldiers and officers of the mission. The Spanish would not have been able to defeat CHamoru resistance without native CHamoru soldiers, who joined the mission's armed contingent, which, for its part, had more soldiers of Philippine than of European origin. Native soldiers were more readily adapted to the terrain and served as valuable interpreters and mediators, both necessary elements that proved vital for the conquest and colonization of the islands. The experiences and history of the soldiers themselves—most of them conscripts and former convicts—have also been addressed in the new historiography, with Stephanie Mawson (2015) specifically looking at the mutinies carried out by the soldiers stationed at the Guåhan presidio in 1680, and their loyalty and commitment to the construction of the Spanish empire in the Pacific (Mawson, 2015, pp. 128-48; Mawson, 2016, pp. 87-125).

Until the present, work on the Marianas has benefited from the *History of Micronesia* edited by Rodrigue Lévesque (1992). An encyclopedic series that spans the period between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, it contains a wealth of information on the diverse islands of the Pacific. The series transcribes a selection of documents from the main archives and libraries of Europe and the Americas, and despite some notorious mistranslations, it is an inestimable source for scholars interested in any aspect of the islands' histories.³⁴ It is comprised of reports (or *relaciones*), royal decrees, and maps, as well as extracts of the Annual Letters (*Cartas Anuas*) written by the Society of Jesus' superiors, which include reports on the activities carried out by each Jesuit under his jurisdiction during the previous year. Most of these letters, written in Latin or in the superiors' vernacular languages, are vital chronicles of events that historians can mine for invaluable demographic, economic and religious information on the missions administered by the Society in Micronesia. They are also valuable for cultural and anthropological studies, containing as they do information on the ancient CHamoru.

In line with arguments developed by Michael Lujan Bevacqua,³⁵ anthropologist David Atienza rejects the premise that the "pure" CHamoru of the pre-Hispanic period ceased to exist, and he questions the notion that a "Spanish genocide" orchestrated through the so-called Spanish-CHamoru wars practically eliminated the native population, and that a new, mixed, neo-CHamoru people was formed by the mix of the few remaining natives and settlers from Spanish America, Tagalogs and Pampangans from the Philippines (Hezel, 2015, p. 10; Tueller, 2014, pp. 97-118). Atienza argues that both Francis X. Hezel's thesis of "the fatal impact of the West upon a defenseless island society" (2015, p. 9), as well as Enrique Moral's thesis of "biopolitics as a system of population control" (2016, p. 231) eclipse the capacity of the CHamoru to act as agents

³⁴ David Atienza, "Lost in Translation, or the Art of Rewriting History?" <http://www.aganaarch.org/blessed-diego-luis-de-san-vitores/>.

³⁵ Lujan Bevacqua, 2020. Retrieved from <http://guampedia.com/transmission-of-christianity-into-chamorro-culture/> (last visited 2 October 2020).

in their own history, especially regarding their appropriation of the Jesuits' evangelical message and the production and reproduction of an entirely CHamoru cultural experience (Atienza de Frutos, 2013, p. 2; Hezel, 2015, pp. 9-10).

Vicente M. Díaz y Anne P. Hattori have also critiqued the canonical visions of the past, such as that expressed in Robert F. Rogers *Destiny's Landfall* (1995), which deny the CHamoru the possibility of acting in the (re)construction of their own history (Hattori, 1997, pp. 275-77, Diaz, 1996, pp. 179-99). Colonialization is an ambivalent, conflictive, fluid process that involves appropriation, cultural borrowing, and effective resistance on the part of the colonized, who, far from disappearing, have, in the CHamoru case, continued exercising an active role in the defense of their culture and traditions (Diaz, 2010, pp. 8; 116).³⁶

In several works, Ulrike Strasser (2015, p. 570; 2020, pp. 113-146) has argued that, like a new "Francisco Javier", Father San Vitores regarded the Marianas as a feminine space that invited "the masculine project of planting the seed of Christ by becoming a martyr of faith". Other historians, such as James B. Tueller, argued that new social networks of conversion were gradually creating and solidifying between the newcomers and the CHamoru, paving the way for the Christianization of the native population. As conversion to Christianity occurred in the surrounding social world, the religious changes of the early modern CHamoru should be best understood in the context of the social networks among all the inhabitants of the Mariana Islands (Tueller, 2001, pp. 385-394; Tueller, 2009, pp. 333-60).

In the long run, Catholicism became a central element of CHamoru identity, and San Vitores turned into a local saint and is regarded as the official founder of the Marianas mission (Diaz, 2010). It can thus be argued that CHamoru cultural patterns not only survived the arrival of the Spanish colonizers, but that they were intertwined with the new Christian codes and symbols, which CHamoru syncretism adapted and reinterpreted as a way to preserve local customs and traditions (Diaz, 1993; Diaz, 1995, pp. 159-71; Tueller, 2009, pp. 333-60; Diaz, 2010. See also Atienza and Coello, 2012, pp. 459-73).

A large number of scholars who work on different aspects of global evangelization, such as Charlotte de Castelnau-L'Estoile, Michela Catto, Guido Mongini, Silvia Mostaccio, Marie-Lucie Copete, Aliocha Maldavsky, Inés G. Županov, Guillermo Wilde and Alexandre Coello, have paved the way for the analysis of modern missions not only as key elements in the occupation system of frontier territories (García de los Arcos, 2011, pp. 47-69), but as the links in a chain of circulation of (missional) knowledge (Catto, Mongini and Mostaccio, 2010, pp. 1-16; Castelnau-L'Estoile, Copete, Maldavsky, and Županov (eds.), 2011, pp. 1-22; Wilde, 2012, pp. 15-27).

³⁶ In 2010, 69.098 people identified as CHamoru in Guam, or 43,36 % of the island's population. In the Northern Marianas, there were 17.510 self-identified CHamoru, or 32,49 % of the population. The majority speaks the CHamoru language, but even for those who no longer do so, it has "a clearly identitarian, sentimental, and symbolic value within their ethnic community and even in relation to the entire population of the islands" (Rodríguez-Ponga, 2019, p. 42).

Similarly, Ulrike Strasser's last book confirmed the participation of German Jesuits in the evangelization of the Spanish Pacific (Strasser, 2020, pp. 147-180). In 1946, Lazaro de Aspuz, O.F.M.'s classic book, *La aportación extranjera a las misiones españolas del Patronato Regio* (Madrid, 1946), had already outlined the contribution of foreign missionaries, especially from German-speaking lands of Central Europe, in the Spanish missions. In this vein, Czech historians, including Pavel Zavadil, Pavel Fochler, Simona Binková and Markéta Křížová, among others, had also traced the participation of Czech, Moravian and Silesian missionaries who went to the Marianas from the province of Bohemia. Starting in the eighteenth century, the scarcity of missionaries forced the Bourbon dynasty to lift the prohibitions set by the Hapsburgs regarding the presence of foreign Jesuits in the Americas and the Philippines, and the number of German missionaries was particularly significant (Zavadil, 2012; Binková, Křížová, et al., 2016; Fochler, 2016, pp. 195-213). The missionary vocation should not be reduced to a simple desire to move to a faraway place ("the Indies"), but as a pastoral strategy that encouraged Jesuits of all nationalities to forge a consciousness of themselves through the diffusion of their apostolic ideas across the world as active agents of a religion with a global projection (Fabre and Vincent, 2007, pp. 1-2).³⁷

The frameworks for the comparative study of sociocultural change facilitate its comprehension (Spoehr, 1978, p. 259), but the limits of the "cultural dialogue" established between Christian universalism, on the one hand, and the local contexts with their cultural and natural diversity, on the other, can only be established by close examinations of case-studies that can reveal the distance or closeness between the objects of the missionaries and the results obtained (Rubiés, 2005, p. 242). This is what Alexandre Coello does in his monograph, *Jesuits at the Margins* (2016), which studies the complexities of Jesuit missionary activity in Guåhan and the Marianas as part of the abovementioned renovated historiography that addressed the first Catholic missions in the Pacific. Besides the activity and history of the mission itself, Coello addresses two major topics: the transoceanic relations of the archipelago and the viceroyalty of New Spain, which included the Philippines; and native agency and the relations of resistance and adaptation that they engaged vis-à-vis the missionaries, constructing new identities.

While the canonical Jesuit historiography has accepted the narratives of the Marianas' conquest and evangelization, Coello adopts the theoretical framework developed by historians Charlotte de Castelneau-L'Estoile, Marie-Lucie Copete, Aliocha Maldavsky, Luke Clossey, and Inés G. Županov (2011), in which the Society of Jesus is seen as a vanguard within a context of production and diffusion of missionary knowledge at a global scale (Clossey, 2008; Martínez Serna, 2009, p. 189). Indeed, the Society of Jesus was not simply an ideological weapon at the service of the Spanish empire (Ross Wiecko, 2013). Jesuits were also agents of the evangelization of the Pacific, who accumulated, produced and received information that traveled through a broad network of procurators in a multinational empire.

³⁷ On the particular matter of the forging of the self that emerged in the modern Catholicism' missionary expansion, see also Molina, 2013.

The CHamoru were also more than mere victims of evil colonizers led by priests who were obsessed with turning them into obedient and pious subjects of the Spanish Crown. In his 2016 article, CHamoru scholar Perez Viernes staunchly defended *maga'låhi* Hurao's famous speech, which was delivered during the first CHamoru rebellion in 1671, as an example of indigenous resistance and agency. Indeed, this was neither historical speculation nor a myth because it really took place. It is worth remembering that the CHamoru were not the only native group that proved gifted in oratory. In the Paraguayan *reducciones* and southern Chilean missions, Jesuits also considered Guaranies and Mapuches huilliches respectively as fine and eloquent orators (Payás, 2018). In contrast to the interpretations of those European scholars (Coello, Rubiés) who defend the rhetoric (Jesuit) character of Hurao's speech, Perez Viernes argues that their dismissal of native agency obscures Hurao's actual leadership. But this scholarship does not deny Hurao's, Hula's [or Yura], Agua'lin's [or Aguarín] capacity to mobilize their fellow islanders in the thousands to confront the Spaniards. It does, however, emphasize Hurao's speech as Jesuit propaganda to justify Western conquest and evangelization.

CHamoru historiography has acknowledged that the indigenous historical experience and native agency transcend what has been represented in Eurocentric histories and apologetic interpretations of the colonial past.³⁸ In so doing, Perez Viernes' 2016 article laid the foundations of the national heroes of the Marianas. When delivering his speech, Hurao, transmuted into a national archetype, not only "inspired the masses", Perez contends, but also "contributed to the making of his people's history" (Perez Viernes, 2016, p. 126). As he often reminds us, Hurao will be a source of inspiration for the future generations, thereby turning him into an icon of CHamorro identity. One thing is certain: the words he uttered are lost in translation, so that it is impossible to know what he once said. Nonetheless, it is evident that what Jesuit missionaries recorded in Guåhån had nothing to do with Hurao's own wording because that "way of uttering" was instead a beautifully crafted exercise of Jesuit "rhetoric".

The Jesuits in Guåhån also discovered the CHamoru's ritualized forms of artistic expression, such as music and dance. In a recent text, David R. M. Irving analyzes music as a mediating element through which the missionaries tried to "transform the hearts" of the CHamoru people. Festivities and civic-religious celebrations "combined elements from indigenous CHamoru culture (theatrical performances, poetry, and singing in the CHamoru language) with Spanish plays and Mexican dances" (Irving, 2019, p. 229). The introduction of new styles, dances, and musical instruments (clarions, hornpipes, bagpipes, drums, lyres) brought over from Europe, Mexico, and the Philippines, was used as an evangelization strategy that had a significant impact on CHamoru musical culture. On the other hand, the incorporation of local musicians in liturgy and post-mortem rituals, which was recorded by nineteenth century travelers such as Jacques Arago (1790-1855) and Louis de Freycinet (1779-1841), evidenced how Guåhån "became a unique microcosm of cultural exchange, bringing Spanish,

³⁸ Faced with an image of apparent inaction and passivity of native women, which blurs and subordinates their agency, see the work of Teaiwa, 1992.

Mexican, and African elements into dialogue with Micronesian musical culture” (Irving, 2019, p. 232).

To conclude, the methodologically creative dissertation by Verónica Peña Filiu, *Alimentación y colonialismo en las islas*, defended in Universitat Pompeu Fabra in 2020, combines written and archaeological sources to analyze the changes and continuities that were produced in the diet of the Marianas’ inhabitants during the Jesuit period (1668-1769). Historians Rebecca Earle (2014), Trudy Eden (2008) and Heather Martel (2011; 2012) had already argued about the centrality of food in the first European colonial expansion. The process of evangelizing and occupying the archipelago entailed the introduction of cattle raising and new methods of agriculture, carried out in small ranches—known as *lanchos* (or *lanchus*)—to produce new foodstuffs (wheat, grapes, legumes, beef, pork). Changes in dietary and culinary practices were multidirectional, however, with local, Iberian and American foods comprising the fare of the archipelago’s inhabitants (Peña Filiu, 2019).

Final Remarks

The present work is a historiographical overview on the first modern Catholic missions established in the Mariana Islands. From the pioneering texts of Marjorie G. Driver and Franz X. Hezel, historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists have studied the Jesuit missions not as a complement of Western imperialism, but as a privileged field to understand intercultural encounters. In a system of territorial frontier occupation, recent studies have emphasized aspects related with the martyrial phenomenon, confessionalization, military uprisings, and cultural transformations in the post-contact period. Standing against the essentialist theses that question the “native” character of today’s CHamoru, several scholars challenge the supposed disappearance of this native people and argue instead for their cultural continuity. Not surprisingly, Carolina Fernández argues that “the islanders’ religious practices are similarly a blend of cultures: they are intensely marked by the Catholicism brought by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, but not fully detached from CHamoru spirituality” (Fernández Rodríguez, 2019, pp. 1-21).

Finally, this essay is a small homage to Marjorie G. Driver, who pioneered the study of the Spanish presence in Micronesia in the field of colonial studies. She was one of the cofounders of the Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC) in 1967, and left us on the 20th of September of 2019, at the age of 95.³⁹ Her work, as reflected in this text, is still a key reference for any scholar who wishes to study the colonial past of Guåhån and the Mariana Islands.

³⁹ “Friday Memorial Service for MARC Founding Member Marjorie G. Driver”. Retrieved from <https://eu.guampdn.com/story/news/local/2019/09/30/marc-founding-member-marjorie-driver-university-guam/3816725002/> (last visited 2 October 2020).

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