

## Politics and Religion: Jesuit Martyrdom and Monarchical Symbolization of the Marianas

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**Abstract:** In 1690, an allegorical image of Joseph Mulder published in Seville exalts Queen Mariana of Austria as a protector of Christianity in Mariana Islands. In the Pacific archipelago, the Society of Jesus, supported directly by the ex-regent, and in parallel with the difficult pacification of the territory, carried out an arduous work of evangelization of the indigenous people in which, from the imperial Catholic perspectives, the continuous martyrdoms unfold ideologically as titles of legitimization. Through an iconographic repertoire, it is emphasized how the ideological tonic of torture in the Marianas is not an exception in the apostolic panorama of the Indies, because an evident interference of the religious branch in the political management of the occupation is revealed. However, the missionary intervention is extremely weak in the modalities of penetration of the Catholic message and in the relationship between the preachers and the evangelized.

**Key words:** Mariana Islands, Jesuits, Mariana of Austria, Martyr Symbolization, Conquest.

**Resumen:** En 1690 se publicó en Sevilla una estampa alegórica de Joseph Mulder que exalta a la reina Mariana de Austria como protectora de la cristiandad en las islas Marianas. En el archipiélago pacífico, la Compañía de Jesús, apoyada directamente por la exregente, y en paralelo a la difícil pacificación del territorio, llevaba a cabo una ardua labor de evangelización de los indígenas, en la que, desde las perspectivas católicas imperiales, los continuos martirios se desdoblan ideológicamente como títulos de legitimación. A través de un repertorio iconográfico, se subraya cómo la tónica ideológica del suplicio en las Marianas no constituye una excepción en el panorama apostólico de las Indias, porque se revela una interferencia evidente del brazo religioso en la gestión política de la ocupación; sin embargo, la intervención misional se constata enormemente débil en las modalidades de penetración del mensaje católico y en la relación entre los predicadores y los evangelizados.

**Palabras clave:** Islas Marianas, jesuitas, Mariana de Austria, simbolización martirial, conquista.

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

As of the 1990's decade, researchers, publishers and academic centers have started to be fully interested in the Mariana Islands. Printed materials regarding the various aspects of the life and sociability of the archipelago have multiplied: the geography and environment, tourism, anthropology and migrator flows. In like manner, suggestive linguistic, economic, sociologic and international-relations studies have been published.

In virtue of the indispensable contribution from the local research agencies, modernist historians have not been exempt from this recovered value; inquiries have been produced, they comprehend various facets of the history of the islands, from the beginnings of the conquest, colonization and autochthonous rebellion up to the successive moments of social "control" in the XVIII and XIX centuries. Jointly, documentarists, among them Marjorie G. Driver and Omaira Brunal-Perry, have managed to rescue and unify heterogeneous sources that were previously scattered in numerous repositories in regional archives and mainly in the United States, Mexico, Spain and Italy. Documental and file information has been systematized, reports and memoirs of clergymen, travelers and officers of the Spanish monarchy have been reedited and some indexes of sources, very useful for the correlated enquiries, have been produced. Such affirmations are noticed in the numerous and recent publications in English and Spanish and in the recently-awoken interest in the aforementioned archipelago (Driver, 1993, 2000, 2005; Driver and Brunal-Perry, 1996; Brunal-Perry, 1997; Coomans, 1997; Ibáñez del Carmen, 1998; Barratt, 2003).

By virtue of a determinate iconographic repertoire, some hagiographies, documentation from the same time and specialized bibliography, the goal of this article is to study, after stressing the history of the occupation, colonization and Christianization of The Marianas, the Jesuit allegoric-religious imagery and that of the Queen Mariana of Austria, former ruler and mother of Charles II, as a "protector of the Christendom of the islands".

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<sup>1</sup> This article finds its origin in a short talk by the international conference "El Pacífico, 1513-2013. De la Mar del Sur a la construcción de un nuevo escenario oceánico" (Seville, September 23th-27th, 2013), organized by University of Seville, Hispanic American Studies School and the General Archive of the Indies. This text is dedicated to the memory of my dear teacher José Luis Souto. I must thank to Alexandre Coello de la Rosa, Giovanna Fiume and Bernd Hausberger as well, since their readings of the draft and their counsel have been valuable to improve it.

In the archipelago, the Society (of Jesus) directly supported by her, and the complicated “pacification” of the territory, a key communication point between the Philippines and New Spain, undertakes an arduous evangelization work of the indigenous people in which, from the imperial Catholic perspective, continual martyrdoms ideologically unfold as titles to legitimize the conquest.

### **Conquest, colonization and evangelization of The Marianas**

The adventure of the New World implied the interaction of cultures and beliefs in an unknown geographic space. The private armies and European settlers were the actors that co-participated with the natives in addition to Asian migrants, slaves and former black slaves, to define the original realities that gave life to new American societies in ceaseless construction (Ciaramitaro, 2015: 631-644). As of 1492, discovery and conquest followed jointly: from the Bahamas the conquistadors moved to Santo Domingo, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Jamaica, then to the Lesser Antilles.<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Mexico (1521) and next, south: Yucatan, Chiapas, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. While these epochal enterprises were undertaken, the expectation of finding an occidental way to the Indies remained untouched in the conquistadors’ minds: while roads were developed, numberless intermediate and large expeditions were planned in the search for a transoceanic isthmus. The Spanish and Portuguese monarchies intended to direct and regulate the convulse cycles of exploration, conquest, settlement and configuration of a definitive scenario.

The “discovery” of the Pacific was crucial for the socioeconomic life of Mexico and Peru; these two regions soon came into contact over commercial and maritime routes. The Marianas —whose most extensive islands are Guam and Saipan— are a fundamental piece in the entangled puzzle of the discovery and command of the ocean and before the arrival of the Europeans, some groups of Caroleans had already come into contact sporadically with the locals (Pozuelo-Mascaraque, 1997: 50; Coello de la Rosa, 2013a: 91). Hence, the Marianas were the stage of various migratory efforts, not only European but Asiatic as well.<sup>3</sup>

2 Some historians separate the first stage of the exploration (1492-1495) of the first colonization (1496-1518) and of the ensuing conquest (1519-1550): “all'inizio del 1495 l'orientamento è già deciso: l'esplorazione porta alla colonizzazione, e la colonizzazione alla conquista. Tutto viene sacrificato all'oro” (Chaunu, 1969: 89).

3 *Expediente sobre evangelización de las Islas de los Ladrones o Marianas*, AGI, Filipinas, leg. 82, n. 8.

According to tradition —among historians there is no certainty yet regarding the fact (Rogers and Ballendorf, 1989)— the first occidental explorer who discovered the archipelago was Ferdinand Magellan, in 1521 he disembarked in Guam, the most meridional island of the Marianas and claimed it for Emperor Charles V, naming it the *Islas de los Ladrones* (Islands of Thieves). However, nothing changed back then and only after Andrés de Urdaneta discovered in 1565 —taking advantage of the southwestern monsoon and passing by the Californias—, the best maritime itinerary through which navigate from the Philippines to Mexico (the famous “tornaviaje”, return-voyage), it was indispensable to locate islands —which in a European fantasy were called Armenias—, which might be used as a place for resupplying in the pacific navigation of the ships that came from China.

A report by cartographer and pilot Francisco Gali,<sup>4</sup> in 1585, points out the Armenias as a possible intermediate port, and maybe the islands were Hawaii; albeit, Europeans did not find them until the XVIII century (Mathes, 1973: 21-23; Mandrí-Bellot, 1991: 13; Pinzón-Ríos, 2015: 754-755).<sup>5</sup> Then, the naval expeditions of Pedro de Unamuno, Sebastián Rodríguez Cermeño and Sebastián Vizcaíno greatly contributed to clarify the geography of the southern seas.

Only after the XVII century, in the face of the threats from other European countries, did the Spanish Crown decide on a more effective policy for the control of the Pacific; and after prohibiting, in 1631, Mexico-Peru inter-American traffic, as it was considered dangerous for its metropolitan privileges, ordered a possible colonization and evangelization project for the Marianas.

In a very accurate recent study, Mariano Bonialian (2014: 27-28), remembering the poem *Grandeza mexicana* (1604) by Bernardo de Balbuena, depicts an image of Mexico as the center of the Hispanic empire, a picture that matches others outlined by other historians, for instance Pierre Chaunu (1969: 110), who has stressed the scope accomplished by the end of the XVI century of the route that connects Veracuz, Mexico and Acapulco, the Marianas routes between the New Spain and Peruvian viceroyalties and

4 The bishop-viceroy of New Spain, Pedro Moya de Contreras (1584-1585), contributed to foster the discovery of a safe port halfway along the 2000 marine leagues between the Philippines and Acapulco, which additionally allowed repairing the vessels, supply water and heal the wounded. Francisco Gali, “soldier and prudent man”, according to the factor and overseer of the royal hacienda of Filipina Juan Bautista Ramón, was one of the referents, see *Carta de Juan Bautista Ramón*, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1584, AGI, *Filipinas*, leg. 6, 2, n. 17.

5 Particularly, on the Armenias and their “curious history”, see Gil (1992: 130-134).

those of these provinces with the Far East in moving people, objects and precious metals. However, Bonialian (2014: 30) underscores the importance of the transpacific axis which, by means of the Manila Galleon, connected the Philippines with Acapulco and the role of the Chinese silk as the “most expressive element” of the long-term reciprocity forged between Asia and America, not a single drop of ink is used to refer the Marianas.<sup>6</sup> However, the strategic position of the islands in the southern seas was already evident from the earliest stages of the discovery: the archipelago was the entrance to the Asian continent (Del Valle, 1991: 14; Brunal-Perry, 2004: 555).

This way, the history of conquest of the Islands of Thieves was defined through a stage to prepare the Spanish conquest in the Philippines (1521-1668).<sup>7</sup> Owing to this reason, the imperial “adventure” in the Marianas archipelago started late, in the XVII century, and the religious had a more decisive role, at least in the first stage, as it was anxious to expand the Catholic frontier in the possessions of the monarchy in the Pacific Ocean, literally applying the methodology of “Christian imperialism”.<sup>8</sup> As pointed out a century ago by Herbert E. Bolton (1917) –and more recently Bernd Hausberger (1997: 63)–, the mission was a typical border institution of the crown.

In the mediaeval and Renaissance Castilian language, the crusades<sup>9</sup> to recover the Iberian Peninsula were generally called “enterprises” or “business”, terms that intermingled mercantile and religious meanings and characteristics: this way, the ultimate goal of Christian imperialism was

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6 The same in a more recent study by Bonialian (2016).

7 Only in 1565 the Spanish monarchy decided to create the first town in the Philippines: San Miguel, present-day Cebu (Reichert, 2014: 135).

8 However, the role of the evangelical propaganda of the conquest is frequently forgotten by contemporary historiography (Ríos, 2015: 20), the “invention of America” and its territorial and imperial “appendix” in the Pacific —the Philippines, mainly— is not only the consequence of a slow process of political-military, economic and demographic expansion, but also cultural and religious: the objective of evangelizing the new populations did not pertain only to the rhetoric discourse of conquest, but also to the praxis and quotidian methods of imposition and government. The Europeans who ventured in the Indies had a complex technology of power, a culture characterized by an effective confidence in its centrality and the most relevant element, a religiosity focused on the omnipresent figuration of an adorable, tortured and assassinated god (Greenblatt, 1994: 32-33).

9 The “crusade” meant the concession of indulgences granted by the Roman Pontiff to the Castilian monarchs who supplied troops to war against the Muslims in the peninsula and to those who contribute to support such troops.

to perform at once the “conversion” of merchandise and souls (*negotium crucis*).<sup>10</sup> All in all, for the “business of the cross” sacrifice —the final one as well, the proper life— of some of the missionaries who tried to convert the native populations of the Marianas to Catholicism was unavoidable:<sup>11</sup> the pioneer apostle was Capuchin Juan Pobre de Zamora, who reached the islands in 1601;<sup>12</sup> the first Jesuits died between 1670 and 1685, in particular during the two Chamorro wars, in 1671 and 1684-1686;<sup>13</sup> the Recollects reached Guam in the second half of the XVIII century, on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1769, and back then in the Marianas there were only three Ignatian missionaries: Franz Stengel, Rafael Canicia and Pedro Lampurdanés.<sup>14</sup>

It is evinced how the previous definition of a more active mobility over the XVII century —of people, vessels and economic resources— comes from a renewed interest in the Marianas: indeed, as of 1593, when a transpacific route was regulated, being the port of Acapulco the only authorized to trade with Asia,<sup>15</sup> the islands became, as recalled by Alexandre Coello de la Rosa (2011: 714), more relevant owing to their logistic position “as a center to resupply the vessels heading for either side of the Pacific”. And that attention share the contemporaries of the conquest, as the Dominic Ignacio Muñoz, who considers “the usefulness of these islands” valuable as they offer welcoming ports for the Manila Galleons, which are “fatigued of rigorous storms in these Levantine confines”<sup>16</sup>

10 Thus reminds Alain Milhou (1983: 289): the “negotiation” of the Indies possesses, as the word “enterprise”, a dual connotation, one mercantile and another religious.

11 As regards the theology of the mission the contribution by Scaduto (1971: 323) is still essential, the author defines Jesuits as a “flying body” with no ties to specific places.

12 The 1608 file, which presents and approves friar Mateo de Recalde, on behalf of friar Juan Pobre, the fifty friars of the order of san Francisco who moved to Philippines and Japan, is in AGI, *Indiferente*, leg. 2073, n. 72. See, Morga (2007: 150-152, 165-166), San Antonio (1738: 131), Rogers (1995: 19), Coello de la Rosa (2010 and 2013a: 86). Rogers and Coello de la Rosa report the year of 1602; however, it seems as if their stay lasted six months as of the year 1601 (Driver, 1983, 1988a: 86 and 1993; 1988b).

13 The first Ignatian murdered was from Malaga, Luis de Medina (1637-1670) (Baró i Queralt, 2015: 131). The critical edition of the first hagiography on Medina has been published by Coello de la Rosa and Baró i Queralt (2014).

14 In the 30’s of the XVIII century, supposedly Jesuits managed 2697 souls (San Antonio, 1738: 59).

15 Concerning the prohibition of sending ships from Peru to China, see AGI, *Patronato*, leg. 25, r. 56. Moreover, see Escalona-Agüero (1775: 160-189) and Yuste (2013).

16 AGN, *Original royal writs*, v. 14, ff. 263-272. Muñoz, who lived in Manila and New Spain and traveled to Asia, was a theology and philosophy teacher (Reichert, 2014).

It is the route of the Chinese silk that allows consolidating the evangelization process of Asia: in the Pacific space friars spread out, mainly Franciscans, Augustinians and Iñiguistas, who, in their travels back and forth orient and occident, incorporated into the European, American and Asian cultures various teachings, not only spiritual but socioeconomic (Zermeño, 2006: 61-108).<sup>17</sup> Particularly, the *Indipetae*, Ignatian youths that *petebant Indias*, who aspired day and night, awake or dreaming the “pious intent” of a mission in Asia (Roscioni, 2001: 5-7).<sup>18</sup> They sought the “indigenous living”, which corresponded to an interior experience and an irreversible election; but maybe more than a desire of religious proselytism, many missionaries craved for an expression of intellectual crisis of the conscience (Fabre, 2007). This way, the young catechist Pedro Calúñgsod (1654-1672)<sup>19</sup> and Priests Diego Luis de San Vítores (1627-1672), Sebastián de Monroy (1649-1676) and Agustín Strobach (1646-1684),<sup>20</sup> who as their model colleague Francisco Javier,<sup>21</sup> headed for martyrdom to evangelize the new world of the Marianas.<sup>22</sup> They were the vanguard of faith in the Pacific: with their periodic

17 See also *Svma del estado del imperio de la China, y Christiandad dèl, por las noticias que dán los Padres de la Compañía de Iesvs, que residen en aquel Reyno, hasta el año de 1649*, AHN, *Various collections*, leg. 27, n. 14, ff. 1-4.

18 The desire to mission on the Indies among the European Jesuits is evinced by numerous *litterae indipetarum* or *indipetentium* that are preserved in the Roman archive of the Society (Roscioni, 2001; Broggio, 2004: 64). For an extensive reading on the role of the Iberian empires had in missionary and educational endeavors outlined by Ignatians in Rome, as well as the place the Catholic missions and the supporters held in the consolidation of the states, see Coello de la Rosa *et al.* (2012).

19 Calúñgsod, assistant to San Vítores, was martyred together with the former and canonized by the Catholic Church in 2012 (Oyola-Fabián and López-Casquete, 2014: 106-107).

20 About Bohemian priest Agustín Strobach, who is not object of study of this article, see De Boye (1691), Hausberger (2015: 281-308), Fochler (2016). In general, on the contribution from the Jesuit province Bohemia for the evangelization of the islands, see Binková (2016a).

21 Francisco Javier was the spiritual guidance of Jesuit missionaries in the XVII century (Dompnier, 2002) and it is not casual that Ignatian Diego Luis de San Vítores, in his petition letter of 1659 to mission in the Indies, declared his intention to deplete his life and strength in the missions ministry protected by Francisco Javier (García, 1683: 71).

22 On the history of the colonization and conversion of the Marianas and the life of apostle Diego Luis de San Vítores, it is interesting the Italian translation and edition of

humiliation from manual labor, the complicated day-to-day situations and from approaching the toughest or the indigenous, embodied the quintessence of preaching among the least as well as the same Jesuit identity; indubitably they carried a material and psychic load that not everyone could face.<sup>23</sup>

Little is known about Priest Monroy: from the village in Arahal, in the archbishopric in Seville, son of the noble Bartolomé Rodríguez de Monroy and of Doña Ana de Perea (Aranda, 1690: 9-10). About San Vítores, we know he was a member of a rich merchant family from Burgos and who studied, against his parents will, in the novitiate of Villarejo de Fuentes, close to Cuenca; then he went on to the university of Alcalá and was ordained as a priest in 1651 (García, 1683).<sup>24</sup> It is known that in July 1659, in a letter to the General Priest, he expressed his precocious desire of converting souls and martyrdom (Baró i Queralt, 2010: 18); previously he enjoyed support from Philip IV of Spain and then from his wife Mariana de Austria; he disembarked in Manila in 1666 and immediately wanted to travel along the 300 leagues between the Philippines from the Island of Thieves. However, his desire was frustrated by the lack of capital, and to raise it he travelled to Mexico, from where, by the generosity of the viceroy, who assigned him 10,000 pesos from the fund of Philippines, he was able to organize the expedition to convert the indigenous people of the Marianas. Reaching Guam, with other peers, in 1668, he settled in Agaña, where he fervently engaged in religious proselytism. On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1669, he erected the first temple in the region, as well as a Jesuit residence in the new Square and in spite of the continuous economic scarcity, as expressed in a memoir sent to

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the text by Francisco García (1683), dedicated to the Duchess of Aveiro, “mother of the missions”, made in Naples by the Spanish Jesuit Ambrosio Ortiz (1686). Finally, see Risco (1970), Saborido-Cursach (1985), Rogers (1995), Ramos-Suárez (2016: 550). The latter, a researcher, reminds that in the Japanese museum of the 26 martyrs of Nagasaki, eight letters by San Vítores are preserved together with other documents and the very cassock in which he was martyred. For a unifying vision of the of the Jesuit mission in the Marianas between 1668 and 1769, see Coello de la Rosa (2014). On the new mission borders in America in the XVII century and the Ignatian “Martyrdom empire”, Cañeque (2016).

23 From the foundational moments of the first half of the XVI century, such was the praxis of the missions (Broggio, 2004: 64) and of the Jesuits. The mission configured as a foundational ministry of the Society. The Ignatian had the obligation of looking for a link with the most needed, with the *rudes*, it was an imperative exercise of his *cursus honorum*, a hard *accommodatio* test that had to erect the foundations of his training and learning as a Jesuit and his spiritual definition as a priest (Majorana, 2003a: 195-199; 2011).

24 See a more recent biography of the missionary in Saborido-Cursach (1985).

the congregation in Mexico,<sup>25</sup> he disseminated Christ's message in 11 islands of the archipelago (García, 1683: 211).

By virtue of the commitment of the two Iñiguista priests to the endeavor to evangelize the Chamorro, the example of holy life and full of gentleness they reproduced, the apostolic verve of men who showed themselves as the most affable, tender and restrained among Christians and mainly because of their mortal sacrifices, San Vítores and Monroy incarnated the model of missionary devotion disseminated in the second half of the XVII century in counter-Reformation Europe and in the oriental and occidental Indies; an "ideal type" functional for the revitalization of the catechistic enthusiasm. In words by priest Pedro de Calatayud (1754: 7-8), being a missionary meant being a genius among the genius, an ardent, brilliant and lively man who with "proportionate virtue" was a timely instrument of vocation and grace for the ministry.

The literature produced in recent decades regarding missiology and martyrology is considerable. The two phenomena, many times correlated, can be studied from various approaches, among them, mobility as an essential modality for conversion to operate and for the establishment of spiritual life (Broggio, 2004: 24-25, 318); the word, the spoken language of the missionaries who communicated with the barbarian peoples, but mainly the written language of missionary stories and *avvisi*, which circulated profusely as proselytical instruments to draw Catholic European youths to the counter-Reformation vigor of *propaganda fide* or those used as an internal tool of horizontal or hierarchical communication;<sup>26</sup> finally, among many other

25 *Memorial que el P. Diego Luys de Sanvitores, religioso de la Compañía de Jesús, Rector de las Islas Marianas remitió á la congregacion del glorioso apostol de las Indias S. Francisco Xavier de la Ciudad de Mexico, pidiendo le ayuden, y socorran para la fundacion de la misión de dichas islas*, 1669, JCBL, RIBR00-B2083.

26 I refer not only to the noteworthy hagiographies of martyrs, translated to various languages, and the internal letters and reports that circulated among the priests, but also the narrations of personal and intimate events that lead numerous Jesuits (but also priests from other orders) to ask their superiors to be deployed to the Indies as missionaries, the *litterae indipetarum* –which have been previously mentioned—, personal letters that tell the romance-like events, the desire to escape, superficial descriptions, the uncertainty on some behaviors of the peers, dissensions as regards missionary policy, afflictions, the poor edifying desire of self-assertion, to sum up, histories of life (Prosperi, 1996: 586-599; Roscioni, 2001: 12, 33, 38, 49, 67, 81-94, 117-118). About the "mediation of the word" and the persuasion in the trade of missionary, see Prosperi (1991: 181-187); while for an attentive analysis on the missionary style and language of Jesuits in the first two centuries of modern times, for the Italian case see Majorana (2015: 137): the historian deepens into

possible analytical approaches, also the iconography, paintings, engravings and sculptures the mission candidates were shown as a quick way to empathy, to share the feeling of pain, the virtuous example and immolation;<sup>27</sup> or by a clear pedagogic-devotional will that underlies the pictorial representation or the engraving: the images were matched with explanatory legends of the martyrdom scenes, which in like manner for the less cultured served as Catholic holiness and praxis models; it was thus insisted on the spiritual value of sight and on the visible as a revelation of holiness.<sup>28</sup> Specimen that indicates the link between text and depiction is the volume by Jesuit Mathias Tanner (1630-1692), *Societas Jesu usque ad sanguinis et vite profusionem militans...*, published in Prague (1675), in which the victims of the order are described, by continental section according to the place where they were martyred, Europe, Africa, America, etc., with a clear devotional intention (figure 1).<sup>29</sup>

Maybe more exemplary is the book *Effigies et nomina eorum, qui Societate Jesu per quatuor orbis partes pro Dei et religionis causa sanguinem et vitam profuderunt. Ab anno 1549 usque ad annum 1655* (Anonymous, without place and date, however from the second half of the XVII century), a mere compilation of engravings with martyrdoms of Jesuits, virtually with no

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the confrontation between “oratoria cittadina e oratoria missionaria, cioè tra i due diversi ministeri gesuitici”, a dispute in which the reflection on the style and languages of rural preaching concur.

27 A significant instance was the frescos, now disappeared, of Jesuit martyrs in the refectory of San Andres College in Rome, in which the immolation spirit intended to be transmitted to the future missionaries to the Indies was evident (Roscioni, 2001: 77-79; Majorana, 2003b; Broggio, 2004: 58).

28 As in the most renowned cases of the tower of the Bavarian castle of Dillingen and the church of Santo Stefano Rotondo in Rome (Nicolaci, 2013: 40-41). See also Bargellini (2016: 150). In general, on the power of images and Visual Studies regarding Christian iconographic theory, see Dekoninck (2016); on the analysis of the role of missionary images, evangelization methods and material, cultural and symbolic interchanges, see Fabre (1999: 466-467).

29 All the figures are in the annex, at the end of the present article. Each review of a martyr's life is accompanied by an engraving made by painter from Prague Karel Škréta, representing the dramatic dying of the priest, however the effigies “rather explicit to represent violence, at that time should not produce fear, instead to exhort to follow the example of those who gave their life to disseminate Christian faith” (Binková, 2016b: 234).

text and only the image that intends to infuse retreat.<sup>30</sup> And from this devotional need so as to justify in the rhetoric and political discourse the Hispanic-Catholic conquest of the Marianas comes, via the figure of Mariana of Austria and “her” Jesuits, a dual emblematic symbolization, pertaining to monarchy and martyrdom.

### **Mariana of Austria in the monarchical-martyrdom symbolization of the Island of Thieves**

By the end of the XVII century, in the already decaying Seville, appears a Dutch engraving to exalt the former ruler Mariana of Austria, not only as an instigator of Jesuit Christianization of the Marianas, thus called in her honor, but also as a guarantee of the Habsburg-Catholic unfolding of martyrdom, as a legitimization of the conquest.

The work of priest Gabriel de Aranda, *Vida, y gloriosa muerte del V. Padre Sebastian de Monroy, religioso de la Compañía de Jesvs, que murió dilatando la Fè alanceado de los barbaros en las Islas Marianas*, published in Seville (1690), and “dedicated to the Augustest Lady Doña Mariana de Austria, Queen of Spain and protector of Christendom in the Marianas” by Fernando Rodríguez de Monroy, prebendary of the Seville cathedral and brother of the martyr, shows as a back cover a stamp addressed to the “Majesty” of the sovereign in the same terms.<sup>31</sup>

Signed by Joseph Mulder, the composition depicts at the very front the queen dressed as a widow kneeled on a cushion, with her crown on the floor, of only two imperials crossed, according to the usual model of the Austrian Spanish and receiving from Sebastián de Monroy, standing on a cloud at the lowest possible level and with a nimbus of sanctity, a sheet which reads: “Islas Marianas Pueblo de Oro se” [Mariana Islands People of Gold se] (Figure 2).

Although the scenario is conventionally indeterminate, to the left of the observer, behind the apparition, the beginning of a column, and to the right, behind the queen, a canopy in whose slope appears the royal coat of arms, reduced to the counter-quarter of Castilla and León. Some cherubs, three of them holding a very long cane, embellish this example of monarchical-devote allegory with a portrait *in assistenza*, of a little usual sort under the Spanish Habsburg. It is worth underscoring that in sharp contrast with

30 BUV, I-235624. The volume, cited but without clarifying the proper collocation by Hausberger (1995: 42-43), is a magnificent example of the “power of the arts” and the persuasion capability of the image Bailey (1999) studies.

31 See also Páez-Ríos (1981: 261, n. 1454, 2 and corresponding sheet).

numerous pictorial, engraved and even drawn effigies, the face of Mariana is not recognizable, which denotes an incomprehensible lack of graphic information for the author, however, he knows how the character dresses.

From the face of the martyr comes a phylactery with the legend “Tu populum humilem salvum facies”, a reference to David’s psalter, in particular to psalm XVII, which, by quoting Spanish versions of the old regime, in that by Jacques-Philippe Lallement (1786: 48), via Jaime Serrano means “care to save the people subject to your will” while in friar Diego Fernández’s (1801: 33) “Lord, you will save the subjugated people”, phrases that only generically seem to adapt to the argument.

Joseph Mulder, born in Amsterdam in 1658 and died in 1728, disciple of Hendrick Bogaert and also of Romeyn de Hooghe, was according to the repertoires of Josep Strutt (1786: 169) and Michael Bryan (1816: 103-104), an artist, who frequently working with his own drawings, developed biblical and historical topics, as well as issues regarding the Dutch Indies, even if he was valued for his images of churches and public buildings. The image dedicated to Mariana of Austria must be an invention of his, however it is not precisely outstanding for the display of architectural motifs. It is plain to see that the iconographic ambition of the description is above the abilities of the author.

As regards the link of Mulder with Spain, it is worth pointing out, on the one side that he opened the front page of *Primera parte de la Historia general del Nuevo Reyno de Granada*, by Lucas Fernández de Piedrahita, published in Antwerp (1688)<sup>32</sup> –composition that offers an edge with the portraits of the successive indigenous rulers of the territory (figure 3)— and on the other, that the previously mentioned Romeyn de Hooghe engraved in 1685 the much famous Eucharistic action of Charles II giving his cart to the viaticum.

In the context of royal support to the acting of the Jesuits in the Philippines area —a stance that, as demonstrated by Coello de la Rosa (2011: 715-716 and 720), was facilitated by the mediation of priest Juan Everardo Nithard, spiritual guide and confessor of the widow— Mariana manifested in the 1665 writ her support to the evangelizing endeavor of the Society in the Island of Thieves, for which she also provided funds with the consequence that the order changed the name to the islands, and were called Marianas.

Barely ascending to power in 1665, the ruler made haste to send there priest Diego Luis de San Vítores, first apostle and in 1673 she sent Monroy to

32 See Falcón-Márquez (1995: 193, n. 112, sheet by Rocío Caramuel Moyano and Aurora Domínguez Guzmán).

the same place, who —as already mentioned— died martyred three years later, when finally the Jesuit mission was supported by a military detachment sent by the Monarchy (Elizalde, 2016: 409). Only after such date, between 1679 and 1680 —after a phase defined by incomplete or “epidermal” conversions of the natives to Christianity, according to the account by Xavier Baró i Queralt (2015: 131)—, the zone seemed to be at a relatively conventional acculturation process whose characteristic features did not reveal an atypical model of conquest and political-ideological “control”; however, martyrdoms continued.

As an example of material acculturation, in the context of livestock and food products importations from New Spain, as direct communications with the Philippines did not start until 1683,<sup>33</sup> an Iñiguista said in 1679 that the natives “already eat pork and are starting to like corn”—a circumstance comparable with others in the empire and that reflects an unquestionable improvement in the life style and diet—<sup>34</sup> according to the fact that “they civilize in the political, showing reverence for the priests and respect for the Spanish, accepting their habits, especially dressing” (Rodríguez-Ponga-Salamanca, 1992: 147-149). This is, in the sociopolitical and international fabric in 1600’s, in which “sweet persuasion” was deemed the most appropriate practice to indoctrinate and the missioner role became more attractive (Prosperi, 1991: 180-181), Hispanic sociability, reinforced by Christian modesty, triumphed over the pagan nakedness that gradually became incompatible with the modified material and moral interests of the natives. As pointed out by Marjorie Driver (1988a: 23), the colony would be inextricably joined to Mexico and Philippines by intense trade that affected both the indigenous and the Spanish. Not in vain, as mentioned, the Manila Galleon stopped in one of the islands, Guam.

However, in a first apologetic reading, from a political-religious standpoint, the preferential historical dimension of the archipelago soon acquired other distinctive profiles. According to Coello de la Rosa (2011: 729 y 741), the triumph of good, identified with preachers, over evil, expressed by the locals, “legalized the Spanish possession of the Marianas”, which as a contemporary Jesuit expressed, had been watered “with the blood of the martyrs”; this is to say, “scattered over the Marianas, the martyrdom symbols, as forms of possession, served to consolidate the Spanish presence

33 San Antonio (1738: 21) points out that caper berries and caper flowers were bought from the Marianas.

34 The same event is noticed in New Spain, in the Franciscan strategies to evangelize in Yucatan (Peccatiello, 2000: 149 and 152).

in the island". Albeit such justification of the conquest from a triumph which paradoxically, unfolded oblation, an accomplishment more celebrated as more human lives were lost —as the ideology of martyrdom contradictorily implied the victorious glorification of annihilation by the hands of the enemy, a death turned into life in terms of the “baroque singularity” over the fragility and insubstantiality of mundane goods— was not the basic tone of the evangelization in the area of the Philippines nor in the Occidental Indies. The political-religious legitimization of the conquest via the dissemination of faith did not imply the desirability of the generalized martyrdom in the fashion of the Marianas.

According to Eugenia Meyer (1964: 125), when Friar Gaspar de San Agustín in his chronicle of the Philippines reaches 1569 —date on which Miguel López de Legazpi receives the appointment in advance of the Island of Thieves—, briefly describes a providentialist thesis, this way he states the conquest of the first of such archipelagos as a “history by the victors”, in which the Spaniards always win. Here the sacrificial argument has made room for a more conventional formula of triumph.

Furthermore, the Jesuit martyrdom discourse of the Marianas evidently contradicts itself at times, as evinced by the case of the very character whose immolation motivates Mulder's image. Also, in the XVII century priest Luis de Morales, when writing the history of the islands, tells in a noticeably incoherent manner the “glorious death” of priest Sebastián de Monroy, who, on the one side exhorts his peers to have the joy of dying for Christ; while on the other, he valiantly defends himself from the enemies until he —much against his own will, it is understood— succumbs to the attacks (Morales and Le Gobien, 2013: 232-234): to accomplish martyrdom there must be the ardor of dying and the assassinated priests served as a proof for the eminence of the Society (Hausberger, 2015: 292).<sup>35</sup> This way the Marianas show an extreme case, not only of the positive reading of an objective loss, as dying before the enemy —as here the topic of the fallen hero acquires alarming proportional dimensions—, but also the interference of religious orders in the control of the conquest. In the fallen character, depicted as a Christ's soldier dead to the unfolded patriotic cause of Catholicism and Hispanism

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35 Hausberger adds how the Jesuit merit “is entirely depicted with the sacrifices missionaries accepted willingly”. Albeit, it has to be clarified that in the history of Christianity, martyrdom is not sought, it is lived: in martyrdom the truth of the *Gospel* is evinced and the martyr does not die of their own accord, but because they want to give testimony of their faith in Christ before the oppressor as the ultimate truth in life. I am grateful to Giovanna Fiume for these considerations; likewise, see Fisichella (2005: 441).

such death is loaded with validations so symbolic of a “positive death”, almost healthy to support the conquest: a substantial annulation of the trauma is reached from the verification of the missionaries’ sacrificial mourning, who through his mortification, purifies the colonial land. Expiration is not breaking, but valor, a symbol of collective belonging and fidelity to Christian principles.<sup>36</sup>

Linked with utopias such as that of an independent indo-Christian realm of Franciscan Toribio de Benavente Motolinía in New Spain in the XVI<sup>37</sup> century and in a much more direct manner, with reductions of Paraguay and the occupation of the Jesuit Baja California,<sup>38</sup> the Society made in the Marianas a curious experiment of “convent government,” fully supported by the crown. Coello de la Rosa (2010: 39) states that after the 1683-1686 war against the indigenous, the Jesuits took up the religious and political control of the islands as founders of a “Missionary state” in which martyrs acted as moral referents of the subjugated land”. However, the executioners’ subjection and Christianization, labeling them as barbarians, did not prevent, from a utopian colonialist perspective, recognizing in them certain natural virtues that, in the dynamic of the existing tensions between Europeans themselves, was equal to disavow the conquest, even though for merely rhetoric effects. Coello de la Rosa (2013a: 81-82, 84-85 and 88) states:

[...] by the end of the XVII century, the Jesuits in the Marianas thought that the right to evangelize was based less on the social and moral values of Thomism (Acosta) than on the universal theories of Neo-stoicism (Ricci, Valignano), substantiated on the natural and universal law, which allowed communication between human societies and their later conversion to Christianity.

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36 Broggio’s (2004: 66) consideration is inspiring, which indeed does not agree with the case under analysis: along the XVII century the meaning of the missionary model is reformulated and the heroism of the enterprise is no longer in the glorifying martyrdom, but in the missioner’s possibility to experience first hand all of the fullest virtues of modern religiousness, i.e., prudence, justice, strength, temperance, charity, and eternal hope, and via the most recondite oblation, true faith.

37 For utopic project of Franciscans in Mexico and the millenarian thinking, among the numerous possible references, see Pacheco-Rojas (2008: 95-119).

38 As argued by Messmacher (1997: 12), for the case of the missionary failure in California –in which the Californian disintegrates as a society and as a group–, over the period 1697-1768, such province “goes from being an indigenous society with no history to having a history without society: the Jesuit occupation of Baja California, which takes place in a continuity process, produces a political-religious, cultural and demographic discontinuity”.

This way, while the brother preacher Muñoz recognizes in the indigenous people of the Marianas evident affability and invites the monarch to endure in the evangelizing task to have missionaries “in the Marianas by any means”,<sup>39</sup> priest Luis de Morales, in his history of the archipelago, stated that natives lived a primal happiness on its way to destruction under the moral corruption of the Spanish governors, so the critical Jesuits, adopting before the indigenous a “dialogical dimension that allowed them to express their own standpoints”, manipulated the statements of the natives in testimonials such as the harangue allegedly delivered in 1670 by Chief Hurao against the pretended superiority of European culture, at present “an icon of the Chamorro identity in Guam” (Coello de la Rosa, 2013b).<sup>40</sup> This original or a-historical innocence found an opponent or negative referent in the Spanish Christian civilization, as it disembarked in the islands in spite of the Jesuit efforts. And in the same sector of the Spanish Pacific, the even more deleterious influx of other developed culture, but not European, was evident. The Jesuit Priest Francisco Colin (1633: 242), gathering materials of a religion brother, priest Pedro Chirino, states that under Philip II, the Philippine political apparatus complained with the king against the Chinese living in that other archipelago, “because of the many vices and sins they teach the Locals, mainly sodomy”.

This way, it may be surprising not only that the individual in the image and the book is a prebendary alien to the monarchical and Jesuit leadership and who acts out of familial reasons, but also inversely, that neither the Society nor the royalty undertook similar commemorative enterprises, linked or not to a Sebastián de Monroy, whose trajectory is not the best exemplar of the conquest. In the same vein, we cannot but be surprised there is no iconography of the Jesuits’ deaths in the Marianas, whereas there is one, and profusely disseminated, of the Nagasaki martyrs, almost all of them Japanese, executed in 1597.<sup>41</sup>

Around the years when the book by priest Gabriel de Aranda, with the image of the monarchical-martyrdom exaltation of the queen, appeared, the Society of Jesus developed a graphic typology of propaganda of its missionary acting that did not hesitate to resort to the most uninhibited symbology,

39 AGN, *Reales cédulas originales*, v. 14, ff. 263-272.

40 On the eloquence of Hurao’s discourse and its historic valence, see Ginzburg (1999: 71-91).

41 The iconography of Japanese martyrs in 1597 is immense, in the Iberian Peninsula and the world; albeit, for Spanish art, according to Alonso-Sesé (2013), it is a poorly recurrent topic.

as exemplified by a Mexican image. Indeed, the front image of the book *Historia de la Provincia de la Compañía de Jesús de Nueva-España*, by priest Francisco de Florencia (1694), in its first tome —in total the *Historia* occupies eight volumes— presents an emerging globe describing a large part of the continent between the north and south seas, and as head to the globe, the effigy of Ignatius (of Loyola), whose heart projects rays to Francisco Javier's and Francisco de Borja's —even though the respective innards are not visible, marked by the Jesuit anagram— which refracting fall upon a number of representative characters of the exotic worlds (figure 4).

The late-baroque scenographic image of the split or multiplied beams, not exclusive to the order. The light irradiated by the mane of Jesus provides the legend for an image in the front cover of *Novus atlas sinensis*, by the Italian Jesuit Martino Martini, published in Amsterdam in 1655, an inseparable work of missionary toils of the Society (figure 5).<sup>42</sup> From the Christ-like image of the sun, to the left, comes a beam that, after hitting a mirror carried by a feminine figure with pontifical garments, reflects against a torch, a symbol of how faith embraces the faithful's hearts (Doménech-García, 2012: 334).

The geographic and cultural sphere where the Marianas insert, i.e., that of the Philippines, also witnessed the rhetoric use of beams to illustrate the glory of Christianization. An image in the book by friar Gaspar de San Agustín, *Conquista de las Islas Philipinas: la temporal por las armas del señor Don Felipe Segundo el Prudente; y la espiritual, por los religiosos del Orden de Nuestro Padre San Agustín: Fundacion, y progressos de su provincia del Santissimo Nombre de Jesús*, published in Madrid in 1698, shows upon a map of the territory a rising sun, above which there is another sun, with the anagram of Jesus, hits a heart in the hand of san Agustín of Hippo and the beam, refracting, divides into two that fall upon the archipelago, a complex issue sided by two groups of people, the profane, to the right, with Philip II and behind him Miguel López de Legazpi, and the religious, with two of the friars that accompanied the conquistador (figure 6) (Aa.Vv. [Various authors], 1993: 155-156, n. 132, sheet by Fernando Bouza). A rather excessive detail of regal humiliation before a venerable priest of the lowest rank in the supernatural Catholic universe, who, on the other side, directly represents the interests of a determinate monastic order that interacts with the empire in a conquest enterprise; the detail of the crown on the floor may be a whim of engraver Mulder, generic symbol of devote humbleness. Objectively,

42 As regards Asia, the sinology and studies of Martino Martini, see Mungello (1989: 106-133).

however, it indicates a renouncement to mundane powers, as noticed, for example, and a distinguishable one, in the par excellence dynastic painting, *La gloria*, by Tiziano, in 1551-1554.<sup>43</sup>

## Conclusions

In the XVII century, the slow pace of occupation of the area of the Island of Thieves and its Christianization was carried out under the symbolic imagery of Ignatian martyrdom and the Queen Mariana of Austria, guardian of the true faith in the islands. The Society of Jesus, “flying body” and voluntary troop in service of the Pope, the Spanish empire and Catholicism, regulated in its *modus operandi* for the execution of the divine glory and the perfect service of the Chamorros’ souls, undertook a dangerous conversion endeavor in which, from the perspective of the Habsburg sovereignty, the martyrdoms of Diego Luis de San Vítores (from Burgos), Sebastián de Monroy (from Malaga) and the other Iñiguistas ideologically unfolded as a justification of the Spanish presence and government.

The ideological tone of torment in the Marianas, analyzed via the presence of Jesuits and the martyrdom and devotional design of the queen herself is not the exception in the apostolic panorama in the Philippines and Occidental Indies, as it reveals a blatant interference of the religious arm in the political management of the conquest; however, in the archipelago, the missionary intervention is verified extremely weak in the modalities of the penetration of the Catholic and civilizing message and in the relation between the preachers-martyrs and the evangelized: the Jesuits in the Marianas did not fully insert into the ancient local pre-Spanish order.

## Archives and libraries

AGI, Archivo General de Indias, Seville.

AGN, Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico.

AHN, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid.

BUV, Biblioteca de la Universidad, Vienna.

JCBL, The John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

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43 In *La gloria*, Emperor Charles V wears the expressive crown of his monarchical hierarchy over the cloud in which he kneeled, a way to hint to be at his feet, as a mere reminder of the vain earthly glories.

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## Annex

Figure 1

Martyrdom of Aragonese Alejandro López and Neapolitan Juan de Montiel, killed by order of sultan Muhammad Dipatuan Kudarat in Mindanao in 1655

SOCIETAS ASIATICA.



P. Alexander Lopez Hispanus. P. Ioannes Montiel Calahor Soc. IESV. anno  
Fidei Christianae crudeliter trucidati ab Idololatriis Indis. Mindanai. A. 1655.  
13. Decembris.

C. S. A.

M. K.

Source: Tanner, *Societas Jesu usque ad sanguinis*, p. 430.

Figure 2

Back cover of Aranda, *Vida, y gloriosa muerte del V. padre Sebastian de Monroy* [Life and glorious death of Sebastian de Monroy]



Ala Magestad de la Augustissima Señor D. MARIANA DE  
AVSTRIA, Reyna de España, Protectora de la Chri-  
tiandad de las Islas Marianas.

Figure 3

Front cover of Fernández de Piedrahita,  
*Primera parte de la Historia general* [First part of the General History]

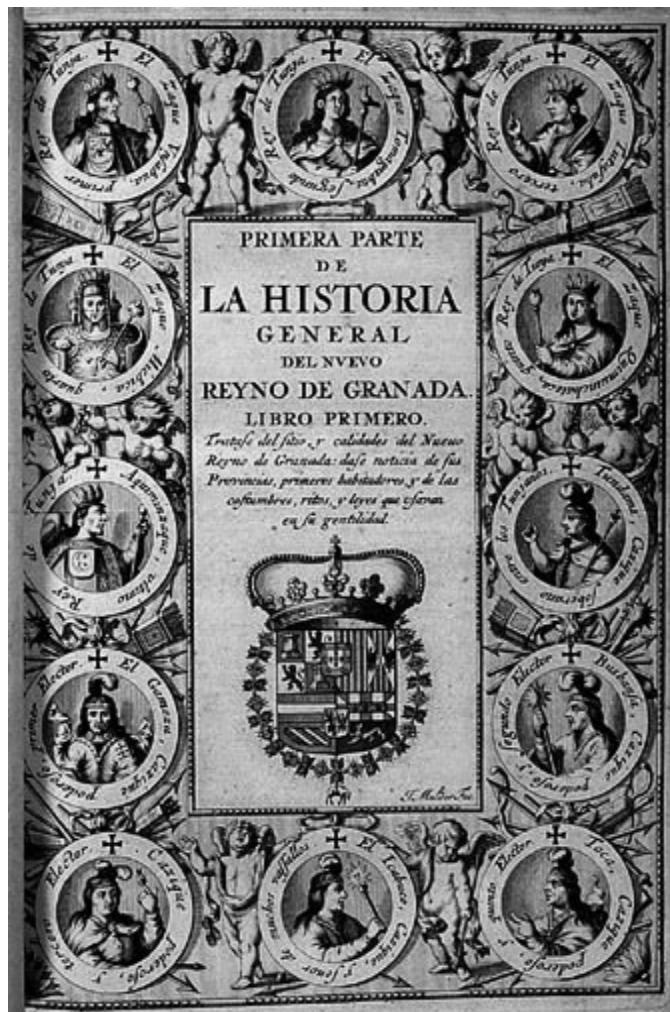


Figure 4

Front cover of Florencia, *Historia de la Provincia de la Compañía de Jesvs*  
[History of the Province of the Society of Jesus]



Figure 5

Front cover of Martino Martini, *Novus atlas sinensis*, Amsterdam, 1655



Figure 6

**Image of the book by friar Gaspar de San Agustín, *Conquista de las Islas Philipinas: la temporal por las armas del señor Don Phelipe Segundo el Prudente; y la espiritual, por los religiosos del Orden de Nuestro Padre San Augustin* [...], Madrid, 1698**



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