
Documents 1670D

First biography of Fr. Medina, edited by Fr. Francisco García

Source: Fr. Francisco García, S.J. "Relacion de la Vida de el Devotissimo hijo de Maria Santissima, de la Compañia de Jesus, que murió por Christo en las Islas Marianas (llamadas antes de los Ladrones) con otro Compañero seglar, llamado Hipolito de la Cruz," printed at Madrid in 1673. BNM #3/9024.

Notes: This is the first book ever published which was entirely on the Marianas or Micronesia. It was written in parallel, and printed almost at the same time as the other biography by Fr. Florencia (Doc. 1670E). This author also wrote biographies of St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, and Blessed Sanvitores.

Description and summary contents.

The biography section of the book covers 146 small pages. It is then followed by a 48-page historical treatise, by the same author, about the Persecution of Christians in China by the Tartar invaders, between 1664 and 1668.

At the end of the biography, at the foot of p. 146, the author says: "Everything that has been said in this biography has been taken from the letters from Fr. Diego Luis de Sanvitores, written from the Marianas, and others that have come into the hands of some Fathers of the Province of Andalusia." Therefore, there is nothing original in it. In fact, the real author is Fr. Sanvitores (or his assistants), and Fr. García is only the editor. I reproduce two letters of Fr. Medina whose manuscript originals have been lost.

A few extracts from this book, for comparison purposes

Original text in Spanish.

...
*Bolvamos al Padre Luis, que dexamos en la Nave, por entrarnos à ver, aunque de
passo, la tierra. Estando nuestro Galeon un Viernes por la tarde, 15 de Junio de 68 à
vista de las Marianas, cercado de las embarcaciones de aquellos Isleños, estavan los
nuestros dudosos de la entrada, y acogida que hallarian en sus Islas, por verlos à ellos*

rezelosos de entrar en nuestro Galeon, por mas que los combidavan, temiendo sin duda algun dañado intento, con la cercania de los Españoles, como lo avian experimentado años antes de los Olandeses, en la entrada de su tierra. Mas todo se facilitò por medio de la Santissima Virgen, cuya devocion promovia en todos el Padre Luis; porque empezaron los nuestros à. imbocar à la Santissima Virgen, cantando su Letania; y apenas llegaron à la mitad de las Preces, quando miraron con no menos alegria, que admiracion, coronada la Nave de aquellos pobres Marianos, que perdido el temor, se llegaron con grande afabilidad, y agassajo à los Padres, que los llevaron luego à saludar à la Santissima Virgen; y à su vista se desvanecieron todos los rezelos que avia de una, y otra parte, como à vista de el Sol desaparecen las tinieblas.

El dia siguiente, Sabado, dia dedicado à la Santissima Virgen, Patrona de esta Mission, dando fondo la Nave, saltò el primero en tierra en la Isla de Guan (llamada desde entonces San Juan) el Padre Luis, con otro compañero, sin mas armas, ni resguardo, que las de su Fè, y confiança en el Patrocinio de Maria Santissima; y tomando possession de estas Islas por Jesu Christo, enarbolò el Estandarte de la Cruz en la Playa, y en un Pueblo, que se llamò de los Martires, por estar dedicado desde el viage el primer Pueblo que encontrassen, à los Santos en cuyo dia se descubriessen las Islas, que fue el de los Santos Martires Vito, Modesto, y Crescencia, à 15 de Junio.

Quedòse aquella noche en la Isla el Padre Luis, con el otro compañero, y algunos pocos seglares, sin mas defensa, que aquella con que avia entrado; pero sin temor ninguno, porque la muerte que podian darle, no la temia, sino la deseava. Hablò à los Principales de el primer Pueblo que encontró, por medio de el Interprete que llevaba, y algunas palabras de su lengua, que avia aprendido en el viage, con su mucha aplicacion, y zelo. Propusoles la embaxada que traía de Dios, y la Santissima Virgen, para que recibiesen la luz de la verdad, y el Santo Bautismo, y por medio de èl la Gloria. Y diò el Señor, y la Señora tal eficazia à sus palabras, que luego los Principales pidieron al Capitan, y Cabo de el Navio, que les dexassen alli à los Padres, para que les enseñassen aquella Doctrina, y verdad, que ellos no sabian; y esto con tal viveza, y instancia, queriendo cada uno de los Principales, que avian venido, que fuesen à su Pueblo, que el Cabo de el Navio obligò à los Padres, con varios requerimientos, de parte de su Magestad, à que se quedassen todos en la Islas Marianas, menos uno, que passò por Capellan de el Galeon à Manila: disponiendolo assi Dios, y la Santissima Virgen, que obligassen al Padre Medina à lo mismo, que èl con tantas ansias deseava. Y assi, embiando con el Navio à Manila uno de sus compañeros, se quedò èl en las Islas Marianas.

En aquel primer dia diò el mismo Padre Luis principio à los Bautismos, con el de una niña, dexando emparentados al Capitan, y Cabo, y otros Oficiales de la Nao, con estos pobres Marianos, por medio de el Santo Bautismo, en que eran Padrinos, con mucho gusto, y consuelo, los que iban saltando en tierra, mientras otros de los Isleños iban à la Nave con sus criaturas, para que las bautizasses, deseando, y buscando el parentesco con la gente de Dios, que assi llamavan à los Españoles.

...

[Letter from Fr. Medina to an unnamed Jesuit in southern Spain, dated Agaña in early 1669]

*Por la misericordia de Dios, se và ya estableciendo forma de Christiandad en este Pueblo, y todos los de él, y mucha gente de otros vienen los Domingos à la Missa, y **anfanaytay**; porque usé de una traza al principio, que ellos me dixerón; y es, que ellos vendrían à nuestro **gipot** (celebridad de concurso) si les diésemos alguna cosilla, como se usa en su **gipot**; con que yo les doy un ançuelo, que los haze Andres, de alambre, y assi vienen con mucho gusto à oir la Doctrina Christiana todos los Domingos; y aora vienen mucho mejor, y han venido casi todos los Lugares de esta Isla à ver el Nacimiento que hemos hecho, y para verlo, les pedia por condicion, que primero avian de dezir la Doctrina Christiana, que esse era mi **guati** (paga) con que todos, primero que lo viessen, rezavan el Credo, y los Mandamientos, y el Acto de contricion, y otras cosas que les dezia, y assi veían el Nacimiento; con que esta Pasqua, mucha parte de esta Isla se ha buuelto à **anfanaytay**, y cada dia van viniendo mas; y yo estoy muy gustoso, por el fruto que se ha cogido de el Nacimiento.*

Sabrà V. Reverencia, como nuestro amigo Kipuha murió à 23 de Diziembre [1668], y yo le procuré assistir con cuidado, por ser la persona à quien mas devemos en estas Islas, y à quien yo hablé quando saltè en esta, y que nos diò el sí para que nos desembarcasemos en su casa: y aunque se ofrecieron muchas dificultades de parte de ellos, para que se enterrasse en nuestra Iglesia, todas se vencieron, gracias à Dios, y le enteramos en nuestra Iglesia Lunes, vispera de Pasqua, yendo por èl à su casa con trompeta, y llevamos el Estandarte de nuestro Padre San Ignacio, y San Francisco Xavier (ordinario guion, y Estandarte de los Padres de la Compañia, en los passos difíciles de su Mission, con que no dudava de emprender, y vencer singularmente el Padre Luis qualquier dificultad en las cosas de la mayor gloria de el Señor) y le diximos su Vigilia cantada, y su Missa tambien cantada. Por acà se han hecho los demàs sufragios entre todos los de Casa, que la Compañia usa hazer con uno de ella. Han quedado todos los de este Lugar muy contentos con el entierro de Kipuha, y me preguntan, si quando ellos se mueran, los enterraremos de la misma suerte, &c.

...

[Fr. Medina was then sent to the Islands of Aguiguan, Tinian, and Saipan.]

[Letter sent to Fr. Sanvitores in Guam from Tinian, fall 1669]

*Gracias devemos dar à Dios nuestro Señor, y à su Santissima Madre, y al Señor San Joseph, que con su venida (de la Nao San Joseph) se han convertido los mayores temores que teniamos en favores, y agassajos de esta gente de Tinian, y Saypan; porque todos los Pueblos, assi de Tinian, como de Saypan, no solo no han hecho la mas minima burla, sino, que en entrando en el Pueblo, me llevaban à la casa de **Chamorri Maagas** (el mayor Principal) y luego venia todo el Pueblo con su **apruit**, para que comiesse el Padre; y donde mas agassajo me han hecho, ha sido en Saypan; porque todos estàn temblando de Corcuera (llaman con el nombre de un Antiguo à todos los Gobernadores de Manila, segun su costumbre) y nos han estimado muchissimo, que*

ayamos evitado, que no ayan venido acá à destruirlos. Gracias à la Santissima Virgen, que les ha puesto estos temores. En esta primera visita de Saypan he bautizado seiscientos y siete; porque muchos, que V. Reverencia no bautizó, pedían el Bautismo.

*En Tinian he bautizado menos; porque la primera visita fue à los niños solamente: no sabe que hazerse la gente para agassajarme, y estamos, no solo con gran seguridad, sino libres de burlas; y los Domingos viene casi toda la Isla à nuestro **Gipot**; con que se junta grandissimo auditorio, qual nunca yo le ha visto en Agaña...*

...

V. Trabajos que padecio en estas Islas el Padre Luis de Medina, y la providencia con que Dios le librò de muchos peligros.

...

VI. Muerte por Christo de el Padre Luis de Medina, con su Compañero Hipolito de la Cruz, è invencion de sus bendidos cuerpos.

...

VII. Virtudes, y milagros de el Padre Luys de Medina.

...

Translation of the above extracts.

...

Let us return to Father Luis, whom we left aboard the ship, to go and see what was going on ashore, though in passing. As our galleon was in sight of the Marianas, on a Friday in the afternoon of 15 June 1668, surrounded by the canoes of those Islanders, our people were doubtful of the entrance, and reception that they would find in their Islands, because they saw them to be reluctant to come aboard our galleon, no matter how strongly they invited them in, for fear, no doubt, that some harmful intention, from close contact with the Spanish, as they had experienced years ago with the Dutch, who had stepped ashore. However, everything was made easy through the Blessed Virgin, whose devotion Father Luis was promoting in everyone, because they began in the middle of the prayers, when they looked with no less joy than wonder at the ship, then crowned with those poor Marianos, who had lost their fear. They arrived with great affability and welcome for the Fathers, who then took them to salute the Blessed Virgin; upon seeing her all the fears, on either side, disappeared, as darkness disappears at sunrise.

The next day, Saturday, a day dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, patron of this Mission, the ship anchored. The first to step ashore at the Island of Guan (called San Juan since then) was Father Luis, with another companion, without more weapons, or protection, than those of his Faith, and trust in the patronage of Blessed Mary. Taking possession of these Islands for Jesus Christ, he raised the Standard of the Cross upon the beach, and in a town which was named De los Martires, as they had already decided during

the voyage to give to the first town they came across with the name of the saints in whose feast-day the Islands would be sighted, and that was on 15 June, the feast-day of the Holy Martyrs Vitus, Modestus, and Crescentia.¹

Father Luis and his other companion remained ashore that night, along with a few laymen, without more defence than that with which they had entered, but without any fear, because the death that they could give him, he did not fear, rather he wished it. He spoke to the chiefs of the first town he met, through the interpreter he had brought, and a few words of their language that he had learned during the voyage, with his great application, and zeal. He proposed to them the embassy that he brought from God, and the Blessed Virgin, for them to receive the light of the truth, and the holy baptism, and through it Glory. The Lord, and the Lady, gave so much efficiency to his words that the chiefs then asked the Captain and Commander of the ship to leave there the Fathers, to teach them that Doctrine, and truth, that they did not know about; and this they did with such vivacity, and insistence, every one of the chiefs who had come up wanting them for his own town, that the Commander of the ship obliged the Fathers, with various requests made on behalf of His Majesty, that they should all remain in the Mariana Islands, except for one, who went on as Chaplain of the galleon to Manila. God has arranged it so, and the Virgin Mary, so that Father Medina would also stay, as he desired with so many anxieties. So, sending one of their companions to Manila aboard the ship, he remained in the Mariana Islands.²

On that first day, Father Luis himself gave a beginning to the baptisms, by baptizing a baby girl, and her god-father was the Captain and Commander, and the other officers of the galleon, with these poor Marianos, through the holy baptism, in which those who stepped ashore became god-fathers, with much pleasure and consolation, while other Islanders were going to the ship with their infants, to have them baptize, wishing, and looking for god-parents among the people of God, as they called the Spanish.³

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- 1 Ed. note: The memory of this first landing at Maite, east of the Agaña River, was soon obliterated by the more formal landing the next day at Agaña proper, where the mission was founded.
 - 2 Ed. note: Fr. Medina had been acting Superior of the mission band, as Fr. Pimentel had stayed behind in Mexico one extra year. The new chaplain of the galleon was Fr. Tati; his remaining companions were all lay brothers.
 - 3 Ed. note: The missionaries did not realize then that many of the people going to the ship to have their babies baptized, were the same ones who had already received gifts when they had them baptized ashore, and vice versa. Hence, the exaggerated estimates in the number of baptisms, and population estimates.

[Soon afterward, Fr. Medina was sent to visit the villages along the coast, westward from Agaña, and wrote short notes to Fr. Sanvitores as he went. One note is from Upagat,¹ another from Tupungan, which had 300 inhabitants in 1668, and went on to Oro-dria [i.e. Orote], which could only be reached by boat and was 1 league away from Tupungan. On another visit, he passed by Apurguan, Pago, Megga, which was half a league from Pago.² Then he went back to Pago, where he baptized 18 adults and 2 children. We learn that the local word for Doctrine was **Anfanaytay**.³ He dedicated the site of Pago to St. James, i.e. Santiago, as he was there on his feast-day, 25 July 1668. He also visited Paa on the south coast, and, by the feast-day of St. Francis Xavier, he had already visited three times the town of Nisichan [i.e. Nisihan] on the NE coast. On 16 July 1668, he was visiting the town of Piggug, on the E coast, and he renamed it “Triunfo de la Cruz” because it was the feast-day of the Triumph of the Cross. It is recorded that he also visited Aputon, i.e. Haputo, and Inapsan, which he then dedicated to the Virgin of Good Succor. Then he visited Tarragui, another village on the North coast of Guam. He was then accompanied by two missionary helpers, Andrés and Nicolas. By February 1669, he was on the west coast, at Fuuña. At one time or another, he also visited Tarrifac, i.e. Taraifac on the W coast.]

[Letter from Fr. Medina to an unnamed Jesuit in southern Spain, dated Agaña in early 1669]

“Through God’s mercy, a form of Christian community is being established already in this town, and all those in it, and many people from other towns came on Sunday for mass, and **anfanaytay**, because I used a trick at the beginning, as they had suggested to me, that is, that they would come to our **gipot** (feast gathering) if we gave them some little thing, as usual in their **gipot**. That is why I give them one fishhook, from those made by Andrés out of wire, and thus they come with much pleasure to listen to the Christian doctrine every Sunday. Now many more come, and have come from almost all the places of this Island to see the Nativity scene that we have made [inside the church], and to see it, they were being asked as a condition that they first have to repeat the Christian doctrine, that such was my **guati** (payment). So, all of them, as soon as I saw them, would recite the Creed, and the 10 Commandments, and the Act of Contrition, and the other things that I would tell them, and thus they could see the Nativity scene. The result was that this Christmas, part of this Island have returned to the **anfanaytay**, and every day more and more are coming. As for myself, I am very happy for the fruit that has resulted from the Nativity scene.”

“Your Reverence should know that our friend Kipuha died on 23 December [1668], and that I tried to assist him with care, as he is the person to whom we owe the most in

1 Ed. note: This is possibly a hamlet named Apaga, as the village of Pagat is far away from there, on the NE coast, although the places named are not necessarily given in sequential order.

2 Ed. note: On the site of the present-day University of Guam, where he baptized a sick child.

3 Ed. note: Other local words mentioned below are: **gipot**, feast gathering, and **guati**, which meant “payment”.

these Islands, with whom I had spoken when I stepped ashore, and who had given us the OK for our disembarkation into his house. And although many difficulties offered themselves on their part, to have him buried in our church, all of them were overcome, thank God, and we buried him in our church, on Monday, Christmas Eve, after we fetched him from his house with the trumpet, and we carried the Standard of our Father St. Ignatius, and St. Francis Xavier (the ordinary pennant, and standard of the Fathers of the Society, in the difficult steps of their Mission, which made them truly believe they could undertake, and overcome any difficulty, particularly Father Luis, in the things of the greater glory of the Lord), and we sung a solemn wake for him, and also sung the Mass. Overhere, those of the House have made the other suffrages that the Society usually does for one of their own. All the people of this place have remained very happy with the burial of Kipuha, and they have been asking me if we will bury them the same way when they die, etc.”

...

[Fr. Medina was then sent to the Islands of Aguiguan, Tinian, and Saipan.]

[Letter sent to Fr. Sanvitores in Guam from Tinian, fall 1669]

“We owe thanks to God our Lord, and to His Blessed Mother, and to St. Joseph, because with her arrival [i.e. that of the galleon **San José**] the worst fears have been changed to favors, and welcomes by this people of Tinian, and Saipan, because all the towns, in Tinian as well as in Saipan, not only have not made the least ridicule; rather, upon entering a town, they were carrying me to the house of the **Chamorri Maagas** (the grand Chief) and then all the town people came with their **apruit**, to feed the Father.¹ Where they have welcomed me better, was in Saipan, because all were afraid of Corcuera (they call all the Governors of Manila with the name of this former Governor, according to their custom) and they have esteemed us very much—something we would have missed—for not having come here to destroy them.² Thank to the Blessed Virgin who has placed these fears in them. In this first visit of Saipan, I have baptized 607, because many, whom Your Reverence had not baptized, were asking for baptism.”

“In Tinian, I have baptized fewer, because the first visit was to children only. The people try their best to please me, and we are, not only in great safety, but free from ridicule. On Sundays, almost of whole Island comes to our **Gipot**; that is how I could fill a large auditorium, something I never saw in Agaña³...”

...

1 Ed. note: So, it appears from context, that the word apruit meant “food contribution (to a “gipot”, or feast).”

2 Ed. note: After what they had done to the ship, and the survivors of the shipwrecked Concepción in 1638, who had been killed in Saipan, whereas the other Islands treated them well.

3 Ed. note: By the end of 1669, he reported having baptized 790 persons in his three islands.

Chapter V. Hardships that Fr. Luis de Medina suffered in these Islands, and how the providence that God freed him from many dangers.

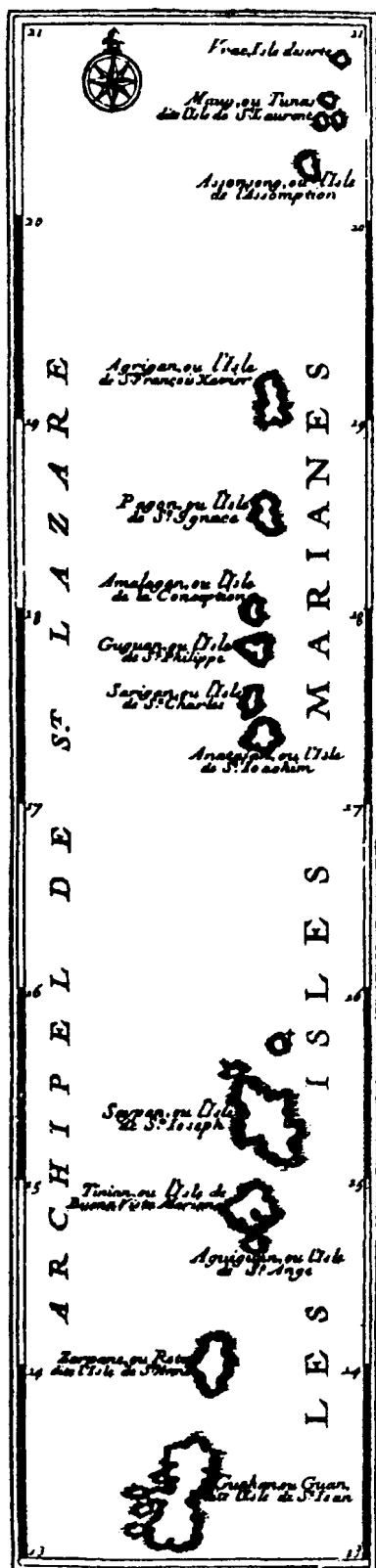
[He wrote notes from Saipan, from Opian, and from Arrayao, to Fr. Sanvitores, who was in Tinian, during the Tinian War. Fr. Sanvitores pretended to be partisan of Sunharon, and Fr. Medina pretended to fend for Marpo, the better to negotiate a peace settlement. We are told that the word *taryoyot* [rather Taryot], which was a payment made to appease the enemy, was a word that simply meant “reconocimiento” in Spanish, i.e. “recognition, or better, thanksgiving”. The peace settlement was celebrated on 24 January 1670. Then Fr. Medina went back to Saipan to continue his missionary work.]

Chapter VI. Death for Christ of Father Luis de Medina, with his companion Hipolito de la Cruz, and recovery of their blessed bodies.

[This is the story of his death as told by Fr. Sanvitores. It begins with the words: “No sé si el Señor diò al Padre Luys de Medina alguna luz Profetica...” and ends with the words: “la corona de Martir, que miramos aora con los ojos de la Fé humana.”]

Chapter VII. Virtues, and miracles of Father Luis de Medina.

[This chapter is his eulogy. It begins with the words “De la devocion, y amor à Maria Santissima, le nacieron al Padre Luys de Medina todas sus felicidades...” and ends with the final words: “intercediendo él mismo con Maria, para que consigamos la felicidad eterna. FIN.”]



Map of the Mariana Islands, ca. 1670.

In 1668, the Jesuit missionaries explored as far north as Agrigan Island. In the second half of 1669, Fr. Sanvitores himself went up as far as Maug. The northern islet of Uracas was not inhabited even then. The Jesuits assigned Christian names to all the islands, as follows:

- Maug = San Lorenzo;
- Asonson = Asunción;
- Agrigan = San Francisco Xavier;
- Pagan = San Ignacio;
- Alamagan = Concepción;
- Guguan = San Felipe;
- Sarigan = San Carlos;
- Anatahan = San Joaquín;
- Saipan = San José;
- Tinian = Buenavista Mariana;
- Aguijan = Santo Angel;
- Rota = Santa Ana;
- Guam = San Juan.

This map was first published in Fr. Le Gobien's *Histoire des isles Mariannes*. The name of San Lázaro Archipelago is wrongly applied to the Marianas, although at that early period, some European map-makers thought, more or less correctly, that the Marianas were somehow connected with the Philippines, since the two archipelagoes nearly touch in the neighborhood of Mindanao. Magellan made no such mistake; he baptized only the Philippines with the name of San Lázaro.