
Documents 1668I

Fr. Sanvitores' Mariano grammar and catechism

Main source: A 45-folio manuscript book in ARSI, called Opera Nostrorum 352.

II. Article by Fr. Pastor de Arráyo

Source: Guam Recorder, June 1938, pp. 7-9, 36.

Historic Documents—An Ancient Book.

The Guam Recorder announces the discovery of an ancient book upon the Chamorro language. In the oldest books concerning the early history of Guam¹ are mentioned some writings upon the language of the Marianos, written by the first Jesuit missionaries who landed in Guam, in 1668. Father García mentions "Explanations upon points of religion in the native language," a "Vocabulary," and "The Art of the Mariano Language," attributed in some instances to Sanvitores and in others to some of his companions. These books are stated to have been copied and some copies were sent to Manila so that new Jesuit missionaries assigned to the Marianas might study them.

It seems logical that these works upon the Mariano language might be found in the archives of the Society of Jesus in Rome, and it is there that one of them has been located. In reply to an inquiry, the Archivist General of the Society of Jesus, Father José Solá, has forwarded the following letter [translated]:

*Rome (113), 2 October 1937.
Borgo S. Spirito, 5. Tel. 50.993.
Rev. Father Pastor de Arráyo,
Guam, Guam.
Pax Christi.
Rev. Father:*

¹ Ed. note: See bibliography, under García, and Murillo Velarde.

I received your kind letter of July 22nd and I was greatly interested in the historic data which it contained, especially the information that you had succeeded in establishing the location of the place where Father Sanvitores was martyred...

Today I can answer your questions upon the whereabouts of the primitive writings upon the "Mariano Language". They are at least, in part—I do not know if they are all that you are looking for—in our General Archives, under the designation Opera Nostrorum, N° 352, in the city of Rome.

There are also in the Archives other documents about Guam. Concerning documents of the time of the expulsion by Carlos III of Spain we have a file with considerable biographical data on the members of the Order in the Province of the Philippines at that time.¹

Of possible service to you there is also a catalogue of the German missionaries of the 17th and 18th centuries by Father A. Huonder, Freiburg, Breisgau, (Switzerland) 1899. 220 pages.

This is as much as I can furnish today in response to your inquiries...

José Solá, S.J.

As indicated in the **enclosure** to the above letter, there exists in Rome a volume (described below) bound in leather with title in gold: *Lingua Mariana* (Mariano Language), written entirely by hand in Latin and containing many interesting and, in certain parts, amusing things regarding Guam.

Perhaps this may be the only remaining document upon the *Lingua Mariana* of those remote times. We do not know whether or not any others exist, but we would be very glad to hear from any of our readers regarding any other ancient documents upon the primitive language of Guam, i.e. of the Marianas.

The contents of the book are described as follows by Father Solá in the enclosure with his letter:

Designation OPP. NN. 352.

The book is bound in leather. Its size is 150 x 205 mm. The title, *Lingua Mariana*, is in gold. It is a manuscript of 44 folios and one insert (fol. 13), and thus contains 45 leaves or folios.

Contents:

I. [Announcing a] Grammar of the Mariano language (folio 3).

¹ Ed. note: He was probably referring to the documents contained mostly in ARSI Philipinas 13.

II. The name and origin of these islanders (fol. 3-9).

III. *Deprecatio ad Patres Romanæ præsertim Societatis*¹ (fol. 10-17.)

IV. Some testimony regarding the Egyptian [sic] origin of the inhabitants of the Ladrões, according to tradition (fol. 17- 25).²

V. Introduction to the study of the Mariano Language (fol. 26-35): 1) the Noun (fol. 27); 2) the Pronoun (fol. 28); 3) the Verb (fol. 29); 4) the Prepositions (fol. 32); 5) the Adverb (fol. 32v); 6) The Interjection (fol. 34v); 7) the Conjunction (fol. 34v); folios 36-37 are blank.

[VI.] Then follow three chapters [of a phrase book and catechism]:

Chapter 1. The method of salutation, for example: *Mati hao na umorin*: Hail, Sir! *Mati hamio manga magarahi*! Hail, Principals (Chieftains, or lords)! (folios 38-39).

Chapter 2: Various questions on Christian Doctrine, for example: the formula for interrogating one who is to be baptized: *Chiroho (Cheluho), muto hao tumigbini?* My brother, are you determined to be baptized?

Chapter 3: Formula for questions and answers in portions of the Catechism. And finally are given the precepts of the decalogue [10 Commandments]: *Sinañaña Nidios adyin [fino] na monotay*: (1) *Adyin na mina*, etc., followed by the “Our Father” and the “Hail Mary” or Angelic Salutation.

Some notes regarding the Chamorro terms mentioned above.

The word *mati*, used to denote respect, has been lost or fallen into disuse. It may be the same as the word *ati* found in the biography of Sanvitores, which states that the Chamorros were very courteous and upon passing in front of one another would say: “*Ati arin[g]mo (adeñgmo)*,” which means “Permit me to kiss your foot.”

Umorin is not used today, the above book says that it means: “Sir (Señor).”

Mati hamio manga magarahi: Hail your Lordships! *Hamio* today is said *hamyo* and *magarahi* has become *magalahe*, which signifies “supreme chief”; it is so used in

1 This passage in Latin could not be exactly translated. [Ed. comment: It means an “Urgent request to the Fathers in Rome, specially those of the Society.”]

2 The above parts (I to IV) are concluded with the statement: “Written in Agaña, called San Ignacio de Agaña, in the Island of Guam which is now called San Juan, in the Marianas, on 18 June 1668. In the name of the Mission of the Marianas. Your humble servant, Diego Luis San Vitores.” Father Sanvitores signs his name “San Vitores”. This manuscript is probably a copy made by Father Luis de Morales of an original manuscript. [Ed. comment: The copy could not have been made by Fr. Morales, as he stayed behind in Guam. See the section Description of the manuscript, in I2 below.]

referring to His Excellency the Governor of Guam. The word *magalahe* come from *magas* (great) and *lahe* (man).¹

Chiroho has become *cheluho* (my brother). *Muto* is used today for “Are you determined”, or “Wilt thou?”

Tumigbini corresponds to the present form *tumagpañge* which signifies “to be baptized.”

Sinañgaña Nidios² adyin fino na monotay: (1) Adyin na mina... “That which God said, these precepts (are) ten: (1) This is the first...” *Adyin* (now *ayin*) means “this”; *fino* means “word” (precept); *na*, in this case, means “that”; *monotay* (now *manutay*) is the numeral “ten”, for counting inanimate things.

We hope to be able to publish other interesting notes concerning this old volume. The copy described is the only one known at this time. It is preserved in Rome as a valuable historic relic of the earliest days of the Christianization of the Mariana Islands.

[Note by the translator: This article is a summary of a longer article in Spanish by Father Pastor de Arráyo, who has given us permission to publish it.—Paul F. Dugan, Translator.]

12. Reprint of an article by Fr. E.J. Burrus, S.J.

Source: *Anthropos* (Freiburg) vol. 49 (1954): 934-34-960.

Sanvitores' Grammar and Catechism in the Mariano (Chamorro) Language (1668), by E.J. Burrus, S.J.

Contents:

Introduction

*Grammaticæ Institutiones Marianæ Linguae*³

1. *Marianæ Linguae Institutionum Præludium*⁴

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- 1 Ed. note: This word “lahi” means race, or lineage, in Tagalog, i.e. in the native language of Fr. Sanvitores' informant (“lalaki” being the ordinary word for “man”). The ordinary word for “man” in Chamorro, and in Tagalog, is “tao”. In Tagalog, *Mga lahi* would simply have meant: “Gentlemen!” Also, as a generalization, one can say that in the Filipino (and Chamorro) languages, the vowel sounds “E” and “I” are often interchangeable, as well as “O” and “U”, and sometimes also the consonants “D” (or L) and “R”.
 - 2 Ed. note: This seems to me that it should have been transcribed “ni Dios” in the first place. It means “of God” in Tagalog, the word for God having been borrowed from Spanish, of course.
 - 3 Ed. note: Latin phrase meaning: “Basics (or principles) of the grammar of the Mariano language.”
 - 4 Ed. note; Latin phrase meaning: “Introduction to the Mariano language.”

*2. Marianæ Linguae Exercitationes e quibus et Institutiones catecheticae licebit pronunc efformari*¹

Introduction

Brief as are the Grammar and Catechism by Father Diego Luis de Sanvitores, they have the distinction of being the first to be composed in Chamorro. Further, they represent its earliest written expression. Yet it was not until 1668 that their author penned them. For despite the discovery of the Marianas in 1521 by Magellan, and the solemn possession of them by Legazpi in the name of the Spanish Monarch in 1565, still no permanent settlement was attempted, nor was any effort made to establish a mission there until Sanvitores, Superior of a small mission band and 30 lay catechists, introduced Christianity in 1668. It was he, too, who built the first schools and churches in the islands.

Diego Luis de Sanvitores was born in Burgos, Spain, on 12 November 1627 and entered at the unusually early age of 13 the Jesuit Order in Villarejo de Fuentes.² Twenty years later he volunteered and was accepted for the Philippine mission. The ordinary route in those days was via Mexico—by ship to Veracruz, overland to Acapulco on the West coast and by Manila Galleon across the Pacific. While in Mexico (1660-1662) en route to his ultimate destination, he devoted himself to successful ministry there and is, in consequence, claimed by Mexican historians and bibliographers as their own.

As the ship carrying Sanvitores stopped at the Marianas early in July of 1662, natives swarmed about it offering fresh supplies in exchange for knives, spears, fishing gear, cooking utensils and other articles.³ The missionary learned to his amazement that no-one had yet attempted to preach the Gospel to them.⁴ It was then that he resolved to return at the first opportunity. This was not to come until six years later.

He first resided at Taytay on the north coast of Palawan Island in the Philippines.⁵ He soon mastered Tagalog so perfectly that legend had it that more than human aid

1 Ed. note: Latin phrase whose loose translation is: "Exercises [phrases] in the Mariano language, to explain the fundamentals of the catechism, for the time being, to be amended(?)." The last word, in Latin, does not exist, and could have been wrongly transcribed; it is possibly *efformari*, which would render the second half of the sentence more understandable as: "...it is permissible to take it away (and/or publish it) for now."

2 ARSI Toletana 24, fol. 57.

3 Ed. note: There is no document to prove that anything other than the usual iron articles would have been given to the natives.

4 Ed. note: He learned this by hearsay, or, in view of what happened later, from at least 5 survivors of the 1638 Concepción shipwreck who were picked up between 1658 and 1662.

5 Ed. note: This is an error. Taytay is not in Palawan, but in the vicinity of Manila, east of it, not far from the source of the Pasig River as it flows from Laguna de Bay.

intervened.¹ His main efforts, however, were expended in evangelizing the island of Mindoro and in forming its natives to a more civilized way of life. But the Marianas were not forgotten. In 1665 he presented a memorial to the authorities at Manila to establish a mission in those islands. During the six years of ministry in the Philippines, he appealed to his religious superiors, to Miguel Poblete (Archbishop of Manila), to Diego Salcedo (Governor of the Philippines), to the King and Court at Madrid and from here to the Supreme Council of the Indies through the efforts of Don Jerónimo, his father, and to Clement IX, all on behalf of the Marianas.

As authorization in the form of a royal decree signed by Philip IV on 24 June 1665 did not bring with it the funds needed to finance the mission, Sanvitores obtained permission to go back to Mexico on a begging tour 1667-1668. He recruited at the same time his mission band: Fathers Tomás Cardeñoso, Luis de Medina, Pedro de Casanova, Luis Morales, and a student for the priesthood, Lorenzo Bustillo; besides these, 30 laymen were enlisted to act as catechists.²

Because of the favorable answer to his plea, Sanvitores renamed the islands—hitherto called the *Ladrones*—the Marianas in honor of Mariana, Regent of Spain during the minority of Charles II.

The missionaries set sail from Acapulco on 23 March 1668 and reached Guam in the Marianas on June 16th of that same year. Sanvitores immediately began to preach and to instruct the natives in their own language. His companions had a slight working knowledge of it and could soon leave to take care of other islands on their own. How was this possible? **Sanvitores had composed the Grammar and translated the Catechism before he reached the islands.** En route from Mexico he practised the language even composing hymns in it. *“As I write this aboard ship, I am setting down the oral explanation of an interpreter—a Tagalog both by nationality and by language. The man is intelligent enough and knows how to express himself, but can not write even in Spanish letters. He luckily escaped from the shipwrecked Concepción and remained in the Marianas 17 years living and dealing with the natives...”*³

Before the Spanish Galleon continued **two days later** its voyage from Guam to Manila, he entrusted to one of his fellow Jesuits a copy of his *Grammaticæ Institutiones Marianæ Linguæ*, so that future missionaries to the Marianas might come prepared even better than he.

Accompanying the treatise was a lengthy **letter** (fol. 1-25v) to his brothers in Manila and Rome. [I.] He explains the nature of the treatise, how and why he composed it, how he intended to add to it and to perfect it. He had not intended to send any copy of

1 Murillo Velarde, fol. 330, and Ortiz' [translation of Garcia], p. 140. More interesting and important than such legends is the sound method that he employed in acquiring a new language; a native instructor to give him the correct pronunciation and vocabulary; a systematic study of the language accompanied by a comparison with a similar one (Ortiz, 104 and the information given in his Grammar and Catechism).

2 Ed. note: Half of the civilians had come with him from the Philippines.

3 See fol. 26v below of Sanvitores' Grammar and Catechism.

it until he could correct it in the light of long experience in the ministry among the natives, but upon seeing how much even such a rudimentary manual had assisted him in instructing them, he decided to let others benefit by it, inasmuch as with it on hand he has been able to receive 16 adults and 34 children of Catechumens into the Faith. Thus, he felt that its practical worth had already been demonstrated.

[II.] He stresses the isolation and poverty, both temporal and spiritual, of the Islanders; yet, he insists, all are well disposed towards the Christian Faith and long to embrace it. He pleads for more missionaries.

[III.] He reminds his confrères in Rome that he has already written them at great length on the history of the islands, their geographical position and the origin of the inhabitants. But, inasmuch as he is not certain that they received these letters, he will briefly summarize their contents. He held with Francisco Colín, S.J., that already Marco Polo was referring to the Marianas when he wrote that there were numerous inhabited islands stretching eastward from Japan; Colín himself believed, however, that the Marianas belonged to the Philippine archipelago rather than to Japan.¹ He recalls the opinion of Father João Rodrigues that these islands are a continuation of the Japanese group, that commerce had long been carried on between them and that even many of the inhabitants of the northern Mariana Islands were of Japanese origin.² This opinion leads him to consider the origin of the people in the southern Marianas. He quotes Gómara to the effect that an interpreter assured Magellan that these natives had come long ago from Egypt.³ This statement strengthens Sanvitores in his opinion that the 18th chapter of Isaias applies to the Marianas. He then quotes Grijalva for a description of their houses and political organization.⁴ He raises the number of the Islands from 13 as given by Grijalva to 38, which form part of an archipelago that includes the Solomon Islands and stretches on to "Terra Australis"; this entire vast chain deserves, as much as the Marianas, to be evangelized immediately, as he has recently written to Clement IX.⁵

[IV.] After a lengthy commentary (fol. 11-22), a mixture of scriptural exegesis and of historical data—so characteristic of the time—on the prophecy of the 18th chapter

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- 1 Francisco Colín, S.J. (1692-1660) was a Spanish missionary in the Philippines; he became Rector of the College of Manila and Provincial of the Philippines. His most important publication is *Labor evangélica* (Madrid, 1663), the history of his Province; a new edition (Barcelona, 1900-02) was edited with great care and considerably enlarged by Pablo Pastells, S.J. Less important but quoted frequently by Sanvitores is his *India sacra, hoc est suppetiæ sacræ ex utraque India in Europam pro interpretatione facili ac genuina* (Madrid, 1666).
 - 2 João Rodrigues, S.J., was a Portuguese missionary in Japan from 1558 until his death in 1633; Sommervogel, VI, col. 1970 ff., lists numerous annual reports drawn up by him.
 - 3 Francisco López de Gómara, whose *Historia General de Indias* (Zaragoza, 1553) is quoted by Sanvitores, was born 1510 in Seville and died after 1557.
 - 4 Juan de Grijalva, O.S.A., was born in Colima, Mexico in 1559 and died after 1627; his work quoted by Sanvitores is *Crónica de la Orden de N.P.S. Augustin en las provincias de la Nueva España. En quatro edades* (Mexico, 1624).
 - 5 Ed. note: See Doc. 1668G.

of Isaias which he applies to the Marianas since he believes that they have come ultimately from Egypt and now inhabit the outermost bounds to which the Prophet refers, he returns to straight-forward history by recounting his interest in the conversion of the islanders and the few but impressive contacts of the natives with the Faith. He brings his long missive to a close with a plea to his Jesuit brothers that they come to his assistance. He had intended, he informs us at the end of the letter, to write nearly twice as much; only the ship's early departure has forced him to lay aside his pen. The letter is dated from the town of Agaña on the island of Guam (renamed by him San Juan), on 18 June 1668, only two days after his arrival there; it is Sanvitores' first report from his new mission.

The Grammar takes up folios 26-35v. After two blank folios, the Catechism begins on fol. 38 and goes to 45v, the end of the manuscript.

[V.] The **Grammar** first discusses the letters and syllables together with their equivalent or similar sounds in Spanish. When no counterpart is to be found in standard Castilian, Sanvitores resorts to parallels in Tagalog and once to Andalusian Spanish. He notes in particular that the *h* is aspirate, not silent as in Spanish. The *g* is either hard, even before *e* and *i*, or guttural as in Tagalog; in the latter case, he will mark it *ñg*.¹ When *i* has a consonantal force or forms a diphthong, he writes it *y*. Accent is for the most part penultimate; exceptions are indicated by an acute accent [as in Spanish]. The main stress in a diphthong is on the first vowel. He finds that *u* has frequently the force of *gu* and indicates such by *û*, e.g. *ûaho* (the personal pronoun "I" = *guaho*).

The traditional classical division according to arts the speech serves as the scheme for his Mariano Grammar. Nouns and pronouns are listed with their cases in both singular and plural; pronouns, demonstrative and personal of all three persons. Next taken up are the verbs—the verb "to be" and the regular verbs, active and passive voice; their moods—subjunctive, optative, participle and gerundive. He takes up the use of what he calls particles—proclitics, enclitics, prefixes, affixes, infixes—at considerable length, pointing out their meaning and force, and calling attention to the shade of meaning of each and the suppleness imparted to the language by their use; in so doing, it is evident that he had in mind the analogous part such play in Tagalog, with which he was so familiar. Prepositions are considered briefly. More attention is paid to adverbs, of which a profusion of examples is given. Numerals (ordinals, cardinals and distributives) are included under adverbs. Interjections follow. A list of conjunctions brings the Grammar—that contains much morphology and little syntax—to a close.

[VI.] The **Catechism** serves a double purpose—to exemplify and illustrate the Grammar and at the same time to furnish the missionary and lay catechist with not only a handy ritual and manual of prayers, but also with a practical phrase book and conversational guide. As with the Grammar, the provisional character of the Catechism is repeatedly insisted upon.

1 Ed. note: Actually he used the letter *g* only, surmounted by the Spanish diacritical mark for *ñ* or *~* (not available among my English fonts).

After the more usual greetings are set down, the formulas for interrogating catechumens are indicated, followed by the sign of the cross, profession of faith, the ten commandments, prayers of oblation, the Our Father and the Hail Mary. Where native words were not at hand, or might be open to misunderstanding, Spanish is employed; yet such are relatively few; it is precisely on this point that the Chamorro of the Grammar and Catechism differ so markedly from the modern form, as may be seen from any dictionary of current Chamorro.¹

Early biographers mentioned the composition of a grammar and a catechism; most recent bibliographers and historians refer to both but usually as no longer extant. In the 18th century, when Hervás gathered linguistic material for his monumental *Idea dell'universo*, he did not have the *Institutiones* of Sanvitores to turn to for help in the Mariano language and had to laboriously patch together a few scraps of information furnished him by those who had some slight acquaintance with the language.²

The letter as well as the *Institutiones* are in Latin; where he fears that the Latin expression may not be readily understood, he gives the Spanish equivalent. **Sanvitores is conscious of the evident similarity of the Mariano language and grammar with Tagalog**, and calls attention to some of the analogies; less frequently he refers to analogous constructions or usage in Latin.

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- 1 Father Callistus Lopinot, OFMCap., now [1954] in Rome, was for many years in the Marianas and other islands of related languages; he very kindly placed at my disposal the books he had written in the Chamorro language with the assistance of educated natives... In the notes to the Grammar and Catechism of Sanvitores, reference is made to Father Callistus' *Chamorro-Wörterbuch* (Hong Kong, 1910); following the dictionary proper, is a brief grammar of the Chamorro language. Fr. Ramón de Vera, OFMCap., *Diccionario Chamorro-Castellano* (Manila, 1932) uses the above work of Father Callistus as the basis of his dictionary but has added considerable material in the light of personal observation and experience. [Ed. comment: There are more modern references available, notably the Chamorro dictionary and Chamorro grammar published in the PALI series by the University Press of Hawaii in the 1970s.]
 - 2 Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro, S.J. (1735-1809) is credited with being the first to establish the relationship of the Austronesian languages... long before it was announced to the world by Humboldt [in 1862]... The manuscript material used by Hervás for the linguistic section of his encyclopedia has been studied by M. Batllori, S.J. (ref. AHSI 20 (1951): 59-116). The more important manuscripts studied here on the Mariano language are to be found in Vat. Lat. 9802. Among them are four letters of Hervás fellow Jesuit exile, Joaquín Camaño, reporting on his findings for the years 1783 and 1785: "*Los que supieron algo de las lenguas Zamuca, Omagua y de Marianas se acuerdan poquísimo...*" [=Those who knew something of the Zamuca, Omagua and Mariano languages remember very little...] (ibid., folio 3). "*Dn. Plácido [Lampuranes] no sabe el Padre Nuestro porque en las Marianas no servía de Catequista sino de Médico...*" [=Don Plácido does not know the Our Father because in the Marianas he did not serve as a Catechist but as a Physician] (ibid., folio 41). The sum total of these contributions to the Mariano language was a few word lists; recollection of Mariano grammar was even more meager in results...

[Description of the manuscript]

The manuscript in its present form is a codex 150 x 205 mm., bound in cloth and leather, stamped with the brief title in gold letters *Lingua Mariana*. Of the 45 folios that make up the manuscript, 43 contain writing. Pasted on folio 13 is an excerpt containing the declension of pronouns of an unidentified language; the writing is Italian script of the 17th or early 18th century with some of the pronouns translated into Italian.

The manuscript is an early copy made shortly after the arrival of the original in Manila—the writing, paper, and the receipt of the document in Rome, all point to this. An archivist added the words “*Manu P. Aloysii Morales n[atus] 1664*” on a notice found with the codex. This Father Luis Morales, as we have seen, was a fellow missionary of Sanvitores on the first expedition to the Marianas. He was not, it would seem almost certainly, the copyist. The transcription was done by one not very familiar with Latin as the mis-spellings and faulty division of words would seem to prove decisively; thus to write “*de Linea bamus*” for “*delineabamus*” and “*laudent*” for “*laudem*” in a well-known scriptural passage, would seem to betray the hand of a lay brother familiar with Spanish than require the services of a scholarly priest.¹ Several corrections by another hand were inserted in both sections of the manuscript.

This manuscript is now in the central Jesuit archives, under the section “*Opera Nostrorum*” [=Works by our people]; it is designated accordingly ARSI OPP. NN. 352. The importance of the document derives not merely from its being the first account of the Marianas² and its offering the only extant version of Sanvitores’ letter to Clement IX³ but especially from its presenting his Grammar and Catechism in the Chamorro language in its earliest written form.

Needless to state, the notes to the document make no pretension to completeness; they are meant to supply the indispensable historical background and furnish the student of linguistics with a few indications that will facilitate the use of Grammar and Catechism; references to similarities and analogies in Tagalog vocabulary and syntax are omitted for the most part since it is presumed that dictionaries and grammars in this language are readily accessible.

13. Fr. Sanvitores’ Grammar of the Mariano language—Original text in Latin [see Appendix A]

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- 1 Ed. note: I suspect that Brother Ansaldo, who wrote the report on the arrival of the missionaries at Guam (Doc. 1668K) to have been charged by Sanvitores, not only to make a report to the Queen on his behalf, but also to make a copy of this document, while sailing between Guam and Manila.
 - 2 Ed. note: One would have to add “written in the Marianas”.
 - 3 Ed. note: For the sake of accuracy, one would have to add here that a full copy was later located in Alcalá de Henares (see Doc. 1668G).