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## BOOK REVIEW

*Chronicle of the Mariana Islands: Recorded in the Agaña Parish Church 1844-1899*, Father Aniceto Ibáñez del Carmen, O.A.R., Father Francisco Resano del Corazón de Jesús, *et al.* Translated and Annotated by Marjorie G. Driver, Spanish Documents Collection, Micronesian Area Resource Center, University of Guam, 1998. 236 pp.

*Reports Concerning the Marianas Islands: The Memorias of 1890-1894*, Joaquín Vara de Rey y Rubio, Luís Santos Fontordera, and Luís Cadarso y Rey. Translated and annotated by Marjorie G. Driver, Spanish Documents Collection, Micronesian Area Resource Center, University of Guam, 2000. 165 pp.

reviewed by

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The ever-productive Micronesian Area Resource Center offers these two collections of nineteenth Century primary sources, attractively presented, to historians and the general reader interested in Marianas history.

The *Chronicle of the Marianas Islands*, a bilingual English-Spanish document collection, grants the reader a simultaneous insider-outsider view of Guam during the latter half of the nineteenth Century, for the main author of these annals, Father Aniceto, was a cosmopolitan fluent in English and Chamorro and well aware of the importance of the events in Apra Harbor both to world events and to the local community. The *Chronicle* lists visits of Spanish and foreign vessels along with commentaries on their officers and crews: in 1870, the Russian warship *Almar*; in 1876, the German warship *Hertha*; etc. But the most significant ship arrival was that of the American

schooner *Frost* arriving from Manila in 1856 carrying smallpox; the resulting epidemic killed 3,463 out of Guam's total population of 8,368.

The Marianas, although the most remote of Spain's remaining colonies, still were influenced by events, both domestic and foreign, reflecting the metropole's decline as a world power. Spanish political exiles, consisting of middle-class *carlistas* and *republicanos*, begin to arrive after 1870. And large numbers of *deportados* from the Philippines filled Agaña's prison following the Cavite revolt of 1872. The end of over 200 years of Spanish rule in the Marianas occurred almost as a farce. When the American cruiser *Charleston* entered Apra Harbor in 1898 firing its three-inch guns at Fort Santa Cruz, the incident was interpreted as courtesy salute by the harbor authorities who, being without cable connections, were unaware of the beginnings of the Spanish-American War.

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The *Memorias* present reports to Madrid by two governors and one naval officer. The documents contain a plethora of statistics on population, market prices, agricultural produce, and budget allotments. As such, they offer the historian with some useful hard data. Of more interest to the general reader are the comments on some perennial problems of the Marianas: insufficient population to support industry, lack of agricultural development, meager and unsanitary water supplies, high infant mortality rates, etc. The modern observer familiar with

the Marianas cannot help but feel a sense of *déjà vu* upon reading this litany of complaints.

The book concludes with a prescient "Plan for the Reorganization of the General Government of the Mariana and Caroline Islands" suggesting sensible administrative measures for a future Spanish Micronesia only four years before the colony's demise. Many of these suggestions would later be implemented by future Japanese and American colonial administrators.