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Introduction: *Quae Mari Sinico* and the Church in Disarray

When the Spanish political administration ended its rule in the Philippines and a new era was inaugurated by the signing of the Treaty of Paris on 10 December 1898, the Philippine Church was in a sad state of “disarray.” This was how the late Jesuit church historian, John Schumacher, described the situation.¹ The dioceses had no bishops. The Spanish bishops were either prisoners of the revolutionary government or had to flee to avoid capture. Most parishes had their convents and churches used as military barracks and were in really bad shape; they had also no priests in charge. The Spanish friars who were left behind wanted to go home to Spain or were suffering from poor health caused by the war and their captivity. The few who wanted to do pastoral work became a cause of irritation among the people who clamored for the native clergy to take over. Some Filipino clergy had joined the guerillas and many others had died—leaving the few to take care of so many parishes. Beyond this everyday experience of a “church in disarray,” there were other forces that threatened the Church’s

¹ John Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, 2nd ed. (Quezon City: Loyola School of Theology, 1987), 292.

existence in the anxious eyes of the Catholic insider: the cessation of the Spanish *patronato real*, the arrival of the Protestants and their proselytizing missionaries, the Aglipayan schism, the “friar question,” the anti-clerical sentiments brought about by the revolution, the inroads of American democratic ideals, the separation of church and state, etc.

The Vatican’s assessment of the new context was twofold: both a commiseration with Spain and an acknowledgment of new opportunities on the horizon. It appreciated what Spain had done to the country by forwarding “Catholic interests”: “slavery was abolished, the natives were brought through the discipline of letters and art to civilization, sumptuous temples were raised, the number of dioceses was increased so that the people and the Church in the Philippines might truly become eminent in civil life and in the dignity and love of their religion.”²

But when “the fortunes of war have changed the political life of the country [and] the conditions of religious affairs also underwent change,” the Vatican wanted to take advantage of the new situation and its “more favorable conditions for liberty.” In fact, the Holy See “was, literally, quick to seize the day,” writes Antolin Uy, SVD, another church historian who has done extensive research on this historical period.³ “Even before the fall of Manila on 13 August 1898,” Uy continues, “Papal Secretary of State Cardinal Rampolla

2 Pope Leo XIII, *Constitución apostólica de S.S. el Papa León XIII para las Islas Filipinas* (Manila: Imprenta del Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1902). Introduction [henceforth *Quae Mari Sinico*]. I am using the English translation from this text. See appendix, this volume, 209.

3 Antolin Uy, “The Friar Lands and the Vatican Involvement,” *Diwa* 16 (1991): 56–69; “The Native Clergy in the Philippines, The Year 1900 Circa: The View from the Vatican,” *Diwa* 17 (1992): 16–29; “The Making of the First Four American Bishops in the Philippines,” *Diwa* 18 (1993): 73–85; “The First Filipino Bishops: The Vatican Initiative,” *Diwa* 19 (1994): 75–95; “The First Three Apostolic Delegates to the Philippines and the Entry of Rome,” *Chapters in Philippine Church History*, ed. Anne Kwantes (Manila: OMF Literature, 2001); “The Philippine Church, 1898–1912: The Role of the First Three Apostolic Delegates,” *Diwa* 37 (2012): 73–80.

was already communicating to the Nuncio in Madrid the Vatican's readiness to send an Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines 'if need be to study the abuses where they would exist, and then to suggest right remedies.'⁴ Thus, the first Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Placide Louis Chapelle, arrived in Manila in January 1900 "to protect effectively the interests of the Catholic Church under the actual circumstances of the country."⁵

Sources and Representations

Quae Mari Sinico thus summarizes the Vatican's realistic assessment and programmatic intervention—"the much awaited Papal response to the clamor for church reorganization and reform in the Philippines."⁶ It was a product of feedback coming from several—sometimes conflicting—sources and representations. John Schumacher identifies some sectors that influenced the Holy See's position:⁷ (1) the view of the Spanish friars under the leadership of Archbishop Bernardino Nozaleda, the last Spanish Dominican bishop of Manila (1889–1902)—Archbishop Chapelle's report as read from the perspective of his pro-friar and anti-Filipino sentiments belongs to this group;⁸ (2)

4 Uy, "The First Three Apostolic Delegates," 160.

5 Rampolla to Chapelle (2 September 1899), n. 51877, Sacra Congregazione degli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari [Archives of the Sacred Congregation for the Extraordinary Affairs of the Church; henceforth, SCAAEESS] cited in Uy, "The First Three Apostolic Delegates," n. 9, 162.

6 Pedro S. de Achútegui, SJ, and Miguel A. Bernad, SJ, *Religious Revolution in the Philippines*, Vol. IV (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila, 1972): 281.

7 See the detailed narrative in John Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy: The Filipino Clergy and the Nationalist Movement, 1850–1903* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1981), 207–214.

8 On 8–26 January 1900, barely weeks after Chapelle's arrival in the Philippines, he held highly secret meetings with the four remaining Spanish bishops (Nozaleda of Manila, Alcocer of Cebu, Hevia Campomanes of Nueva Segovia, and Andrés Ferrero of Jaro; the Bishop of Caceres, Arsenio del Campo, was

the American lobby as exemplified in the positions of Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul Minnesota and Maria Longworth Storer, wife of the American ambassador to Spain—they advocated for the withdrawal of Spanish friars in the Philippines;⁹ (3) the mission of Fathers Jose Chanco and Salustiano Araullo to Rome in the name of the Filipino clergy—they had a private audience with Cardinal Rampolla, the Vatican Secretary of State and other dignitaries of the Roman Curia;¹⁰ (4) a group of Catholic laymen headed by Felipe Calderon who cabled the Holy See warning it of “imminent schism brought about by Chapelle’s plan to return the friars to the parishes”; (5) the mission of William Howard Taft, then the first Governor-General of the Philippines (1900–1904) which had two main agenda—the purchase of the friar lands by the Philippine Insular Government and the withdrawal of the friars from the Islands.¹¹

out of the country). In this series of conferences, all aspects of the Philippine Church were tackled and it was asserted that the European clergy is necessary because the Filipinos are not fit for the sacred calling. Arcilla writes: “The happy result of this conscientious work by persons of the highest solvency as the Apostolic Delegate and the Bishops of the Country was the Apostolic Constitution, QUAE MARI SINICO, issued by Leo XIII on September 17, 1902.” Cf. Quintin Garcia and Jose Arcilla, “Acts of the Conference of the Bishops of the Philippines held in Manila under the Presidency of the Most Reverend Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Placide de la Chapelle – 1900,” *Philippiniana Sacra* 9 (1974): 308–351. See also “Points for Church Reform Recommended by a Meeting of Fifty-Six Priests Convoked by the Apostolic Delegate (January 1900)” and “Additional Suggestions for Church Reform by the Committee of the Clergy,” in Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV: 48–51.

- 9 Schumacher based his account on John Farrell, “Background of the 1902 Taft Mission to Rome,” *Catholic Historical Review* 36 (1950–1951): 1–32; and 37 (1951–1952): 1–22.
- 10 See “The Attempted Philippine Representation in Rome (1900),” in Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV: 83–84; “The Attempt to Establish a Delegation in Rome of the Filipino Clergy (1900),” in Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV: 321–345.
- 11 This last one comes from Uy, “Friar Lands,” 56–69.

We do not know how all these sources played into the writing of the document. What we know is that Pope Leo XIII issued and signed the Apostolic Constitution *Quae Mari Sinico* on 17 September 1902. It was brought to be implemented into the Philippines by the new Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Giovanni Battista Guidi, who arrived in Manila in November 1902, and was promulgated in the Manila Cathedral on 8 December 1902, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. This suggested program of reorganization of the Philippine Church contains 12 sections—from the erection of new dioceses and the appointment of their bishops to the issue of the secular-religious clergy and the administration of seminaries; from the running of parishes and the preaching of missions to the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline.

The Apostolic Constitution

To synthesize this document, we may group the provisions into six main areas: (a) dioceses and their bishops; (b) secular clergy; (c) seminaries and the education of the young; (d) regulars (or religious clergy); (e) parishes and missions; and (f) ecclesiastical discipline and reverence for authority.

First, the document proposed the erection of four new dioceses (Lipa, Tuguegarao, Capiz, Zamboanga) to be added to the already existing ones (Manila, Cebu, Caceres, Nueva Segovia, Jaro); and to create the Marianas as a Prefecture directly under the Holy See (I). The Archbishop of Manila was to serve as the Metropolitan of all these dioceses, and the rest were suffragan bishops who would “interchange ideas through meeting . . . as often as circumstances will permit” (II). The Metropolitan Church and other cathedrals would have a College of Canons; or a set of consultors if the College of Canons was not possible (III). For dioceses without a bishop, the Metropolitan or the nearest bishop was to take care of its administration, and a Vicar appointed immediately (IV).

The second concern addressed by the document was the controversial situation of the secular clergy (V). Several proposals were mentioned partly in response to the clamor for secularization of the parishes, but also to the dominant prejudice that the native clergy was “entirely incapable of fulfilling the sacred ministry faithfully as they should.”¹² The Philippine Church was enjoined to increase the number of native clergy; to provide structures for their appropriate preparation in piety and discipline; and to “promote to higher dignities” those found worthy. The secular clergy was also admonished not to be guided by partisanship or engaged in secular business and that both secular and regular clergy “should all [be] of one mind, loving one another in fraternal charity.” It might help to take these injunctions with the animosity engendered by the revolution as background. In order to promote these directions, the bishops were instructed to convoke Synods in their dioceses, practice spiritual exercises, and hold updating programs in morals and liturgy for their clergy.

The third set of proposals concerned the training of seminarians (VI) and the education of the youth (VII). The pope wanted that seminaries be run according to the vision and decrees of the Council of Trent in the form of what we now call *minor* (“lower and higher branches of learning”) and *major* (philosophy and theology) seminaries. The document was more concrete on some crucial areas of formation: (a) only “the most deserving person . . . endowed with prudence and experience in government, and [who excels] in holiness of life” can be appointed as formators; (b) episcopal colleges or *convictores* shall be separated from seminaries; (c) those who have been ordained shall also undergo guidance; they “should not be left entirely to themselves . . . at least the first five years after their ordination.” This section also foresaw the establishment of a “house in Rome” for Filipinos

12 Archbishop Nozaleda during the meeting between Chapelle and the bishops (8 January 1900), cited in Schumacher, *Philippine Church History*, 300–302. See also Uy, “Native Clergy,” 16–29.

who want to proceed to higher philosophical-theological studies. For its part, the Holy See vowed to ensure to give the best training to the secular clergy so that “in due time they may be fit to replace the regular clergy in fulfilling their duties of the pastoral charge.” Besides the training of seminarians, the document was also concerned with the education of the young lay people in the schools. Extra care was to be taken with regards to the provision of religious education for those in public schools, the kinds of books used, etc. Praise was given to the *Lyceum of Manila* under the Dominicans, referring to Universidad de Santo Tomas, which was endowed the title of *Pontifical University*.

Fourth, there were two concerns about the “regulars” or the religious clergy: observance of enclosures as it was laid down by the norms for religious life and fraternal relationship with the secular clergy (VIII). Fifth, it was given to the bishops’ authority to appropriately decide which parishes would be entrusted to the care of the religious orders (IX); missions would be conducted among the faithful by members of religious orders and a house “[shall] be established in each province” for the purpose of visiting the cities and *pueblos* and “cultivating the spiritual life of the people through sacred preaching” (X). Sixth, members of the clergy were to observe ecclesiastical discipline and should have “their lives and manners so completely ordered.” It was also enjoined that a Provincial Synod be held “as soon as the circumstances permit” (XI) and the faithful pay due reverence to authority (XII).

Responses and Reactions

The Apostolic Constitution was a complex and ambivalent document which can be read distinctively from different sides of the ideological divide. On the one hand, it announced the end of the *patronato real*, the necessary creation of new dioceses, the suppression of the privileges of the friars, and the recognition of the place of the secular clergy in the Philippine Church. On the other hand, the document was not clear on the appointment

of Filipino bishops; members of religious orders can still be appointed to the parishes or act as diocesan consultors.¹³ Thus, it might be interesting to see the different ways with which the Apostolic Constitution was received by its immediate audience. Historians point to three diverse responses: (a) the Aglipayan rejection; (b) the loyalist-nationalist reaction, and; (c) the position of the *Asociación de Clero Jareense*.¹⁴

The Aglipayan rejection of the document was predictable. When *Quae Mari Sinico* was promulgated on 8 December 1902, the Aglipayan movement was already in full swing. Isabelo de los Reyes had by then published his now famous launching speech on 3 August 1902. Gregorio Aglipay had begun to write his Epistles which first appeared on 22 September 1902, with him signing as the *Obispo Maximo*. He had already celebrated Mass as Supreme Bishop before his “consecration” in an improvised chapel in Azcarraga Street, Tondo, on 26 October 1902; and some Catholic supporters had already started to confiscate the keys of churches and had Aglipay celebrate Mass in them.¹⁵ “It is consequently difficult to understand how, in view of all this,” Achútegui and Bernad argue, “some writers can claim that there is no formal rupture with Rome until after the publication of *Quae Mari Sinico* on 8 December 1902, implying that it was the document that precipitated the schism.”¹⁶ But it also cannot be denied that *Quae Mari Sinico* provided them with a new weapon in the Aglipayan fight for Filipinization. The contents of the document might have been leaked so much so that it was mocked and criticized by Aglipayan bishops in a pronouncement issued on the same day as the promulgation at the Manila Cathedral. Aglipay’s Epistle V

13 Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. I: 205–206.

14 For this, we follow Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. I: 181–206; see also Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 245–266.

15 For these events, see Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. I: 181–203.

16 Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. I: 204.

reads thus: “The Filipino people wanted to get rid of the friars: in consequence the Pope gives them new bishops, canons, parish priests, diocesan consultors, seminary directors—all friars! This was the spirit of the long-awaited Apostolic Constitution of Leo XIII.”¹⁷

Another set of reactions came from what Schumacher calls the “loyalist-nationalist” faction among the clergy headed by Fr. Mariano Sevilla. This group of secular priests was mainly based in Manila even though there were others in Nueva Segovia who held the same position.¹⁸ Schumacher identifies three main agenda of this group vis-à-vis the whole controversy: (a) that the friars should not return to the parishes and should not be given positions of authority; (b) all parishes shall be given to the Filipino clergy; (c) other positions of preeminence shall be given to Filipino priests.¹⁹ Even as these demands were parallel with Aglipay’s, this group also believed that the only authority from where the decision should come was the Holy See—thus, the banner “loyalist-nationalist.” They were both against Aglipay (obedience to Rome) and pro-Filipino (anti-friar position). So when *Quae Mari Sinico* was promulgated, Frs. Manuel Roxas and Mariano Sevilla, their leaders, came out with a pamphlet choosing to emphasize the positive points of the Apostolic Constitution, e.g., that the privileges of the friars have ended and the pope has recognized the “rights (that is, legitimate preferences over others) belonging to the Filipino priests.”²⁰ The Roxas–Sevilla pamphlet argues that there

17 Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. I: 206. For the whole Epistle, see “The Fifth of the Fundamental Epistles (8 December 1902),” Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV: 190–196. This was signed by Aglipay and four of his co-bishops.

18 Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 200–204, 228–230.

19 Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 202–203.

20 *Consideraciones sobre la Constitución Apostólica “Quae Mari Sinico” del 17 de Setiembre de 1902, por el Pbro. L.do Manuel E. Roxas, clérigo filipino, párroco de Hagonoy (Bulakán)* cited in Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 247. Fr. Manuel Roxas wrote the detailed commentary (19 January 1903) and Fr. Mariano

are other provisions in the document which were in line with their nationalist agenda—the care for the education of the seminarians, the possibility of raising Filipino clergy to the “highest dignity” in due time, etc.—all pointing to the fact that its benefits are not instant and immediate but ongoing and permanent. As to their legitimate demands of assigning secular priests to the parishes, Roxas admitted that the native clergy was also not yet ready to assume the job due to their insufficient training, no thanks to the inefficiency of the Spanish church. On the injunction for bishops to decide which religious orders shall take over some parishes again, Roxas also admitted that the religious congregations were a big help to the problem of the scarcity of priests. These religious, however, need not be friars nor Spaniards.

The third distinct reaction came from the *Asociación del Clero Jarensé* (ACJ).²¹ This group of secular Filipino clergy from Panay organized themselves sometime in the 1900s and professed the same nationalist sentiments as the other groups. In fact, some of their members had been recruited and appointed bishops of the new Aglipayan religion. The members of the ACJ, however, were also careful not to ally themselves with supporters of Aglipayanism, whose positions they assessed as deceitful. But when *Quae Mari Sinico* came out, the ACJ issued its rejection on 12 January 1903 on two points: (a) the Papal document “did not guarantee the rights of the Filipino clergy against the friars”; and (b) “it did not answer the real needs of the country.”²² In the same *memorial*, they also protested the actions of the Spanish Bishop Andrés Ferrero, OAR, whose imposed pastoral presence in Jaro was detrimental to dialogue in this highly charged situation. The

Sevilla wrote the “reflections” (26 January 1903)—just over a month after the document’s promulgation at the Manila Cathedral.

- 21 Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 237–255.
- 22 “Memorial of the Jaro Clergy to Monsignor Guidi against the Papal Constitution and against their Bishop,” in Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV: 240–243. Cf. Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 247.

bishop who belonged to the friar order—the Recollects—had already made clear his intentions to bring the friars back to the parishes. To prevent this, the ACJ requested the new Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Guidi, to designate “an ecclesiastical governor to be chosen by the clergy of the diocese” in order to take care of the administration of the diocese. With an assurance from the Archbishop, the members of the ACJ retreated from their initial rejection of the Apostolic Constitution. But they were shocked when the new bishop who was announced to succeed Ferrero was an American and not a Filipino—Frederic Rooker from New York. The response of the ACJ to this new development was what is now called the “Jaro schism.”²³ On 3 July 1903, 22 priests and several lay persons gathered in the convent of Molo and declared “to detach ourselves from the authority of the Vatican as far as ecclesiastical discipline is concerned, inasmuch as that which is being imposed on us is openly injurious to the interests of religion itself and contrary to the legitimate desires of the people and the clergy. As far as dogma is concerned, we will continue to recognize the supremacy of the Pope”²⁴ It was not a full schism since they still recognized the authority of the pope “in matters of faith and morals.” What was rejected was his disciplinary power over other churches. Asked if this position was compatible with papal supremacy, one ACJ member, Fr. Valencia, argued: “Yes, to the extent that the Pope is the head of the Church

23 “The Final Break in Jaro,” in Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV: 249–255. “This was the climax of the movement which had [begun] with the Memorial to Monsignor Chapelle in February 1900. As their demands had not been complied with, they decided to break with Rome completely: the Pope’s infallible teaching authority was accepted; but his authority in disciplinary matters was rejected Asked about their relationship with the Aglipayan schism, the Jaro clergy said that they had not studied the Aglipayan constitution but would welcome collaboration if it coincided with theirs. Aglipay himself rejected the Jaro position as untenable: either the Pope must be accepted in toto or rejected in toto.” *Ibid.*, 249. See also Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy*, 251–255.

24 *Ibid.*, 253.

in general, but not in precise role as the head of the Church of Rome.”²⁵ Although they later on conceded and submitted to Bishop Rooker when he finally took over the diocese, their distinctive position vis-à-vis *Quae Mari Sinico* and its subsequent developments was like no other in the country during this time. It was different from the outright rejection of the Aglipayans or the critical acceptance of the loyalist-nationalist factions.

Contemporary Reflections

More than a century has passed since the promulgation of *Quae Mari Sinico*. This present collection examines the reception of the document beyond the knee-jerk reaction and immediate acceptance or rejection of different church groups narrated above. It inquires into how the post-Hispanic Church understood, implemented, revised, rejected, and applied provisions of *Quae Mari Sinico* in the long term. It does not tackle all of its points but focuses on some of the crucial provisions it has explicitly put forth: the new dioceses and appointment of bishops, seminary formation, the education of the young, and the convening of a Provincial Council.

Antonio de Castro gives a detailed socio-historical context of this period in our history: the revolution’s anti-friar character and the question of the “friar lands,” the arrival of the Protestants and the “Aglipayan schism,” the role of the Apostolic Delegates, the vision and initiatives of the secular clergy, and more. De Castro ends on this positive note: “In 1906, some four years after the promulgation of *Quae Mari Sinico*, and joining the four American bishops who had taken over from the Spanish friar bishops, the first Filipino bishop, Jorge Barlin, finally assumed office as the new Bishop of Nueva Caceres, the Bicol peninsula.” In 1909, Juan Gorordo became the first Filipino Bishop of Cebu and Pablo Singzon was appointed the first Bishop of Calbayog upon its

25 Ibid.

erection as a new diocese. From here on, the Filipino local church slowly began to take shape.

Antolin Uy traces how the post-Hispanic Church implemented the document's injunction to establish four new dioceses, how and who were the bishops chosen, and what they had done in their dioceses according to extant sources. His privileged access to the Vatican's secret archives gives us many interesting details on the workings of the Vatican otherwise not accessible elsewhere.

Marcelo Manimtim tackles an important provision: seminaries and priestly formation in the Philippines from *Quae Mari Sinico* to the 1960s—their formation programs, academic curricula, pastoral formation, etc. He points out that “with the exception of the seminary of Vigan, all the conciliar seminaries in the Philippines were in the hands of the Vincentians when *Quae Mari Sinico* issued its directives on clerical formation.” The Vincentians' arrival in the Philippines in 1862 and their quiet labor in the training of the native clergy for 40 years before the promulgation of the document had already provided a ready seedbed for future developments in seminary formation along the vision of *Quae Mari Sinico*. The new generations of bishops entrusted their seminaries to the Vincentians (e.g., Calbayog, Lipa, San Pablo), aside from the ones they were already administering before the revolution. Manimtim also discusses in detail the interesting question of the *colegio-seminarios* (mixed training of seminarians and lay students). It has been *Quae Mari Sinico*'s foremost concern not to mix the seminarians with the *convictores* (i.e., those who “prepare themselves for civil callings”). But there must have been weightier pastoral reasons in our specific context that prompted the bishops to persist in this modified practice for half a century (1870s–1920s) despite repeated warnings from the Holy See. Such an observation sensitizes us to the fact that official pronouncements belong to one sphere of ecclesial life; the everyday living of it belongs to another—and each significantly modifies the other.

Education was a crucial concern of the post-Hispanic Church. Jose Femilou Gutay traces the challenges of educating the youth during this post-Hispanic transition: the ambivalent consequences of the American public school system; the prohibition of religious classes in public schools; the arrival of Protestant teachers and their aggressive proselytizing; the revitalization of Catholic education due to the arrival of new missionary congregations and their labors in the educational field; and the founding of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), among others. These concrete initiatives were not contemplated by the writers of *Quae Mari Sinico*, coming as they were from a different era. But these all belong to the “care and providence” for young people in schools which bishops should “consider as commended” by the Holy See.

Albert Flores discusses the event, proceedings, and resolutions of the First Provincial Council of Manila, whose convocation was already stipulated in *Quae Mari Sinico* but came to be implemented only five years later (1907). It was in this Council that *Quae Mari Sinico* was formally recognized as the new basic charter of the Church in the Philippines. Flores, however, laments the Council’s misguided adoption of the decrees of the Plenary Council of Latin America held in Rome in 1899 as its own blueprint “due to similar conditions obtaining in our country.” Despite this great limitation, he does point out the specific way with which the Provincial Council in Manila adapted Roman documents to concrete situations on the ground and how it dealt with Philippine realities as they were: the issue of the Aglipayan schism, the practice of closing churches, the setting up of parochial primary schools—an act of a local church trying to answer its own questions and living the faith in its specific context.

The original Latin text of *Quae Mari Sinico* first appeared in *Acta Sanctae Sedis*²⁶—the precursor of *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* as the

26 *Acta Sanctae Sedis* 35 (1902–1903): 268–277. *Acta Sanctae Sedis* published official documents of the Holy See from 1865–1908. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*

official gazette of the Holy See. The document was published in the Philippines by the Imprenta del Colegio de Santo Tomás in 1902 with its Spanish, English, Tagalog, Ilocano and Cebuano translations.²⁷ We have fully reproduced the latter in the Appendix in order to make the real concerns of the Church at that time accessible to contemporary readers. As we read these texts, we do not only learn about our historical past but also read it from the perspective of our present questions and, in a dialectical manner, view our present concerns as to be both outcome of and reaction to these past historical contexts.

The articles in this collection are attempts by contemporary Filipino church historians to reflect on the consequences of the Apostolic Constitution on the local church in the Philippines after the Spanish regime up to the era before the Second Vatican Council. Simply put, these works try to make sense of subsequent developments in the Philippine Church as effects of the implementation of *Quae Mari Sinico*; but they are also efforts to understand *Quae Mari Sinico* from the perspective of those subsequent events. Hermeneutic studies in our times from Gadamer on—be it in biblical exegesis or philosophy—speak about *Wirkungsgeschichte*, that is, the effective history of texts.²⁸ Sometimes, much effort is expended on endless hypothetical reconstructions of the factors “before the text” and the historical dynamics that went into its production. Although this is indeed necessary, what is effectively forgotten is the history of the text’s interpretation after it has left the hands of its authors, e.g., what

(AAS) was established by Pope Pius X (29 September 1908) and its first volume appeared in January 1909.

- 27 See appendix, this volume, 183–265. See also Achútegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution*, Vol. IV, 281–290; A.R.P. Joanne Ylla, O.P., *Constitutio ‘Quae Mari Sinico’ Cum Notis* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas, 1938).
- 28 Cf. Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1989); See also Mark Knight, “Wirkungsgeschichte, Reception History and Reception Theory,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33 (2010): 137–146.

the recipients make of it, what revisions were made on the ground, and how the text came to be understood and applied in the course of its history. This volume intends to answer these questions: what were implemented, revised, or rejected in the provisions of *Quae Mari Sinico*; why it came to be so; how these provisions were put into operation, if they ever were, etc.

This move proves necessary because this effective history of the document also forms part of its own interpretation—and of our own self-understanding as a Church—in our times. In other words, our intention here is not merely academic and historical as it is also philosophic and hermeneutical. Or, as Gadamer says, “[m]y real concern was and is philosophic: not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing.”²⁹ As we will realize in our reading of the articles, *Quae Mari Sinico* was not only an event of the past; it is decidedly an important part of our present—and one that would effectively shape our future.

29 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, XXVIII.