

# Jose Maria Gurule . . . Who Are You?

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While at a meeting of the New Mexico Genealogical Society in March 2015, I met a man who showed me a book containing an entry about a man named Jose Maria Gurule, a supposed grandson of Santiago Gurule and Elena Gallegos. Now, I don't have everything memorized on the Gurule family, but I immediately knew that this entry wasn't true. I had my laptop with me, and so I pulled up the Gurule website ([www.gurulefamily.org](http://www.gurulefamily.org)) and brought up the will of Antonio Gurule, the only child born to Santiago Gurule and Elena Gallegos, thus proving this Jose Maria Gurule was not a grandson. I didn't think anything more about it.

Then a week later I was contacted by Moises Gonzales, whom I've known for many years as he's done some research in various Gurule lineages linking back to the Las Huertas and Carnue Land Grants, and always provided sound source material. He told me that Samuel Sisneros, an archivist at the University of New Mexico, had told him about a record he'd found about a man named Jose Maria Gurule. Wow, what a coincidence....I wondered if it was the same man from the entry I had seen last week?

Moises then obtained a very clear copy of the record from Mr. Sisneros, which was acquired from the Diocese of Durango, and we asked our friend Patricia Sanchez Rau for a translation as she knows Spanish and Latin and is very well known for translating documents. The narrative of the translated document is as follows:

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Source: AHAD-209 0473-0477

## Translation of document regarding Jose Maria Gurule

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As a result of what was furnished by you to the Señor Comandante General of this Province Nemesio Salcedo Salcedo, who gave me his verbal and written authorization that he concurred with you. He informed in a verbal/oral manner about what had happened in the Province of New Mexico at the Villa of Albuquerque regarding the case of an apparent baptism that, in reality was not done properly by the Reverend Padre Guerra, present missionary of this said villa; that the Indian Comanche that you now have in your company, having noted married Jose Maria with a Christian lady, from this villa. According to the information you have given me and the expressed Señor Comandante General, in order to proceed we have to give this account to His eminence, Señor Bishop from this Bishopric my señor don Francisco Olivares y Benito with regard to the conduct of the parish priest of this villa, don Jose Maria Sandoval, who verbally communicated the determination and finding to the Señor Comandante General so that with clarity while waiting for the certificate (legal statement) to arrive so that the doubt regarding the baptism of the referred to Comanche, as well as regarding the separation that was done to his marriage, along with the rest of what was written and asked for material all of which has great importance.

That God May Guide your life and you,  
Written in Chihuahua, Mexico, May 25, 1803

Juan Fran<sup>co</sup> Garcia (rubric)  
Margin Name – Cura don Juan Jose Sida

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Juan Joseph Sida, Provincial of Dominican Clergy in the Bishopric (church territory), resident of the Villa of Chihuahua

CERTIFICATE (Sworn Statement): As soon as I can, I order that if you permit, that in the month of February of this present year, I found myself in the Villa of Albuquerque, in the Province of New Mexico, with the title of Intermediate Foreign Vicar (Vicar General) appeared in this ecclesiastical court, the judicial lieutenant from that place; don Vicente Lopez, telling me that Jose Maria, the Comanche, had availed him to listen, because he was very distressed that he had been unable to obtain the proof of his baptism, or find who had put the baptismal waters on him, and he wished to talk to me regarding this matter. Agreeing to the request, I told the lieutenant for him to bring him (Jose Maria) to my presence.

After the swearing, I began the examination of the interested party, and he again expressed his distress telling me that it had been 12 years since he had married a Christian lady from that same place, and during the time of this marriage, they had six children; but before getting married, as well as afterwards, he told the minister that he was not a Christian, but that he wanted to be baptized. So in the third year after his marriage, he was baptized by the said minister, however, he was not satisfied, because he observed that the same thing was not done for him as he had observed in the baptisms of his children and he felt that the priest did not believe he was a Christian.

With this information and finding the minister who celebrated the sacrament of matrimony and baptism was the Reverend Father Ambrosio Guerra, the present priest of this Villa of Albuquerque, and to investigate the case of what the plaintiff was saying, and needing the specific truth as to what happened and he (Padre Guerra) stated that it was true, that it had been 12 years since he had married said Jose Maria to a Christian lady, but he had found that this man was the son of Juan Antonio Gurule, who conducted the marriage investigation and told the priest (Guerra) that this was his son and that he was a Christian, and it was for that reason he was able to conduct the marriage ceremony.

Also, he (Gurule) assured me that Padre Guerra stated that he was certain that three years after they were married, the aforementioned Jose Maria returned regarding being baptized (or giving him the baptism water), and it was at that time that he (Juan Antonio Gurule) returned and testified that his son was already a Christian having been baptized as a baby, and so that he (Jose Maria) would not get anxious, he put a little water on him without completing the baptism form nor any of the other requirements of the church. Just pretending to go through the motion of this sacred sacrament, because I was asked to by the Gurule person, father of Jose Maria, and finding myself in the place of Saint Joseph de las Huertas, also a parish in my care, I ordered and summoned before me, and in the presence of Lt. Don Vicente Lopez and two witnesses, I questioned him (Juan Antonio Gurule) in a manner that would take into account this delicate situation and he answered that he had never assured himself that Joseph Maria was his son, nor that he was a Christian, but that he had a son that was five years old when he had been captured

by the Comanches and much time had passed when Jose Maria was redeemed and taken to Santa Fe, and at that time the referred to Gurule admitted to the Governor don Fernando de la Concha, that this was his son who had been captured by the Comanches and that he recognized him although he had grown a lot.

This was a different story and contrary to what he had told Padre Guerra, at the time of the marriage and at the time of the simulated baptism, which could have nullified the marriage, and for this reason, I kept him separated (from Jose Maria?) but still in my jurisdiction until the investigation could be completed and to show him (Jose Maria) the principal mysteries of the faith, baptize him effectively, and to have his marriage consecrated although he comprehended very little (page 3) and for his spiritual good.

It was for this reason that I brought him with me to Durango, and if necessary to receive the sacraments of baptism and confirmation and to obtain from the Bishop, permission to revalidate the marriage. This is all I can swear to (Latin phrase) *“in word, priestly – that I may not sin”* in this unprecedented petition that I signed in this Villa of Chihuahua, on the 21 day of May 180\_\_ (last digit cut off)

Juan Jose de la Sida (rubric)

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On the 20<sup>th</sup> of the present month, because of their arrival in this villa, where they were traveling to the City of Durango, the priest don Juan Jose Sida, Curate of San Felipe of the Villa of Alburquerque, the Province of New Mexico, on behalf of the Señor Comandante General of this province of New Mexico, don Nemecio Salcedo de Salcedo, who has in his company, a Comanche Indian by the name of Jose Maria who has doubted that he was baptized causing grief to this man after he had married a Christian lady (not named) in Alburquerque by the Reverend Padre Fray Ambrosio Guerra, his (unknown word) sent him to the said presbyter so that I can assure myself or make a determination of same – to replicate what happened as a continuation to my official who accompanied said individual and who is now in front of me Jose Maria, referred to by same Padre Sida who exposed the story of the testimony that was given to Señor Comandante General who disputed what was told to him by the individual, so that he could review the case and his renunciation of said Indian in that he did not want to travel to Durango, as was ordered by the Roman (Catholic) Ritual by the Bishop of Durango regarding the baptism so that he can determine what needs to be done by reviewing all the documents at the first opportunity.

May God Bless You

Signed before me in Chihuahua on May 22, 1803

Signed – Juan Francisco Garcia (rubric)

#### Lower part of page 5

Margin name: Priest don Jose Maria Sandoval

In this villa of Chihuahua on the 24 day of May 1803, the señor, don Jose Maria Sandoval, present priest and acting vicar and ecclesiastical judge, having seen the Bishop don Manuel Francisco Garcia who ordered that the Señor General of this province passed on to the Señor Pro (?) don Juan Jose Sida, the certification or sworn statement given by him as had been told to said Captain, and the expressed Señor General, including the point about his doubts regarding the baptism and the rest of the verbal and written declaration that the named Sr. Comandante has passed on about the Comanche Indian Jose Maria, he then proceeded to the Señor Judge and then appeared before me for the examination that would be made of a neophyte (*means newly baptized person*) Jose Maria, and asking about his baptisms and the instructions in the Castillian (Spanish) language; that if he had told the truth to the priest; that he had gotten married in Alburquerque, Province of New Mexico. He responded that his eyes had been opened with time after having lived among the pagans and with that motive had gone on a campaign in the time of the Governor don Fernando de la Concha, when he was captured and then returned to New Mexico. At the end, a man by the name of Juan Antonio Gurule stated that he had a motive for looking at the redeemed captives, because the Comanches had carried off his small son that he had at the camp watching the sheep. He swore without a doubt that the one they were talking about was him (his son).

What he expressed above, but with all that, the señor Padre Ambrosio Guerra had married (Jose Maria) about 12 years ago with a Christian lady from the pueblo, and that when the priest was sick in bed, that he married the couple but did not veil them, but he (Jose Maria) had observed that this was done with all the other marriages of the other españoles. He asked what diligencias (marriage investigations) Padre Guerra had completed before the marriage. He (Guerra) answered that he didn't remember, but said that (Juan Antonio) Gurule had told him at this time, that this was not his son in reality; even though he had expressed it differently before.

Finding he was living among the Christians, it occurred to Padre Guerra to baptize him because he was hearing that he (Jose Maria) was not a Christian, because he had been raised among the pagans. That he continued his supplications about being baptized and after three years of marriage, Padre Guerra gave him the water of baptism but it was not done in the same manner as he had seen baptisms at other times and that introducing a container, only took water from the fountain and put it on his head, but now believes that he was not baptized. At that time, Padre don Juan Jose Sida was received as a priest in the parish of the Villa of Alburquerque. He (Jose Maria) then stated to the lieutenant in that place, and that the Reverend Father Jose Lopez verified with the padre Guerra and also with Gurule and informing everyone in this case, then assured him and his wife with whom he had six children and then he was taken from his house because he could not verify the baptism, so he (Sida) brought him with him in his company until they arrived at this villa, because he had offered to take him to see the bishop of this diocese so that out of the kindness of his heart so that he could obtain the proof of his baptism from the main priest and all priests so that in time, he can return to his wife; and he is certain that he will find in his heart the spirit to travel to City of Durango. But now that he finds himself in this villa with the journey that took so long, asking the priest to confer the baptism sacrament, however just asks that the investigation be completed.

When asked about the motive for asking about the baptism, he replied that he was living the Christian life but had fought in various battles that had taken place against the enemies of the

Comanches and he had killed 28 Apaches, and when he contemplated death and how he killed people like they were wild animals, he didn't want the same thing to happen to him and in the faith he declared the external pain of sin, which the Indian Jose Maria indicates.

With all of this (information) then the said Señor Ecclesiastical Judge found that Jose Maria had been instructed sufficiently, especially in this case that had been exposed to the Señor Padre Juan Jose Sida, in his certified statement and he wanted the Indian Jose Maria to understand the bad state in which he was living with the woman he called his wife; with whom he can no longer live with regardless of whatever love he feel for his children. So then moved with pity, the Señor Bishop as well as the recommended interested party Señor Comandante General of the province; it is also recommended by the Governor of that province and the respective pastor Fr. Ambosio Guerra, that he (Jose Maria) should continue his instructions with care and proceed to baptize him in the correct manner according to the Roman ritual. Having presented all the solemn rites so that the ceremony will include the pouring of the water as stated in the ritual under certain conditions and the original record to be remitted (sent) to the Honorable Señor don Domingo Francisco Gabriel de Olivares and Benito de Consejo, R.S.M. the right reverend bishop of this diocese. After this, I charge that this is all that is needed in this present case, and then you need to approve the marriage, according to the justice of Christ. And so I order and sign this decree.

Before me and to this I swear.  
Jose Maria Sandoval (rubric)

Before me  
Jose Phelipe Paez (rubric)  
Notary Public

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We all agreed that this testimony must be published, though we admitted that we were unable to figure out who he was. The translation states that Jose Maria Gurule was claiming to be the son of Juan Antonio Gurule. Based on this article, written in May 1803, is when Jose Maria Gurule was brought before the bishop. Then, according to his testimony, he had been married for 12 years and that takes us back to the years 1790-1791.

We started looking through the Gurule records to try and figure out how who he might be. There is a family in the 1790 census, same name, but this family is well established (along with the other family members living next door to each other):

1790 – NM, Bernalillo County, location: Albuquerque, Plaza #7

Juan Antonio Gurule (mestizo, 1737, age 53, carpenter), Maria Montoya (Spanish, 1760, age 30), son (1778, age 12), son (1792, age 8), 1785, age 5), dau (1775, age 15)

(next house)

1790 – NM, Bernalillo County, Albuquerque, Plaza #7

Jose Maria Gurule (mestizo, age 20, shepherd), Josefa Candelaria (Spanish, age 14), one daughter (age 1)

This Jose Maria Gurule in the 1790 census had been baptized between Sep-Dec 1768 at San Felipe Mission, and was the son of Juan Antonio Gurule and Maria Petrona Montoya.

This other Jose Maria Gurule was supposedly the son of Juan Antonio Gurule as he had been claimed during the recapture of several individuals. Is this the same family? Again, doesn't seem so.

While searching for published work on Google Scholar, we found another record that references Jose Maria Gurule being a Comanche. This is from the book "*Kiva, Cross, and Crown: The Pecos Indians and New Mexico, 1540-1840*" (published in 1987) by John L. Kessel. Could this be the same Jose Maria Gurule identified in the translation?

430 *Kiva, Cross, and Crown*

First, he was unhappy with interpreter Juan Cristóbal who neglected to carry the reports of the Comanches to Governor Chacón. He asked permission for a son of his, one **José María** who had received baptism at Chihuahua in 1803, to live at San Miguel del Vado and serve as interpreter there and at Pecos during the trading. He also requested license to hold the trade fairs at Pecos because, en route through the mountains from that pueblo to Santa Fe, their animals suffered and Apaches killed their women and children who followed along behind. Guarnicoruco had another son whom he believed should be named captain of the Yamparikas. Lastly, he volunteered to guide Spaniards to the Cerro Amarillo, fifteen days east of Pecos and El Vado, so that they could determine whether it was gold or some other metal. Salcedo, requesting that the governor keep him informed, passed these matters on for Chacón's attention.<sup>19</sup>

The New Mexico governor was frank. Guanicoruco was a liar. Interpreter Juan Cristóbal had not been assigned to the Yamparikas since Chacón took office. **José María Gurulé** was not a son of Guarnicoruco, rather a Skidi Pawnee genízaro who had once been a captive of the Comanches. Chacón had sent him to El Vado as **Comanche** interpreter with the first settlers. But because of Gurulé's unruly conduct, cheating, and horse

While conducting a second search for additional material on Google Scholar, we found another record that references Jose Maria Gurule being a Comanche. This one is in the book "*Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands*" by J. F. Brooks (published in 2002).

68. "Diligencias criminales contra Francisco el Comanche, Francisco Xavier, José María Gurule, y Antonio María . . . 2 diciembre 1805–28 marzo 1806," *SANM* 2 no. 1931, Roll 15, 1099–1117. Gurulé's Kiowa identity is questionable, in that Governor Chacón reported in 1804 that the Yamparika Comanche captain Guanacoruco claimed him as his son. Chacón countered that Gurulé was, in fact, a Skidi Pawnee *genízaro*, once a captive of Guanacoruco, whom Chacón had settled in 1794 as an agent for the Comanches in San Miguel del Vado. Gurulé's "unruly conduct, cheating, and horse-thieving" had led to his replacement by Alejandro Martín, the former captive of Tosapoy. See Kessell, *Kiva, Cross, and Crown*, 429–30.

69. Isidro Rey a Real Alencaster, 2 marzo, 1807, *SANM* 2 no. 2043, Roll 16, Frame 315.

70. This period is treated in chapters seven and eight of Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*. For the general outlines of the transition, see Thomas D. Hall, *Social Change in the Southwest, 1350–1880* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1989).

71. See Ana María Alonso, *Thread of Blood: Colonialism, Revolution, and Gender on Mexico's Northern Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995); Daniel Nugent, "Two, Three, Many Barbarisms? The Chihuahuan Frontier in Transition from Society to Politics," in Donna J. Guy and Thomas E. Sheridan, eds. *Contested Ground: Comparative Frontiers on the Northern and Southern Edges of the Spanish Empire* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), 182–200; Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*.

Is this another Jose Maria Gurule? This one is Kiowa, yet being claimed by a Comanche captain.

As you read in the translated document, Jose Maria questioned the validity of his baptism as the ceremony conducted for his children had been different from what he had experienced. He wanted proof of his baptism so he could return to his wife and children. In the final part of the translation, the senior judge felt that Jose Maria had been instructed sufficiently, but was still did not recognize the marriage, thus they're going to approve the marriage and include baptism as part of the ceremony so he can return to his family. No other documents were found.

We all wanted to share what was found about this other Jose Maria Gurule, but we admit to not knowing more about him, or the other two men we also found with the same name.

We've all talked about this Jose Maria Gurule and the various findings, and we can't help but think that Juan Antonio Gurule may have had a \*liaison\* at some time as he first admits that the Comanches had carried off his small son that he had at camp watching the sheep, and he swore to his words. Then later, he changed his mind.

The Jose Maria Gurule identified in "Kiva, Cross and Crown" does not sound like the man seeking answers to his being baptised and married in the Catholic Church properly and traveling all the way to Durango, Mexico for answers – if it is the same man, what happened to disillusion him so completely?