CULTURE CONTACT AND ETHNOGENESIS IN MINDORO UP TO THE END OF THE SPANISH RULE*

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For centuries Mindoro exuded an air of mystery to all that passed through the island. The turbulent waters that surround it, which were of old the site of numerous shipwrecks, the successive ranges of mountains, the diverse set of peoples inhabiting the interior and the coasts, the exotic tropical plants and rare wild animals, the many rivers and streams, all combine to generate an aura of mystery.

Around this relatively unknown island grew fantastic myths about the "white race" and "tailed-people" of Mindoro. The 17th-century traveller-chronicler, Gemelli Careri described them as people with a "tail half a span long".[1] Le Gentil de la Galaisière, a French scientist sent to do astronomical studies in the region, also made reference to the popular myth about the Mangyans at that period:

> It is said that in the Island of Mindoro there is a case of men who have little tails, like those of monkeys. Several priests have witnessed this and have so assured me; and not long ago in the Pacific coast near Baler, a woman was found who had a tail. Of this I have been assured by the missionaries who saw her...[2]

Early in this century, a report circulated that Mindoro was the home of a white race with one woman; any man who had seen her never came back. The report originated in the imperfect knowledge of one American reporter who, translating wrongly from a Filipino newspaper, mistook a legend of the Batangan Mangyans for real fact and consequently made of this group a purely white "tribe".[3]

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[1] "A Voyage to the Philippines" in *A Voyage Round the World.* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild), p. 133. Careri's description was based on the reports given by some Jesuit priests who probably mistook the Mangyan "bahag" for a tail.

[2] *A Voyage to the Indian Seas,* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, 1964), p. 43.

[3] A. Henry Savage Landor, *The Gems of the East, Sixteen Thousand Miles of Research Travel Among Wild and Tame Tribes of Enchanting Islands,* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1904) p. 461.

To this day, little is known about the inhabitants of interior Mindoro. They are to the lowlanders generally known as "Mangyans", a term which upon closer study would not reveal much meaning or distinction, except that of savage, mountaineer, pagan negroes[4] — meanings reminiscent of a colonial past.

Yet, there is a sense in which Mangyans today still live in a colonial setting, unyoked from age-old exploitation of "outside people".

This paper examines the various historical accounts which constitute an external view of the Mangyans and the culture up to the end of the Spanish rule. The history of the Mangyans as a people is attempted on the basis of the varied references made to them by Spanish and other writers.

From the sources themselves, we are able to surmise the varying forms of pressures the 'Mangyans' have had to contend with from the outset up to the end of the Spanish colonial regime. Pressures inevitably bring about responses; thus, this study also focuses on the 'Mangyan' reactions to external pressures. The sources appear to allow the inference that the Mangyans may have constituted themselves as groups as a result of these pressures from the outside.

Pre-Spanish Mindoro

Though present day Mindoro hardly gives the impression of a flourishing trading port, it was one of the major islands regularly visited by Chinese traders long before the Spaniards stepped on Philippine soil. Early Chinese accounts of the Sino-Philippine cultural relations may be gleaned from Chao-Ju-Kua's work *Chu-Fan-Chi* (literally, *Reports on the South Seas Barbarians*) completed in 1225.[5] This

[4] Pardo de Tavera defines the term in *Etimologia de los nombres de razas de Filipinas* (Manila, 1901: "Thus in Tagalog, Bicol, and Visaya *manguian* signifies "savage", "mountaineer", "pagan negroes". Blair and Robertson construed this word as applicable to a great number of people (Filipinos), but nevertheless applied it specifically only to certain inhabitants of Mindoro: "In primitive times, without doubt, the name was even then given to those of that island who today bear it, but its employment in three Filipino languages shows that the radical *ngian* had in all these languages a sense to-day forgotten . . ." Cf. Emma Blair and James A. Robertson, *The Philippine Islands* 1493-1898. Vol. 40. (Cleveland, Ohio: The A. H. Clark Co.) p. 47 footnote. Henceforth this work will be referred to as B & R.

[5] Wang Teh-Ming, "Sino-Filipino Historico-Cultural Relations", *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, Vol. XXIX, September-November, 1964.

gives us a comprehensive enough account of the Philippines especially Mindoro and the neighboring islands.

In his account, Chao Ju-Kua made mention of the island of Ma-i which historians today generally believe to be Mindoro. Recently, an analyst of pre-hispanic historical sources wrote that "Mai is evidently Mindoro, for that island used to be called Mait, which is a southern Chinese pronunciation for the name".[6] He partly supports his view with the Spanish account of Juan Francisco de San Antonio (*Chronicas de N.S.P. Francisco en las Islas Filipinas, China y Japon* 1738) which, among other things make reference to Mindoro. Chapter 36 of this book deals with "De la Provincia y Isla de Mait o Mindoro". It speaks of *Minolo* "from whence the Spaniards apply *Mindoro* to this whole island which in ancient times has been Mait". Mait according to Fr. de San Antonio is presumably a Chinese word meaning gold.

Scholars of the 19th century also made reference to Mait as Mindoro. Notable among them is Ferdinand Blumentritt who gives as the meaning of Mait, 'the country of the black', which he says is the name of Mindoro.[7] Early in the 20th century, Dr. Fletcher Gardner, a pioneer field researcher on the Mangyans found Hampangan tribal folks calling the island *Mayit.* Lately, Scott records that the term Mayit is still used by Mindoro indigenes to refer to the region around the mouth of Mauhaw river, Bulalacao.[8] Olarte, on the other hand, avers that the fishermen of Aklan still call Mindoro, Mait. Of this controversial place, Chao Ju-Kua gave the following account:

> The country of Ma-i is north of Borneo. The natives live in large villages (literally, of more than a thousand household) on the opposite banks of streams, and cover themselves with a cloth like a sheet or hide their bodies with loin-cloth.
>
> There are bronze images of unknown origin scattered about the tangled wilds. Few pirates reach shore.
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> When trading ships enter the harbor, they stop in front of the official plaza, for the official plaza is that country's place for barter and trade. The local chieftain board the ship and proceed to make themselves right at home, and since they make a habit of using white umbrellas, the merchants must present them as gifts.

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[6] William Henry Scott, *Pre-hispanic Source Materials for the Study of Philippine History,* (Manila: University of Sto. Tomas Press, 1968), p. 72.

[7] Quoted from Hirth-Rockhill's *Chu-Fan Chi,* cited in Wang-Teh-Ming; *op. cit.,* p. 405.

[8] Cited in the footnote of W. H. Scott, *op. cit.,* p. 72.

> The method of conducting business is for the savage traders to descend on the baskets and hampers all in a mob, grab them and pick out the merchandise and then go off. If at first they can't tell who they are, gradually they come to know those who remove the goods so in the end nothing is actually lost. The savage traders then take the goods around to the other islands for barter, and generally don't start coming back till September or October to repay the ship's merchants with what they have got. Indeed, there are some who do not come back even then, so ships trading with Ma-i are the last to reach home.[9]

While some of the trade items and information mentioned by Chao-Ju-Kua can be checked against ethnological and archaeological sources, whether Ma-i is indeed Mindoro, is not conclusive. There are scholars with differing opinions. Jose Rizal himself, after offering a geographical premise, declared that Ma-i should be in the Tagalog region of Luzon.[10] Wang Teh-Ming, cited earlier in this paper, agrees with Rizal and adds that "Ma-i or Ba-iac was primarily located in the Batangas region, including: Cavite, Laguna and at least a part of Manila, Rizal and South Tayabas, beside the province of Batangas."[11] He gives reasons historical, archaeological and etymological in nature to back up his claim.[12]

Despite his denial of Mindoro as the land of Ma-i, Wang Teh-Ming does not discount the existence of trade relations between the Chinese and the early inhabitants of Mindoro. In particular, he considers Mindoro as the Min-to-lang referred to in Wang Ta-Yuan's account completed more than a century after that of Chao Ju-Kua. The account of Min-to-lang which is part of the *Tao-I-Chih-Lio* or *A Short Account of the Islands Barbarians* is, according to the chronicler himself, a report of his two voyages in the South Seas, probably from the port of Zaitun.[13] It is generally supposed to be the most complete record relating to the Philippines, among the Chinese sources of the Yuan dynasty. Min-to-lang is described in Wang-Ta-Yuan's work as:

> . . . an important port along the sea coast. Owing to the stream overflowing the sea, the sea water is not salty. The soil of their cultivated fields is fertile. Rice and other crops are cheap. The climate is hot. To esteem thrift is popular. Both man and woman do their hair up in a knot, and wear black short-shirt, with blue short skirts around the lower part of the

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[9] From William H. Scott and Ju I-hsiung's English translation in the *Historical Bulletin,* Vol. XI, No. 1 (March 1967), pp. 69-72.

[10] Rizal's letter to A. B. Meyer, cited in Wang Teh-Ming, *op. cit.,* p. 405.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] For extensive discussion of these points, see: *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 300.

> body. They dig wells for drinking water, boil sea water to make salt and ferment treacle to make wine. There is a chieftain(s). Robbery or piracy is prohibited. When any one commits the crime, his whole household will be slain. The local products are: Wu-li wood, musk, sandal wook, kapok, and ox-deer-leather. In trading the Chinese goods are: lacquered wares (porcelains), copper cauldron, Ja-Po (Java) cloth, red silk fabrics, blue cotton cloth . . . wine ond so on.[14]

On the basis of the accounts cited, Wang Teh-Ming believes Min-to-lang to be Mindoro. As a proof, he cites the trade item "ox-deer-leather" which he interprets as one solid term — that is leather derived from an 'ox-deer'-like animal. He identifies this animal as the tamaraw, and sets this forth as a major reason for identifying Min-to-lang as Mindoro.[15]

> Obviously, this animal is nothing but (the) tamaraw which "looks somewhat like a deer and somewhat like a carabao". Hence, we may conclude that Min-To-Long is Mindoro. For "Mindoro is the home of a fierce animal called *tamaraw* which is found in no other part of the world".

Wang Teh-Ming supports his view by pointing out that Min-To-Lang is Min-To-Long in the Amoy dialect, and might well be Min-to-lo in old Chinese, "for as a rule, the final nasal of many Chinese words is a later development".[16]

In the Ming dynasty and shortly before the coming of the Spaniards, references were made to Mang-Yan San and I-Ling in the Ming Annals, *Tung-Si-Yang-Kao* (The Study on the Eastern & Western Oceans, 1618). Wang Teh-Ming identifies these places as part of Mindoro — Mang-Yan San, as northwestern Mindoro and I-Ling as Lin or the western end of the island. He adds that "the people Mang-yan of the island may have the name after or for it" (*sic*).[17] Another term closely related to Mang-Yan San is Ka-Ma-Yan, a name possibly transliterated from Ka-Mangyan, or the land of the Mangyan people.[18]

While it may not be conclusive whether Mindoro is indeed Ma-i or Min-to-lang, it is quite clear from the accounts cited so far, that the inhabitants of the island had trade relations with the outside world centuries before the Spaniards came and colonized the country. However, it should be pointed out that such trade relations were limited

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[14] W. T. Ming's translation, *op. cit.*, p. 303.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 306.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 413.
[18] *Ibid.*

to the exchange of goods on the coastal areas. There is no indication of the existence of Chinese settlements or communities from the accounts, the prevailing picture appearing to be more of itinerant Chinese merchants trading items from one island to another. Therefore, no culture contact situation analogous to the present seems to have existed during the pre-Spanish period.

Mindoro at Contact Point with Spain

The idyllic pattern of trade relations between the Chinese merchants and the inhabitants of Mindoro was disrupted with the coming of the Spaniards in the 16th century.

Pressing northward from their base in Panay, the Spaniards first set foot in the island of Mindoro in April, 1570. This drive northward was spurred by news of flourishing settlements and rich supplies of gold in the island of Luzon. Added to this compelling drive was the presence of Portuguese forces in Cebu which harassed the Spaniards to an extent that Legazpi, the first Spanish governor-general of the island removed the settlement to Panay — "a place where no damage may be done, for never since these parts were discovered have the Portuguese resorted thither, and neither the king of Portugal nor his vassals had trade or commerce, nor can they possess anything there".[19] From his island therefore, the youthful and daring *conquistador* Juan de Salcedo was sent to explore the neighboring islands of Luzon, including Mindoro.

Salcedo's pioneer expedition is described vividly in an account made by an anonymous writer, presumably one of the Captain's soldiers. In his introduction to the account, he explains that he has ventured to write:

> . . . because I have been informed that many things concerning events in this land have been written, and sent to Nueva España, which are the merest fable and conjecture . . . whatever I may say in defense of these natives will be read without any mistrust whatever, for whosoever reads this will know the truth with regard to what occurs here.[20]

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[19] Andres de Mirandaola, "Letter to Felipe II', (Cebu, June 8, 1569). B & R, Vol. 3, p. 38.

[20] Manuscrito inedito, "Relacion de la Conquista de la Isla de Luzon", fechado en Manila, el 20 de Abril de 1572, in Wenceslao E. Retana, *Archivo Del Bibliofico Filipino,* (Madrid, 1898), p. 4. Portions cited were translated by Mrs. Consuelo Perez and compared with the translation in B & R. Vol. 3, pp. 141-172.

The account states that Salcedo sailed from Panay with 14 or 15 small ships, then sailed to a small island called Elim (possibly Ilin), from whence he crossed to the island of Mindoro and

> . . . spent the night till dawn in a very rich town called Mamburau, plundered it and captured many natives some of whom afterwards escaped, while others were set free upon giving payment.[21]

Pressure from the 'Spanish Sword', as may be inferred from the preceding account, constituted one of the earliest forms of compelling influence upon the inhabitants of Mindoro. Unlike the Chinese who came solely to trade, thus exerting only a minimal influence on the indigenes, the Spaniards came to conquer and reduce the island to a vassal of Spain. The corresponding response of the natives to this initial pressure from the Spaniards may be gleaned further from the account:

> When the Captain (i.e., Salcedo) was deported, the natives, who had fled from the pueblo, returned and saw the havoc and destruction caused by the Spaniards, and were unwilling to return and rebuild it; accordingly they themselves set fire to it, and totally destroyed it.[22]

Faced with the possibility of further attacks and plundering by the Spaniards, the indigenes quite understandably retreated. The reaction is characteristic of people who are resistant, but are unable to change the tide of events. This may be inferred further in the reaction of the Lubang residents who did not differ markedly from them — a people resistant to the encroachment of outsiders on their lives and properties, but helpless in the hands of an overpowering force. Of the Spanish action and the native reaction, the writer relates:

> . . . . The captain, having arrived at his destination at midnight, with all possible secrecy leaped ashore, and arranged his men and the Pintados Indians (Visayans) whom he had with him in an ambuscade near the village, in order to make the attack upon them at daybreak. However, the natives of the island having been informed of the hostile incursion of the Spaniards, withdrew with their children and wives and all their belongings that they could take with them to three forts which they themselves had constructed. Now as the captain approached the villages at daybreak, and found them empty, he proceeded through a grove to the place where the first fort was situated; and having come in sight, negotiated with them, asking whether they desired to be friends of the Spaniards. The natives, confident

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[22] *Ibid.*

> of their strength, refused to listen, and began to discharge their culverins and a few arrows. The captain, seeing that they would not listen to reason, ordered them to be fired upon. The skirmish lasted in one place or the other about three hours, since the Spaniards could not assault or enter the fort because of the water surrounding it. But, as fortune would have it, the natives had left on the other side, a boat tied to the fort . . . two of our soldiers threw themselves into the water and swam across, protected by our arquebusiers from the enemy, who tried to prevent them. This boat having been brought to the side where the Spanish were, fifteen soldiers entered it and approached the rampart of the fort. As soon as these men began to mount the rampart, the Indians began to flee on the other side, by a passage-way which they had made for that very purpose. It is true that thirty or forty Moros fought and resisted the entrance of the Spaniards; but when they saw that half of our people were already on the wall, and the rest in the act of mounting, they all turned their backs and fled . . .[23]

The existence of forts complete with moats, reflect a relatively advanced culture. Likewise, the writer's account of the weapons used by them in warfare portrays a people with a knowledge of metallurgy:

> Now since these were the first natives whom we had found with forts and means of defense, I shall describe here the forts and weapons which they possessed. The two principal forts were square in form, with ten or twelve culverins on each side, some of them moderately large and others small. Each fort had a wall two estados high (lit., two men high), and was surrounded by a ditch, two and one-half *brazas* in depth, filled with water.
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> The small weapons used by these natives are badly tempered iron lances, which become blunt upon striking a fairly good coat of mail, a kind of broad dagger, and arrows — which are weapons of little value. Other lances are also used which are made out of fire-hardened palm-wood and are harder than the iron ones. There is an abundance of a certain very poisonous herb which they apply to their arrows. Such are the weapons which the natives of these islands possess and employ.[23]

Salcedo had another military encounter with two groups of natives who likewise provided resistance, but while the first group ended up defeated, the natives in the second fort were able to hold their ground:

> On the following day, we went with some four hundred friendly Indians to the fort; and the captain advancing within sight of it, addressed them, asking they should be friends with the Spaniards and not try to fight with them, as that would result badly for them. They again declared that they did not desire this friendship, and began to fire their culverins and discharge arrows; and in return the soldiers discharged, on all sides, their arquebuses. But during the whole day we were not

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 6. trans. based on B & R, vol. 3, p. 144.

> able to enter the fort, for we Spaniards were very few in number; and the heat was intense, and we had not eaten, although it was near night. The captain, seeing that he had not accomplished anything, decided to return to the boat which he had left behind.[24]

The Spanish siege did not end with defeat for the natives, but an amicable treaty was reached with the Spaniards:

> To this end the leaders came out of the fort and made peace with the captain, becoming good friends, which they are up to the present time. They gave him a hundred tall (taels) of gold which he divided among the soldiers.[25]

Salcedo returned to Panay with all his force, after having successfully laid the groundwork for future colonization of the islands of Mindoro and Lubang.

In May of the same year, the Spaniards returned to Mindoro with a larger force designed to finally reduce the island into a tributary of Spain. The second expedition was led by the Master-of-camp, Martin de Goite, accompanied by several Spanish officers, among whom was Captain Juan de Salcedo. The account of the expedition may be gathered from a document without signature, which narrates the events of the "voyage to Luzon" in May, 1570. It is a simple but graphic narration of the campaign which resulted in the conquest of Luzon and the foundation of the Spanish settlement in Manila and Mindoro. The account, evidently written by one who took part in those moving events, cites that Martin de Goiti,

> . . . left the river of Panay with 90 arquebusiers and 20 sailors on board the following vessels: the junk "San Miguel", of about 50 tons' burden with three large pieces of artillery: the frigate "La Tortuga"; and fifteen *praus* manned by natives of Cebu and the island of Panay.[26]

After passing through the islands of Zibuyan and Banton, they reached Mindoro and anchored there with all the vessels in his charge.[27]

The account speaks of Mindoro as "the lesser Luzon", not in the sense of it being inferior, but because of the unexpected presence of flourishing ports and maritime towns, "all inhabited by Moros". The writer also reports that "inland lives naked people called Chichimecos".[28]

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 145.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 146.
[26] Anonymous, "Relation of the Voyage to Luzon", (June 1570) in B & R, Vol. 3, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[28] *Ibid.*

These above facts are of great import because they imply the existence of two distinct sets of people — the coastal and the inland peoples. While little is said of the 'chichemecos', or the inland folks, the coastal people are described extensively, especially as regard their reaction to the coming of the Spaniards in the island. The "Moros", residing in the river of Baco and the capital town of Mindoro, are said to have a large number of culverins, arrows, and other offensive weapons, and were entrenched in a very strong fort.[29] The town of Mindoro itself is described as an "excellent though poorly-sheltered seaport. The harbor has only one entrance. Its waters beat against a hill which is the first and the smallest of a chain of three hills overlooking the port. The foot of the hill was fortified by a stone wall over fourteen feet thick".[30] The people themselves are described briefly as "well-attired after their fashion, and wore showy head-dresses, of many colors, turned back over their heads". They are also shown to be in possession of large quantities of gold which they so wisely withheld from the Spaniards by deception;

> They give it an outside appearance as natural and perfect, and so fine a ring, that unless it is melted they can deceive all men, even the best silversmith.[31]

These same people are shown to be in close links with the "Moros of Luzon". Martin de Goiti himself sought information from them regarding the distance of Manila and the towns which could be found on the journey:

> . . . While in this port of Mindoro, the master-of-camp sought information concerning the distance to Manila and the towns which would be found on the journey. Our interpreter disagreed with the Moros of Mindoro as to the number of days it would take; but they all agreed that it was far, and that perhaps the weather would not permit us to sail thither. The natives of Mindoro added also that the Spaniards were crazy to go to Manila with so small a force, and that they pitied us. They recounted so many wonders of Manila that their tales seemed fabulous; they said that there were very large oared boats, each carrying three hundred rowers, beside the warriors; that the people were well armed and excellent bowmen; that the ships were well equipped with artillery, both large and small; and that any one of these vessels could attack two *praus*, and sink them when within range. With these accounts the Moros tried to discourage the Spaniards; but the more they attempted to frighten

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[29] *Ibid.*, p. 77.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 78.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

> them with such things the more desirous they all became to set foot in Manila.[32]

The account itself of the encounter between the Spanish forces and the 'Moros of Mindoro' is described as an aborted battle — the Spaniards more desirous of a 'treaty for peace' than war, and the Moros divided in their determination to fight:

> There seemed to be a difference of opinion among the Moros, as was gathered from their demeanor, for some made gestures of war, and others of peace, some of them even going so far as to throw a few stones and level the culverins. On the whole, they were not very anxious to fight. Meanwhile, the master-of-camp was so near them that they could have spit (*sic*) on him. All the Spaniards had already disembarked, and stood at an arquebuse-shot from the master-of-camp. The latter was so anxious to win over those Moros and gain their confidence.[33]

Owing to the 'peaceful attitude' of the Spaniards, no battle took place. The natives wisely gauged the situation and took advantage of the 'peace-offering' of the Spaniards:

> The Moros having seen the peaceful attitude of our people, one of them descended the hill, almost on all fours. Our Moro guide advanced toward him but on account of the great steepness of the hill, he had to be helped up by the other Moro. After they had seen and recognized each other, and after the customary embrace and kiss, they descended to the master-of-camp. The latter told the Moro who had come down through the interpreter, that he need not fear; for he had not come to harm them, but to seek their friendship. The Moro carried the message to the others upon the hill, and a chief came down; and upon reaching the master-of-camp, said that he and all the town wished to be his friends, and to help the Spaniards with whatever they possessed. The master-of-camp answered that the proposition was acceptable; whereupon the Moro chief asked him to withdraw from that place—saying that, after they had withdrawn, he would come to treat of friendship and of what was to be given.[34]

Considering the strength of the Spanish forces with one hundred sixteen men and five hundred to six hundred drafted natives, the response of the natives becomes more than just a case of passive resistance but a creative response to Spanish pressure. As may be gleaned from the following excerpt, the 'Moros' did not fully yield at the first confrontation, but took every opportunity to carry out strategems de-

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[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[34] *Ibid.*

signed to give an outward form of acceptance while they bade their time for a mass withdrawal from the sphere of Spanish control:

> . . . . a Moro came with sixty gold taels, which he gave to the master-of-camp asking him not to be offended if the gift were not brought quickly, because the people had dispersed through fear, and therefore it could not be collected so soon; but he promised that they would raise the amount to four hundred taels. The master-of-camp received this gold, and had it placed in a small box, the key of which he gave to the Moro, telling him to keep it until the promise was fulfilled; but to consider that after treason nothing could be more blameworthy than falsehood. The Moro salaamed low, and said that he would *not lie, and that they would fulfill their promise little by little* (underscoring mine). And so they did, for on that same day, four more messengers came with gold; and all entreated and begged the master-of-camp not to be offended at the delay, if there should be any. With these flatteries and promises the Moros detained us about five days, during which time we had friendly dealings and intercourse with them, although they mistrusted us to a certain extent . . . . .[35]

The delaying tactics of the natives gave them time to withdraw from the coastal town into the hills.

This is the first recorded response of import, for the process of withdrawal out of the sphere of Spanish control later led to diverse differentiation of cultures among the natives who decided to remain in the coastal areas and those who decided to flee into the interior. Without doubt, those who decided to remain within the pale of Spanish control embraced the Catholic Faith and consequently absorbed Spanish cultural practices transplanted in the country.

The Chinese Traders in Mindoro at Contact Point

An equally significant point made by the same chronicler is his reference to the presence of Chinese traders in the island, some of whom they encountered in a skirmish at the Baco river. The Spanish author's account of the presence of the Chinese in Mindoro corroborates the point made earlier in this study about the existence of trade relations between them and the natives of the island. For one thing, the trade items found by the Spaniards on board the Chinese junks, parallel those mentioned in the Chinese accounts cited above:

> The soldiers (i.e., Spanish) searched the cabins in which the Chinese kept their most valuable goods, and there they found

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

> silk, both woven and in skeins; gold thread, musk, gilded porcelain bowls, pieces of cotton cloth, gilded water-jugs, and other curious articles—although not in a large quantity, considering the size of the ships. The decks of both vessels were full of earthen jars and crockery; large porcelain vases, plates and bowls; and some fine porcelain jars, which they call *sinoratas.* They also found iron, copper, steel and a small quantity of beeswax which the Chinese had bought . . . .[36]

The writer adds that the Chinese were known to the natives as *Sangleyes,* which means nothing more than a 'travelling merchant'. The Spaniards found several *Sangleyes* in Mindoro, some of whom were encountered in a skirmish at the Baco river area. While the original intent of Martin de Goiti was to "request peace and friend ship with them", the Spanish arquebusiers who reached the river ahead of the master-of-camp, engaged the Chinese in a short battle which ended with the death of twenty Chinese traders:

> . . . . . At the break of day, the *praus* which had preceded the others reached the river where the Chinese ships were anchored. The Chinese, either because news of the Spaniards had reached them, or because they had heard arquebuse shots, were coming out side by side with foresails up, beating on drums, playing on fifes, firing rockets and culverins, and making a great warlike display. Many of them were seen on deck, armed with arquebuses and unsheathed cutlasses. The Spaniards, who are not at all slothful, did not refuse the challenge offered them by the Chinese; on the contrary they boldly and fearlessly attacked the Chinese ships and, with their usual courage grappled with them . . . the goodly aim of the arquebusiers was so effective that the Chinese did not leave their shelter, and the Spaniards were thus enabled to board their ship and take possession of them . . .[37]

Martin de Goiti, according to the account "showed much displeasure when he heard of the occurence". And to make up for it, he set the Chinese free and provided assistance for the repair of their ship. This gesture was "highly appreciated by the Chinese who, being very humble people, knelt down with loud utterances of joy".[38]

At point of contact then with Spain, Mindoro was an island of relative importance. It was frequently visited not only by native traders from other islands as Luzon, but also foreign traders like the travelling Chinese merchants. The coastal people then whom the Spaniards encountered, were not without experience dealing with aliens and itinerant travellers. It is likely that the island even served as a

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[36] *Ibid.,* p. 76.
[37] *Ibid.,* p. 75.
[38] *Ibid.,* p. 76.

commercial port where not alone Chinese, but other Southeast Asian nationalities as well, loaded and unloaded trading goods. Early Spanish accounts in fact speak of the town of Mindoro as an excellent seaport — an asset which they did not leave untapped, for shortly after colonizing the island, they turned it into a major port-of-call of vessels coming from New Spain and the islands of 'Pintados'. Thus, to speak of Spain's discovery of the island or of any other part of the Philippines is totally unwarranted, for even Spanish accounts of the state-of-affairs at that time discounts the whole idea. In truth, Spanish historians themselves speak of maritime towns or pueblos, of fortified forts and moats, even a 'stone wall over 14 feet thick'.

On the other hand, the coastal people are described as possessing a relatively advanced culture, having a diverse collection of arms and elaborate forms of defenses against possible intruders. They were also shown as fancy dressers and owning quantities of gold. These descriptions reflect a culture that could not be legitimately called 'primitive'. As the Spanish writers themselves recognized, the inhabitants were not only skilled warriors but also a resilient people — innovative even in the face of defeat. Furthermore, the Spaniards encountered in the island a semblance of organized religion which ironically posed the same challenge as in their own homeland.

In all likelihood, the 'Moros of Mindoro', as they are described in the Spanish accounts, are proselytes of the roaming Bornean preacher-traders that undertook Islamic missionary activities in different parts of the country shortly before the Spaniards came. It is also possible that some Borneans themselves formed settlements among the older inhabitants of the coastal areas of Mindoro and exercised some form of authority among the indigenes of the island.[39] Nonetheless, the accounts do not verify the existence of deeply embedded Islamic practices, save one reference in the letter of Fray de Albuquerque which mentions among other things that "some inhabitants in Mindoro killed pigs out of sheer hatred for them, whereas they killed goats

[39] Prof. Cesar A. Majul attests to the existence of Bornean settlements in Manila and construes that some of the rulers found by the Spaniards were themselves Borneans. He in fact cites that as late as 1574, the Borneans and their allies, the Sulus, continued to extract tribute from the natives of Mindoro, thus this practice must have been going on for quite some time. Cf. *Muslims in the Philippines,* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1973), pp. 72-78.

with special ceremonies". These people may well be the Muslim Bornean settlers among the native inhabitants of Mindoro.

Around this period too, distinctions between inland coastal peoples have already been noted in the Spanish accounts though vaguely, for their expedition did not go beyond the coastal areas. The 'Chichimecos' or inland folks may well be the pioneer settlers, driven to the interior by the arrival and immigration of Borneans in the island. With the coming of the Spaniards, a new movement into the interior is observed causing a shift in the geographic placements of the inhabitants of the island. This time the 'push factor' are colonizers bent on reducing the natives to vassals and tributaries of Spain.

Mindoro During the Spanish Era

Religious work in Mindoro and with it, the compelling influence of the friars, started alongside the pacification of the island in 1570. Colin observes that side by side with Salcedo's soldiers were preachers of the Faith, who preached through the island.[40] In 1575, a letter to Phillip II of a Spanish captain named Juan Pacheco Maldonado reports, among other things, the presence of the Augustinian order in Mindoro. He includes Mindoro in the list of five places where religious monasteries could be found in the country and adds that it is one of the relatively few areas "where a great number of Indians have been converted".[41]

Contrary to what one writer cites,[42] the pioneer religious workers in Mindoro were the Augustinians and not the Jesuits. Among those pioneer Augustinian preachers were Diego Mojica and Francisco de Ortega. Mojica was sent to the island in 1573, whilst Ortega was reassigned and appointed prior of the convent of Manila in 1575, after a near-death encounter in the hands of the 'Moros of Mindoro'.[43] Juan de Medina throws light on this event spurred by Limahong's attack

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[40] Francisco Colin, S. J. *Labor Evangelica,* (Madrid, 1663) rep. in 3 vol. ed. Pablo Pastell, Barcelona, 1900-1902, p. 132.

[41] Juan Pacheco Maldonado, "Letter to Felipe II", Manila (1575?) in Blair and Robertson, vol. 3, 1569-1576, p. 299.

[42] Macario Z. Landicho, "Ecclesiastical Administration" in *Mindoro Yearbook* (Manila: Year Book Publishers, 1952), p. 126.

[43] Juan de Medina, *History of the Augustinian Order in the Filipinas Islands,* O. S. A., 1630, in B & R, Vol. 22, 1629-1630, p. 222.

on Manila, whence the pirates spread rumors that the Spaniards had all been killed. Medina records that,

> Those who hastened to believe this (i.e., the rumors) were the Indians of Mindoro, who are also something like the Moros . . . As soon as those Moros heard, then, of the result at Manila, they threw off the yoke, attacked the fathers, seized them, and talked of killing them. However they forbade to kill the fathers immediately — I know not for what reasons since the Moros were setting out to execute that resolve.[44]

At the onset, the influence of the missionaries did not go beyond the village of Baco, where only one minister labored for years. At that time the flourishing coastal villages noted in the early Spanish accounts had all disappeared, as may be gleaned from Ortega's report which came out in 1594:

> The island of Mindoro is 80 leguas or so in circuit, and lies to the south. It is but scantily populated. Although much of it has not been visited, in the known parts there are about 2000 Indian tributarios. The chief village of the island (which belongs to your Highness), has one minister. There is need of 6 ministers of the one priest that it has.[45]

One of the earliest references to the 'Mangyans' was made by Fray Medina who identifies them as "other Indians whiter than the Tagals, living in troops in the Mountains".[46] Except for the apparent difference in color which, obviously, was more a consequence of the 'Tagals' greater exposure to the sun in the coastal areas, no other marked differences were recorded.

Medina describes the Mangyans as

> . . . . . the ancient inhabitants of the country, and it is they who gather the great abundance of wax which is yielded there . . . . They are very good, and if they were instructed and taught, it would be easy to reduce them to settlements and missions.[47]

It is possible that these same people described by Medina are the 'Chichemecos' reported in the account of Martin de Goiti's expedition to the island. From Medina's account it is quite clear that the Mangyans themselves are inland peoples:

> . . . . Especially do these Mangyans fear the sea. They pay no tribute. They fear lest the Spaniards take them to man their

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[44] *Ibid.*

[45] Fray Francisco de Ortega, "Report Concerning the Filipinas Islands, and Other Papers", in B & R, Vol. 8, p. 98.

[46] Medina, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

[47] *Ibid.*

> ships. They go naked; and deliver the wax to the Tagals, which the latter pay as tribute, and give as their share. More than three hundred quintals of wax yearly must be obtained in this island.[48]

A chain of exploitation is evident from the account — that is, low landers were exploiting the Mangyans and the lowlanders in turn were exploited by the Spaniards. Direct interaction between these mountain peoples and the Spaniards would have been made difficult by the nomadic life of the former. As such, direct missionary efforts to reach the Mangyans began only in 1631, more than half a century after the Spaniards set foot in the island. Murillo Velarde records that in that year, the Augustinians relinquished their missionary work in the island to the Jesuits, who immediately set forth to convert the Mangyans:

> In the year 1631 the cura of Mindoro, who was a secular priest gave up that ministry to the Society, and Ours, began to minister in that island, making one residence of this and one of the island of Marinduque, and the superior lived at Naujan in Mindoro; and they began to preach, and to convert the Manguianes, the heathen Indians of that island.[49]

Velarde's account of the Mangyans does not differ markedly from Medina's description of them. He likewise describes them as a nomadic people, with no fixed habitation; living only on wild fruits and root crops. Obviously, the descriptions do not fit the coastal people found by Salcedo and the pioneer Spanish explorers in the island:

> . . . . These people wandered through the mountains and woods there like the wild deer, and went about entirely naked, wearing only a breech-cloth (bahaque) for the sake of decency; they had no house, hearth, or fixed habitation; and they slept where night overtook them, in a cave or in trunk of some tree(s). They gathered their food on the trees or in the fields, since it was reduced to wild fruits and roots; and as their greatest treat they ate rice boiled in water. Their furnishings were some bows and arrows, or javelins for hunting, and a jar for cooking rice, and he who secured a knife or an iron instrument, thought they had a Potosi (?). They acknowledged no deity, and when they had any good fortune the entire barangay (or family connection) killed and ate a carabao, or buffalo; and what was left they sacrificed to the souls of their ancestors.[50]

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[48] *Ibid., loc. cit.*

[49] Cited in the footnote of the translation of sections of Colin's work in B & R, Vol. 23, p. 274.

[50] Pedro Murillo Velarde, *Historia De La Provincia De Philipinas De La Compania De Jesus,* Segunda Parte, (Manila: La Imprenta de la Compania de Jesus, 1749), Lib. III, Cap. 15, p. 278.

It is safer to conclude that the people described here are the inland or mountain people living in the interior of Mindoro, long before the Spaniards came. These are the same people that the Jesuits came to evangelize.

The Jesuits' efforts at converting the Mangyans were not without fruits for Colin records that a few years after they took spiritual charge of the island, "some 600 of the tribe... received Baptism".[51] Such conversions took place around the area of present-day Naujan where the first Jesuit residence was located.

Though the initial number of converted tribal members is quite impressive, Catholic outreach among the Mangyans progressed rather slowly. A lull in missionary activity seems to have taken place at one point broken only by a revival of religious activity in 1665. Velarde records that in the month of October that year, the same time when a violent earthquake hit Manila, Fray Diego Luis de San Vitores and some companions undertook a missionary trip to Mindoro.[52] He notes down the difficulty of their travels but observes that the "time and strength were well spent for not only the old Christians (lowlanders) were revived in their faith but... the infidel Mangyans, many of whom were converted to (our) religion."[53] The missionary activities of the priests who set afire a religious revival of the Catholic Faith in the island, included instruction, preaching, hearing confessions and settling their affairs. Many conversions and revivals of special interest were obtained of both Christian lowlanders and Mangyans. Velarde in particular cited that of a Mangyan woman,

> . . . a heathen, married to a Christian man. She was baptized, and named Maria; and afterward they called her "the Samaritana", on account of the many persons whom she brought to the knowledge of Christ, the ministers availing themselves of her aid for the conversion of many persons, not only heathens but Christians, with most happy results.[54]

The account cited above brings out several items of great import. For one thing, it tells of intermarriage between a Mangyan and a 'Christian man', undoubtedly an indication of a close lowland-Mangyan interaction, which is also reflected in the acceptance of the woman as a witness of the Faith. The fact that the priests used her not only to

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[51] From the translation of sections of Colin's work, *op. cit.*, Lib. I Cap. XVI, p. 64.

[52] Velarde, *op. cit.*, in B & R, Vol. 44, p. 103.

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

facilitate conversion of the Mangyans but also of lowlanders would mean her acceptance into lowland culture. The distinction made between 'Mangyan' and 'Christian man' should however be pointed out, as this possibly reflects the growing differentiation between lowland 'Christian culture' and highland culture. This truth could be further seen in the account that follows, which also reflects the extent of the religious revival that went on in the island of Mindoro:

> In order to convert these heathens, a beginning was made by the reformation and instruction of the Christians (i.e., lowlanders); and by frequent preaching they gradually established the usage of confession with some frequency, and many received the Eucharist — a matter in which there was more difficulty then than now. Many came down from the mountains, and brought their children to be instructed; various persons were baptized, and even some, who, although they had the name of Christians, had never received the rite of baptism. After the fathers preached to the Christians regarding honesty in their confessions, the result was quickly seen in many general confessions, which were made with such eagerness that the crowds resorting to the church lasted more than two months.[55]

The adoption of Christian names, their willingness to be baptized and have their children taught by the friars, show the extent of the compelling influence or religious pressure exerted by the Spanish priests on the Mangyans with whom they came in contact, during the said religious revival in the island.

As a further consequence of the religious revival in the island, three churches were erected for the converted Mangyans: one in Bongabon, another in Pola, and that of San Javier on the coast of Naujan.[56] Velarde adds that another was built for the holy christ of Burgos, for those old Christians who were roaming about through the mountains.[57] Whether these were old Christian Mangyans or lowlanders is not clear from Velarde's account.

To sum it up, compelling religious influence exerted by the pioneer Spanish missionaries in Mindoro, forms one of the earliest 'pressures' on Mangyan life. This however, should not be set apart from the equally compelling force provided by the Spanish colonial government which came simultaneously with the 'Cross.'

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[55] *Ibid.*
[56] M. Velarde, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
[57] *Ibid.*

Effects of Spanish Colonial Rule In Mindoro

In the early years of Spanish colonization of Mindoro, the island was administered as part of Bombon (now known as Batangas), and directly supervised by the chief magistrate residing in the said province.[58] It should however be pointed out that, the inhabitants of the island were also subject to the religious cleric in their midst. Velarde for instance, records that apart from preaching and hearing confessions, the priests who initiated a Catholic revival in Mindoro, also administered the affairs of the natives.[59] In 1591, it was set apart from the province of Batangas and was organized into a *corregimiento* with Puerto Galera as the capital. Under this system, the island was placed under a military officer called the *corregidor,* but as Teodoro Agoncillo points out, conditions of peace and order were less stable under such order.[60] From Colin as recorded in 1663, we note a change in the form of administration in the island-the corregidor was replaced by the alcalde-mayor or pronvincial governor and the capital was moved to Baco:

> La cabecera de la Isla, y jurisdicion en que reside el Alcalde mayor, es Baco, pueblo de saludables aguas, porllevar los montes, en que nace surio, la sarsaparilla: bien, que no tan fina como de la Castilla.[61]

Under the new system, the alcalde-mayor or provincial governor was the Chief political, judicial, financial, and military official.[62] This concentration of power in the hands of the same official inevitably led to abuse of power. Thus until the reform decrees of 1844 and 1886 made some changes, there were four principal sources of abuses by the alcalde-mayor: the privilege to engage in commerce and the lending of money. Agoncillo points out further that

> At the same time that he was the highest executive official in the province, the alcalde-mayor was also the highest judicial official and performed the functions of a judge of first instance. The anomalous nature of this arrangement derives from the fact that some of those who became alcaldes-mayores were formerly hairdressers, lackeys, sailors, or deserters, with no background in the law. One who was, himself, ignorant about the law performed the duty of interpreting the law . . . As the only judge

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[58] Anonymous, "Relacion de Las Encomiendas Existentes en Filipinas, in W. E. Retana, *op. cit.,* p. 68.

[59] M. Velarde, *op. cit.,* p. 278.

[60] Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Oscar M. Alfonso, *History of the Filipino People,* (Quezon City: Malaya Books, 1967), p. 86.

[61] Colin, *op. cit.,* p. 58.

[62] Agoncillo and Alfonso, *op. cit.,* 86.

> in the province, the alcalde-mayor was in the enviable position of making the decision himself.[63]

The atrocities committed by the alcaldes-mayores reached a point where the Spanish military and naval officers themselves have to take action to stop them from making business out of the ships of the State:

> . . . . Se quito a los alcaldes mayores toda attribucios en materia de corso, para evitar el abuso de que utilizasen en provecho propio y en sus negocios comerciales a los buques del Estado, y es mando reparar todos los fuertes de los Visayas, Mindoro, Tayabas Y Zamboanga.[64]

Despite the presence of such an oppresive system, the isle of Mindoro remained a flourishing port for some time. Antonio de Morga, a noted and well-respected historian of the 17th century, includes it in his list "of the more extensive, and the principal and best known islands in the country".[65]

He gives a concise description of Mindoro, and points out that it has many settlements of natives similar to those found in other islands. These people according to him, "settle on the side where it bounds with the province of Balayan (Batangas) and Calilaya. Apart from these, Morga identifies a principal settlement in the island which has a port called *The Varadero* or shipyard for large vessels, aside from other places of anchorage and sand-bars for smaller vessels. He also records many other settlements of natives all along the coast of the island, all of which localities, according to him, abound in rice and food supplies.[66]

The Muslim Pirates' Action in Mindoro:

The relative prosperity of the coastal towns of Mindoro underwent a serious setback with the rise of Muslim piracy in the seventeenth century. While Professor Majul asserts that not all Moro attacks at that time were purely piratical, he acknowledges the existence of Muslim marauders carrying out "their private enterprises".[67] It is primarily the "private piratical groups" that were instrumental in bring-

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[63] *Ibid.*

[64] D. Jose Montero y Vidal, *Historia de la Pirateria, Malayo-Mohametana en Mindanao,* Tomo I (Madrid: Imprenta y Fundicion de Manuel Tello, 1888), p. 350.

[65] Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas,* trans. by Encarnacion Alzona and annotated by Jose Rizal (Manila: Jose Rizal Centennial Commission, 1962), p. 267.

[66] *Op. cit.*

[67] Majul, *op. cit.,* p. 108.

ing about the deterioration of the coastal towns of Mindoro. Barely a century after the onset of piratical attacks on Mindoro, the island was greatly depopulated and was reduced to a malaria-infested region, devastated and stripped of all its former prosperity.

From several Spanish accounts, it is possible to infer many sidelights of the actions of the pirates in Mindoro. Montero y Vidal's *Historia de Pirateria,* Vicente Barrantes' *Guerras Piraticas de Filipinas* and a number of other Spanish writings become highly relevant on this count. In recent times, Prof. Majul's account of the *Muslims in the Philippines* provides new perspectives on these long-drawn conflicts between the 'Moros' and the Spaniards.

Yet, regardless of Majul's redefinition of the Moro wars and the apparent effort to justify three centuries of Muslim attacks on various Spanish-held territories at that time, the fact remains that such struggles served at one point as a tremendous pressure on the lives of the inhabitants of those places. Taken as captives and sold as slaves, at times killed mercilessly, the natives were innocent 'pawns' caught in the conflict between the Spaniards and the Muslims. In the final analysis, the natives of the islands and not the Spaniards were the ones who truly bore the brunt of Muslim assaults.

The first recorded Muslim attack of Mindoro took place in 1602 when a Magindanao fleet led by Datu Buisan attacked the island and some coastal towns of Luzon, as part of larger Islamic offensive against the Spanish presence in the country. According to the existing accounts, the Muslims scourged the coastal towns of Mindoro and a few settlements in Luzon and netted about 700 captives including clergymen.[68] Majority of course of the captives were natives who later on were turned into slaves or exchanged for goods. Captives were taken according to Majul, to weaken inhabitants of "Spanish-held territories fighting the Muslims, to provide income to the raiders (as the practice was to exact huge ransoms from Spanish officials, native chieftains or men of importance), and to strengthen the war machine of the Muslims, as well as to increase their agricultural production-the captives were kept not only as household retainers but also as farm or agricultural workers to enable the Muslims and the other so-called freemen to dedicate themselves to the profession of fighting.[69] Fray

[68] *Ibid.,* p. 117.
[69] *Ibid.,* p. 122

Martinez de Zuñiga, further records that while the captives do not yet reach the homes of the Moros, they suffer great hardships:

> They are placed in wooden stocks, at times with both feet and hands inserted, and safely tied so that they could not escape. When the business of the sales and barter of captives are over, they enjoy greater freedom and are often ordered to serve in their master's house and to get water, to catch fish, and other chores . . . .[70]

Another recorded account of Muslim attacks on Mindoro took place in April 1636, when Tagal, the *kapitan-laut* of Sultan Qudarat set forth to spend a season of plundering in Mindoro and Calamianes. The Spanish captain Juan Lopez writes that:

> Tagal went to Mindoro, and everywhere he pillaged a great quantity of goods, and took a number of captives. He left Don Diego Alabes in Mindoro (he was assigned as corregidor in Cuyo and Palawan) so that he might come (here) to get ransom and that of the three Recollect fathers. They demanded two thousand pesos and thirty *taels* of gold — the latter amounting to more than 300 pesos in addition for each person . . ."

According to another account which Blair and Robertson assume to be that of Pedro Gutierrez, S.J. 1637, Tagal remained almost eight months in the coast of Mindoro, "robbing and inflicting enormous damage.[71] In 1657 the Moro chief, Balatamay, is reported as committing the most terrible atrocities in the islands of Marinduque and Mindoro and returning to Mindanao with much booty and a multitude of captives, Montero y Vidal's account provide a more graphic account of Balatamay's incursions in Luzon:

> His boldness (i.e., of Balatamay) brought them until the coast of Mariveles, near Manila in whose waters he seized two Chinese vessels filled with goods. Upon their return they stayed in Mamburao, an island of Mindoro, where they built a hidden factory, where some traders went to make business and from whence they (the Moros) sold their native captives.[72]

Though the Spaniards undertook several expeditions to drive the Muslims away from their settlements, they were able to hold on to their fortified strongholds for centuries, and to carry on their 'pillaging business'. As such, Mindoro served as convenient base and stop-over for the Muslim pirates. Further accounts of Muslim action in Min-

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[70] Juan Lopez, "Events in the Philippines", in *B &R*, Vol. 27, 136-37, p. 316.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[72] Montero y Vidal, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

doro reports that in 1753 and 1754 Calapan, the capital of Mindoro was sacked and burned to the ground. In the first raid 409 prisoners were taken and an unknown, near Mansalay, was destroyed. In 1754 they took 150 prisoners between Bongabong and Bulalacao-areas which until recently were recorded as Hanunoo settlements.

A Spanish expedition of 1250 men, sent from Manila in 1762, against the Muslims who had fortified themselves on a peninsula between the rivers Maasin and Mamburao, momentarily checked Muslim activity in the region. An apparent recurrence of piratical incursions in the years that followed, led to the sending of an even larger force in 1778. The expedition led by a certain Don Jose Gomez, went to Mamburao which had been reoccupied by the pirates and burned the town, boats, and crops. In this, Gomez was ironically duplicating the exploit of Juan de Salcedo who did exactly the same thing in 1570. The expedition was apparently successful for as Montero writes, "commerce started to progress, (i.e., for the Spaniards) except in Samar whose trade relations with Manila was paralyzed for more than ten years".[73] After the said event, the Spaniards successively made more assaults in other places, particularly in Balete which the Moro frequented, but because the Muslims had always easy access to the mountains the Spanish expeditions did not accomplish the desired effect.[74]

The successive Muslim raids and Spanish counter-attacks staged in Mindoro, inevitably led to the destruction of formerly flourishing coastal towns and depopulation of such places, as numerous inhabitants were taken as captives, or fled inland to relative safety. In 1800, Fray Joaquin de Zuñiga who travelled through Mindoro records that the coves of Pinamalayan, and other places in Mindoro which used to be populated were entirely deserted and have become the hiding places of pirates. Of Ilin, a former Spanish gold dust claim, Zuñiga writes, "Neither houses nor people could be seen because the Moros had wrought havoc on the region and have settled down there,"[75] The noted Spanish writer likewise avers that in his time the pirates could no longer undertake the "piratical expeditions of yesteryears, nor could they rob anymore to their heart's content..."[76]

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[73] *Ibid.*, p. 360.

[74] Fr. Joaquin Martinez de Zuñiga, *Estadisino de las Islas Filipinas O' Mis Viajes Por Este Pais.* Tomo Primero (Madrid: Dec. 1893).

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

[76] *Ibid.*

While a decline in piratical incursions has been noted in this period, existing accounts also cite sporadic 'Moro attacks' even towards the end of the 19th century. Jordana for instance, records raids made as late as 1870 and 1874 in places listed as Bulalacao (which Gardner at the start of the twentieth century identified as a Hanunu-o region), Tulin and Socol.[77] Including such raids, Muslim piratical activity in Mindoro cover almost three centuries of known suffering and shame.

It is evident from the foregoing accounts, that the population of Mindoro have been under tremendous strain for centuries. Without doubt, the consistent burning of towns either by the 'Moro pirates' or the rampaging Spaniards, the ransacking of homes and capture of natives for the slave market, could very well have brought Mindoro to its end as a port of major importance. A further effect must have been to drive the population either into exile in safer places or to send them inland to comparative safety. Joseph Montano, a Frenchman who travelled through the Philippines during this period brings out this point vividly in his account:

> .... As for the big island of Mindoro, situated more towards the south-west, it was in olden days the granary of the Philippines: Mindoro was colonized by the Fathers of the Company of Jesus; in the preceding century, the suppression of the Company gave a fatal blow to its prosperity; the *raids of the Moros finalized its ruin* (italics mine). Today, the Tagalog population, very small, is more or less concentrated on the shores. Some half-savage *Manguianes* who some say are of the same race as the Tagalogs, roam in the thick forest which covers the ruins of formerly flourishing towns.[78]

It is interesting to note that while the Spanish accounts strongly attribute the destruction of Mindoro to Muslim attacks, Montano places the blame largely on the Spaniards' mismanagement of the affairs of the island. Rizal himself assume this view and in his annotation of Morga's work writes with sarcasm,

> Mindoro is so depopulated that the Minister of Overseas Colonies, in order to remedy this effect of the Spanish colonization, wants to send to that island the most dissolute from Spain to see if great beasts can be made into good settlers and farmers. Anyway, considering the condition of the people who are going there, undoubtedly the following generation will know how to

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[77] Ramon Morera Jordana *Bosquejo Geografico e historico natural del archipielago Filipinos* (Madrid Impr. de Moreno y Reyes, 1885), p. 52.

[78] Joseph Montano, *Voyage Aux Philippines Et. En, Malaisie.* (Paris: Hachette, 1886), p. 78. Translation by Dr. Zeus A. Salazar.

> defend themselves and live so that the island will not be depopulated again.[79]

Thus along with the disastrous effect of Muslim piracy, the Spanish exaction of heavy tributes among the inhabitants, the imposition of burdensome monopolies, and unreasonable requirement of forced services in the forts, contributed equally to the deterioration of Mindoro. Fray de Zuñiga himself recognized such abuses and strongly advised that the Spaniards will have no hope of seeing the island populated again and prospering, unless

> ..... the people be exempted from paying the required tribute for several years until such a time when some regular towns could have been established, that they would not abandon their houses, that no monopolies be imposed on them nor burden them with the forced services in the forts — unless so needed for their own security. If to these measures of gentleness and indifference to profit are substituted severity and covetousness, no progress shall be expected . . . If the magistrate start to collect tribute with harshness, if they ask that they be paid in kind — made burdensome with the imposition of value exceeding one-half of the regular peso — if the guards commit their usual wanton tricks with the pretext of listing down the smuggled goods, if the magistrates would once again bother the native merchants by extorting from them the little profit they make, these will easily go to places where they will be treated with consideration and respect.[80]

Mass immigration to nearby provinces like Batangas, served at one point as a handy means of escape from the rampaging Muslims and the tyrannical Spanish magistrates. de Zuñiga records that about 1,165 families migrated to Batangas in 1735 to evade such menaces already mentioned.

The Mangyans in the 19th Century

Despite the relative isolation of the Mangyans, they were not fully free from the 'Moro' piratical incursions. As a fact, the Muslim pirates found safety refuge in the interior when faced with overwhelming Spanish forces. de Zuñiga writes that such easy access to the mountains made it impossible for the Spanish soldiers "to hunt them like wolves and deer." On such occasions when pirates freely roamed in the interior, Mangyan villages were raided and consequently

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[79] Jose Rizal's annotation to Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, op. cit.

[80] de Zuñiga, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

destroyed. This apparently conditioned the Mangyans to flee at the presence of strangers, fearing they are pirates:

> In the mountain they (i.e., the fleeing natives captives) usually come in contact with heathen natives who reside there and *who usually flee upon seeing them thinking that they might be Moros who did plenty of harm many times before . . .* (italics mine).[81]

Apart from the pirates, the Christian captives who managed to escape from them also fled to the interior of Mindoro and came in close contact with the Mangyans:

> In order to persuade these pagans that they are peaceful men who need their help, these Christian escapes kneel down before the mountaineers and arrange their arms in the form of a cross. The *infieles* recognize this signal, take them to their homes and entertain them.[82]

It is possible that such captives taken from different parts of Luzon, intermarried with the Mangyans and maintained residence there-possibly contributing to the growing diversification of inland culture.

Apart from the difference in religion, no significant distinctions between lowlanders and Mangyans are set forth early in the 19th century. In 1800, Fray de Zuñiga described them simply as the "Non-Christians of Mindoro... are natives like the others, but are less exposed to civilizing influences; as a consequence they live a more miserable life". The miseries of the Mangyans, as the well-respected Spanish historian perceives them come in the form of lowland exploitatoin:

> The Christians give them a bolo and rice to plant. What they do is to burn a piece of barren land (possibly a kaingin) and with the bolo they plant the rice; when reaping time comes, he gives back one-half of his harvest in return for the bolo and the seeds. He might have to give up the whole harvest if he had back dues. The more fortunate people of Mindanao(?) take too much advantage of their non-Christian fellows. They buy the honey and wax gathered by the Mangyans in the forest at a low price and sell or barter them with goods from Manila priced exorbitantly, which yield them much profit. This is one of the reasons why these gentiles do not desire to be baptized or to embrace the Catholic faith even if the priest instruct them in Christianity and even if they often visit the Christian towns . . . . .[83]

Setting aside his bias, de Zuñiga's observation presents a keen view of lowland-Mangyan interaction at the start of the 19th century. As

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[81] *Ibid.*, p. 111.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

will be shown later on, almost the same form of Mangyan exploitation exist to this day, thus proving a long history of lowland abuse of the Mangyan people. It is ironic but true to this day, that the nominal Christian lowlanders are themselves the deterrents to the total conversion of such tribal peoples to the Christian faith. The Spanish ecclesiastical policy to remedy such a situation is summed up in de Zuñiga's pronouncement:

> All these difficulties will be remedied if evangelical ministers are placed in the hinterland, independent of other towns, *and if new towns are organized for those who are newly converted.* (underscoring mine).[84]

The policy of setting new towns for 'converted pagans' was a widespread Spanish practice in dealing with the 'heathen' people of the country. Such a practice is considered by Felix Keesing as a major key to the cultural differentiation which developed between 'Christian lowland' Filipino and the mountain people:

> With pacification and Hispanization of the lowland groups, and resistance by the mountain groups, the lines were drawn between Christian and non-Christian, which were to last up to modern times. At most, mission workers were able to whittle away at the edge of the mountain populations, transferring them down to the lowland communities.[85]

If one is to accept Keesing's thesis and there is a strong ground for it, it would appear that the northern lowland and highland peoples are basically of the same racial stock. Inferring from the existing Spanish accounts, the same thing would be said of the indigenes of Mindoro. Language-wise, several Spanish accounts cite that the inhabitants of Mindoro, Marinduque and Lubang "speak Tagalog which is the official language of the whole archbishopric of Manila which has jurisdiction over these islands".[86] He adds that the way they build their houses and furnitures and in the method of dressing, in the appearance of their boats, and in their habits and customs, they are similar to their Tagalog brothers. In what appears to be a 'pioneer' ethnological account of the Mangyans in relation to their lowland brothers, de Zuñiga writes:

> The Christians of the three islands believe in the same superstitions of the Tagalogs and the infidels believe in the same religion of the Tagalogs before their conversion to Catholicsm.

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[84] *Ibid.*

[85] Felix M. Keesing, *The Ethnohistory of Northern Luzon,* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 27.

[86] de Zuñiga, *op. cit.,* p. 121.

> All of them adore an invisible entity called *anito* whose name is likewise given to the thing sacrificed to him.
>
> All of them adore the *Nono* or spirit of his ancestors, whom they respect and revere in the form of an alligator, big trees, stones, and the end of all rivers and seas.
>
> All of them have priestesses who offer the sacrifices for(*sic*) them, this sacrifices may be a whole pig which is divided reserving the better portion to the priestess or *babaylan.* They even revere some birds, believe in the immortality of the soul, and at the same time believe all the superstitions of the ancient gentiles of these islands....[87]

Until late in the 19th century, the Mangyans were known as a homogenous people. One of the first men to contest such a view is Ramon Morera Jordana, a Spanish historian and naturalist who came out with a detailed study of the Mangyans in 1885. Among other things, Jordana notes how the Mangyans set themselves apart from the *Buquiles,* a half-breed tribe belonging to the negrito race and who inhabit the part near Baco and Subaan. The Mangyans themselves are classified into three ethnic groupings:

1). those who occupy the Occidental coast of the island, occupying the mountains in Palauan to Irurun. They are fair complexioned and of intelligent physiognomy, (intelligent-looking), have thick brown hair and beard, robust and graceful, peaceful.
2). those who inhabit the territories between Abra de Ilog and Pinamalayan are tan in complexion, with wavy hair (lit. flacid), prominent cheekbones, flat forehead and somewhat long-nosed(?) and dull-looking.
3). those who inhabit that part of Pinamalayan until the South, look as if they are of Chinese blood, not only because of their oblique eyes, flat nose, prominent cheekbones, flat forehead and olive skin, but also of their custom of having a long braid in the upper part of their head with the rest of their hair, if not shaved, cut short. This tribe who are quite hard-working, judging by the products that they bring to the Christian towns, are undoubtedly less poor than the two other breeds.[88]

The third group, based on their given place of habitat and other ethnologocial data cited by Jordana, are obviously what is known as the Hanunu-o tribe of today.

Further, Jordana points out that the names with which the given ethnic types distinguish themselves is rather vague:

> Between Socol and Bulalacao, the name Manguianes is used for the pagans who live in the shore of the rivers. Those who stay in the lowlands are called *Buquil* and *Beribi,* to those who

[87] *Ibid.,* p. 122.
[88] *Ibid.*

> are found sheltered in the peak of the mountains. In Pinamalayan, they call the inhabitants of the same localities given above as *Bangot, Buquit,* Tadianan and Durugman or Buctulan respectively. In Naujan, they substitute the last name for Tiron (those who live in the mountain peaks) and from this part until Abra de Ilog, they use only the generic name of Manguian. Lastly, in Mangarin, they call Lactan those who stay in the lowlands, *Buquil,* those who dwell in the river shores, *Manguian* those who reside in the mountain slopes and Barangan (possibly the Batangans today) those who inhabit the peaks of the mountain ranges.[89]

It is evident from Jordana's work that the collective name of *Manguian,* encompasses several ethnic groups of very different origins. Blumentritt, the time-honored Austrian scholar, who translated and annotated Jordana's work into German, affirms that the latter's description of the *Buquiles* "reveals without doubt that the group is the result of a cross between the latter (*i.e.,* the negrito race) and the *indios,* that is to say, natives of Malay origin."[90] Blumentritt further believes that the term *Buquil* may mean "mountain", as for instance in the root word of the ethnic name of *Bukidnon.* As for the name *Tiron* cited above, it may refer according to him, to the remnants of pirates who came from the island of Tawi-Tawi, as well as from the area of Tiron (Tedun, Tidon) in the island of Borneo. Indeed such differences in ethnic origins may well be attributed to the varying groups of people who migrated to Mindoro at different periods of its history. The *Buquiles* may well be the descendants of those lowlanders already mentioned who escaped from the Moro pirates, found safety refuge among the interior negrito inhabitants, and inter-married with them.

Due to the diverse ethnic groupings of the Mangyans, ethnographers of the period were indecisive about classifying them as "a people". As Ferdinand Blumentritt writes,

> The Mangyans of the island of Mindoro are in fact a very little known people. If in point of fact they constitute a people, for it is assumed that the name Mangyan, which means as much as "forest men" (people), is a general name for all pagans, excepting those with full negrito blood, who live in the interior of that big island.[91]

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[89] *Ibid.* p. 54.

[90] From Ferdinand Blumentritt, "Die Manguianen der Insel Mindoro (Philippinen)", Globus, Vol. 50, footnote 3, p. 216. Translation by Dr. Zeus A. Salazar. Blumentritt's article is an annotated translation of R. Jordana Y. Morera's previously mentioned account of the Mangyans.

[91] Ferdinand Blumentritt, "Die Mangianenschrift von Mindoro", *Globus,* Vol. 69, 1896, p. 21, translated by Dr. Zeus A. Salazar.

While they were generally considered by Spanish and other European writers as 'half-savages' with a very low level of culture, the Mangyans were nonetheless shown to be in possession of a script of their own. This fact surprised some European scholars as Blumentritt himself who, commenting on Dr. Adolf Bernhard Meyer and Dr. A. Schadenberg's work[92] expressed,

> From the materials given . . . . we can only see that the Mangyans are on a very low level of culture and civilization. One was therefore very little prepared to discover a script in such a people.[93]

Though the existence of the Mangyan script was known to some Spanish and even Filipino writers like Pedro A. Paterno, the extent of their coverage was very minimal, if none at all. Paterno, who came up with a few lines about it in his book, *Los Aetas,* was according to Meyer 'even unaware of the importance of his discovery'. Blumentritt in fact comments that Paterno's reference to the Mangyan script is almost without value since it shows simply that the Mangyans have a script of their own. On the other hand, the Spanish friars "from whom we owe so many grammars and vocabularies of Philippine idoms have not unfortunately given any attention to the Mangyans.[94]

The first scholar who came up with really substantial findings on the Mangyan script was Dr. Schadenberg whom Blumentritt acknowledged as the one "who has been able to give us the first linguistic samples of one of the Mangyan idioms." Schadenberg himself went through the island of Mindoro around 1890 and discovered that the Mangyans did not only have their own alphabet but also, this was still being used in written communication:

> In his own particular active way, Dr. Schadenberg went about gathering together sample (proofs) of his discovery in which activity the governor of the island, Don Maximo Lillo, and Don Ramon Valencia, secretary of the provincial council an officer of great service to the ethnology of the Philippines zealously helped him. Thus he succeeded in bringing together seven bamboo pieces with inscribed script signs. For some of them, Shadenberg received also keys and translations.[95]

Although it is generally known that the Mangyans are nomadic people, Jordana's account not only negates this view but provides an

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[92] See A. B. Meyer, A. Schadenberg, "Die Mangianeschrift von Mindoro", Berlin, R. Friedlander, 1895.

[93] Blumentritt, "Mangianenschrift" p. 21.

[94] *Ibid.*

[95] *Ibid.*

intriguing point of comparison with that of the 'Christian indios' habitations:

> Almost everyone has huts only very few wander about in the mountains, without any particular place of residence. These huts are small and miserable and generally are made from bamboo and bejuco. The way they are built correspond completely to that common among the Christian indios. Their household belongings are composed of some pots, a kind of frying pan, mats are luxury items which they got in commerce with the Christian indios only at a high price.[96]

The natural simplicity of the Mangyans coupled with conscientiousness in keeping promises and honesty, made them according to Jordana, easy prey to lowland exploitation. The Hispanized indios

> exploits them to their heart's desire by making them work heavily in the ricefields or using them to cut and carry trees and this only for a handful of rice. Also in commercial relations they have to suffer from the effects of the greeds of the Christians, receiving only worthless objects in exchange for enormous quantities of wax bejuco and other things. This abuse has already become an extreme scandal, since aside from the commercial trickeries *slavery still exist and still is in practice among the Christian indios* (italics mine).[97]

What Jordana refers to as "slavery" is defined in terms of economic dependency rooted in the 'pa-utangan' system between lowlanders and Mangyans.

> They generally (i.e., the lowlanders) give the Manguianes an advance of palay, a thing or other objects for which they do not once like to get the payment but instead expect that the Mangyans should give back their debts through work in their fields. This apparently legal contract transform the Mangyan into a true slave, since the landowner gives a very low value to the work and beside adds interest to the debt which has not yet been paid through work; when a new necessity forces them to make another debt, the same is done as earlier so that the debt made by the Mangyans instead of decreasing increases enormously and he sees himself forced to work during his entire life for the small sum which he first received . . .[98]

While lowland exploitation of Mangyans did exist in the Spanish era, it should not be dissociated from the chain of exploitation which linked it up to world commerce. The lowlanders themselves were subject to the abuse of Spaniards who set the chain of exploitations within Philippine society, quite unknown in the pre-Spanish era.

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[96] *Op. cit.*, p. 217.
[97] *Ibid.*
[98] *Ibid.* p. 218.

The oppressive system of Spanish control may have driven many Mangyan groups into the interior, but there were some who remained within the sphere of Spanish control. In such cases, the Mangyans were indirectly ruled by the Spaniards through the *Comisario de Manguianes,* chosen from a neighboring Christian pueblo or *rancheria* and who then has to function as an intermediary in all official meetings and other occasions. In turn, each Mangyan tribe or rancheria has a chief which through election or general agreement gets his honor and under whom all of them put themselves with all respect. Those Mangyans who live very closely to the Christian settlements generally ask the provincial chief to confirm the authority of their heads through a piece of document. Jordana is careful to note however, that this practice was completely unknown in the rancherias of the interior.

In matters 'moral' and 'legal', the Mangyans were shown to be more conscientious than their lowland brothers. Jordana notes that

> The legal customs of the Manguianes as they themselves say are very strict. Adultery is punished with death in the same way that they also have very harsh punishment for robbery; however, they are not used with extreme strictness among some tribes. In general one can say that the customs of the Manguianes have a good basis of legality and morality. They fulfill conscientiously their promises, they do not deceive nor cheat, on the contrary these very high qualities combined with their natural naivete make them victims of the Christian indios.[99]

Speaking of morals and ethics, the Mangyans could not be rightfully deemed 'more backward' than their 'Romanized' lowland kins. In point of fact, almost all the Spanish accounts of these people noticeably present them as honest, upright and trustworthy beings. Yet, faced with opportunists, such high moral attributes became more of a 'liability' rather than an asset:

> One cannot help admiring the submissiveness and patience of the Mangyan who submit himself with resignation to this hateful exactions. Even if plight into the thickness of the forest could be sufficient to save him since it can be said with complete certainty that no Christian indio would dare enter it, and take him back from his hiding place.[100]

The Mangyans were not without awareness of a Supreme Being. They also believe in the immortality of the soul even though only in a vague way which find expression, as Jordana clarifies, "neither in religious custom nor in whatever ceremonies". The almost mo-

[99] *Ibid.*, p. 217.
[100] *Ibid.*, p. 218.

notheistic concept of God, however, is adulterated by their fears of spirits expressed in their belief that the souls of the dead do not leave the place where they have lived during their lifetime. Consequently,

> ..... they believe themselves always surrounded by the spirits of their fathers, grandfathers, and ancestors by whom they are protected and defended in times of danger and by whom they are punished if they are bad or they act in a bad way.[101]

The lighter side of Mangyan life as reflected in the Spanish accounts consist of occasional dancing and singing, possibly held on special occasions, as the marriage of a couple. Presumably unaware of the other Mangyan musical instruments, Jordana identifies only one which he compared to the Chinese violin — one having two strings. Their songs and melodies, relates Jordana, do not differ markedly from those of the Christian indios — "In order to ask from their supreme being rain, they sing a chant which in some places is called *malaguia*". Marriage itself was a special activity participated in by the whole family:

> The marriage is always preceded by a getting together and agreement of the families of both parties. In the ceremony, these two families gather together and the parents or the nearest relative take hold of a pot or any other breakable object which they consequently throw to the ground so that the marriage would be unbreakable. By some *tubus,* the following custom follows this ceremony: bride and groom lie down in each one of a particular hammock after which the respective parents swing their child up to the moment when, upon the nearing of both hammock the man leaps into the hammock of the woman which ends the entire thing. After this, a feast is held which consists of a meal, songs and dances.[102]

Recapitulation

At the close of the 19th century therefore, we find the term 'Mangyan' used collectively to denote a diverse set of peoples. We have seen how through the ages various historical processes have led to growing multiplicity of the 'inland people.' Originally, the inland folks may have been coastal residents driven into the interior by the coming of a more dominant group. From the accounts we observe that such pioneer settlers in the island were the negritoes, referred to in the early Spanish accounts as the 'chichimecos'. The situation could have been that initially, of the Bornean immigrants push-

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[101] *Ibid.*
[102] *Ibid. loc. cit.*

ing the negritoes into the interior, or to put it in abstract terms, B displacing A and driving it inland. Yet while this may have been the case, the accounts also show that the members of group A were not totally cut off from group B. A minimum social contact was maintained, primarily in terms of exchange of goods — that was, A bartering forest products, which B in turn traded with foreign travelling merchants. This may well be the situation before the Spaniards came.

The coming of the Spaniards, who consist group C in our designation, brought radical changes in the status quo. In this case, group C dislodged B, B withdrew into the interior and consequently had a close interaction with A. The product of such interaction are presumably the Buquiles, whom Jordana described as "a half-breed tribe belonging to the negrito race", tan in complexion and not black. With C or the Spaniards in control of the coastal areas, contacts between B and the outside world (that is with the Chinese traders and other Southeast Asians) would have been cut off and free-trade relations cut off. This could have precipitated the spread of piracy in the region, and consequently brought in a counter-force to C, which eventually exerted pressure on groups A and B. However, because of C's advanced military and naval weapons, counter-force D represented by the Muslim pirates, were overwhelmed and in the process, some of them were forced into the interior. These possibly were the Tirones (Tidunes) who contributed to the growing multiplicity of the 'inland people.'

On the other hand, some of the members of group B who decided to remain in the coastal areas, underwent an entirely different historical course — their response to C is reflected in a Hispanized culture which inevitably set them off from their kins in the interior. This historical process led to marked differentiation between lowland and mountain people.' The influx of natives from other islands as Luzon and the Visayas led further to diverse intermingling of lowland groups. Thus at the close of the 19th century, the isolated groups in the interior evolved as the 'minority groups' in the island of Mindoro. Yet, while we speak of a 'minority group' the problem of integration was not yet at hand, probably because in the 19th century, there was no concept of a totality into which they can be integrated except the Hispanized Philippine society. The problem of inte-

gration only becomes a reality when a total society either exists or is in the process of being constructed.

While we speak of social distance between Mangyans and Hispanized lowlanders, a minimum of social contact existed which as we have seen was primarily exploitative in nature. It may seem strange, but the Mangyans were actually integrated into the worldwide capitalist cycle through various intermediaries which close at hand were the lowlanders and their Spanish colonial masters. In point of fact, the social relations among Mangyans and Christian lowlanders were laid down in the 19th century, developed during the American colonial regime, and perpetuated until the present time.

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