# INDIAN PENETRATION OF PRE-SPANISH PHILIPPINES: A NEW LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE

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### Introduction

In discussions of Indian cultural and religious penetration of Southeast Asia, the extent to which the Philippines came under such penetration is commonly dismissed as having been peripheral. Identifiable Indian influences in Philippine culture, which are considerable, are attributed to secondary influences rather than to direct penetration of Indian thought, religion, and customs in the process of cultural diffusion recognized in other areas of Southeast Asia.

The absence of a more profound Indian cultural impact is generally attributed to the Philippines' location, being at the end of the line, so to speak, the most distant area of Southeast Asia from Mother India. The Philippines, it is commonly said, was both distant and of little commercial or political importance and thereby, largely unreached by those who bore Indian beliefs and cultures to adjacent lands.

The author would like to suggest that the Philippines, though distant from India, was not in fact divorced from the life and trade of the region. The view of the Philippines as isolated in relation to historic developments in Southeast Asia may be attributed to two features of the Philippines as viewed by 20th century observers: the real isolation of the Philippines during much of four centuries of Spanish and American rule, and the paucity of evidence of Indian penetration in the form of several elements found commonly in other Indianized states of Southeast Asia.

To take the latter aspect first, there are in the Philippines no Hindu or Buddhist temples or monuments. There are no Sanskrit documents. There is no mention in early Spanish accounts of Indians or reference to religions as being other than Islam and heathenism. There are no dances or "wajang" performances based on the Indian epics. Philippine names are Hispanic or Malay, not Indianized, and there are no pockets of remnant peoples practicing religions that are identifiably Indian-animistic mixtures. In short, there are none of several of the highly visible identifying features of Indian civilization which one would ordinarily expect to find in an area which had been strongly influenced by Indian culture.

This paper will suggest, however, that the Philippines, which was integrally joined with the region in pre-Spanish trading relations, received therefore the stimuli of Indian influences common to the region. The absence of the elements discussed above can, it is felt, be explained by the low level of population density in the Philippines and the interposition of the Christianizing Spanish impact. If this is the case, this paper will suggest that the Indian influences which have been identified in the Philippines can be better explained as the consequence of the absorption of an Indian religious/cultural system by the early Filipinos, rather than as dimly understood, secondary influences. The author does not mean to suggest that the influences were necessarily borne to the Philippines by Indians; their relevance is equally great if borne to the Philippines by Indonesians or other Southeast Asian bearers of Indian culture.

#### **Patterns of Contact**

Philippine scholars are inescapably conditioned in their approach to regional contacts by nearly four centuries during which it was easier, psychologically and in many cases physically, to journey to Mexico, Spain, or the United States than to travel south to Indonesia or Borneo. While the existence of historically long-established contact between Muslim Filipinos and their brethren in Indonesia and Malaysia is recognized in present-day provisions for barter trade and border crossing arrangements, such contacts have little present-day relevance for other Filipinos. The flow of communication stops in the south.

The dominant Christian Philippine culture has, moreover, been engaged almost continuously since its inception in an expansionary drive which has encountered its most formidable check in the Muslim south. Muslim incursions of prior centuries notwithstanding, the dominant expansionary impetus has in modern times run from north to south. The Muslim south has thus, from the viewpoint of the Christian center, constituted the periphery and a barricade to the outward flow of people and ideas. A reverse flow of ideas and cultural features from the Muslim south to the rest of the country is an alien concept to the twentieth century Filipino.

Yet it was not always so. Islam itself was borne northwards by cultural contact in the immediate pre-Spanish period, and the earlier trading contacts which brought Indian elements to the rest of Southeast Asia embraced the Philippines as well.

The image of the Philippines as a peripheral area, too far removed from Southeast Asia to share in its cultural evolution, is dubious even from a geographic standpoint. The distance from Manila to North Borneo is about the same as the distance between Singapore and Jakarta. From Manila to Jakarta is about equal to the distance between Jakarta and the Vietnamese areas of Champa and Tongking with which the Javanese were in contact more than one thousand years ago. The distance from either Manila or Sulu to Champa is considerably less than the distance between Java and Champa.

The magnitude of the trading contacts within Southeast Asia and between Southeast Asia and China is well-documented, with much of the trade carried out by Malayo-Polynesian people.<sup>1</sup> It requires a con-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>See, for example, O.W. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*. Chapter 10, "Shippers of the 'Persian' Cargos," discusses in detail the early entry of Indonesian traders into regional trade.

siderable stretch of the imagination to suppose that these trading ties would extend west as far as India, north as far as China, east throughout the Indonesian archipelago including Borneo, but would stop at the border of the Philippines.

An extensive Chinese trade with the Philippines is, of course, well established, by early Chinese accounts, early Spanish accounts, and the wealth of Chinese porcelain. But tangible evidence of extensive and long standing non-Chinese trading exchanges with the Philippines is not entirely absent.

Early Chinese accounts describe trade in the third century between Funan, centered on the lower Mekong, and the islands of Chu-yen and Tan-lan. These islands, north-east and north-west of Chu-po, which has been identified as north-eastern Borneo, are believed to have been in the Philippines. The Tan-lan islanders brought iron to Funan, while the Chu-yen sailors brought large shell cups.<sup>2</sup>

Subsequently, the Malay state of Champa emerged in central Vietnam, to the north of Funan. Like Funan, this state also appears to have maintained regular contact with the southern Philippines. Professor Otley Beyer describes an early Sulu traditional history which relates how Orang Dampuan, men of Dampu, established settlements in Sulu. Dampu, after allowing for sound shifts, is quite probably Champa. According to the traditional account, the Dampuans built several towns in Sulu but eventually had a falling out with the local inhabitants and after a bitter war withdrew, burning their towns as they left.<sup>3</sup> That Champans might travel such a distance to colonize Sulu is not as surprising as it might at first seem, in view of the Chams' language affinity and their considerable contact with more distant Java and Sumatra.

Early Sulu manuscripts also record traditions of contact with Borneo, Sumatra, and elsewhere. Beyer cites one of these early manuscripts as claiming that in the century before the arrival of the Spaniards, some four hundred to five hundred junks arrived annually from Cambodia, Champa, and China.<sup>4</sup> Although these figures may be greatly exaggerated in order to bolster Sulu's claim to be a great trading center, they nevertheless provide further evidence of familiarity and contact with Southeast Asia.

The archaeological evidence is also suggestive. While Chinese traders might conceivably have brought to the Philippines all of its Southeast Asian porcelains as well as its Chinese porcelains, as suggested earlier it would be improbable in view of the extensive trade by Southeast Asians themselves. And by the beginning of the 15th

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>R.A. Stein, "Le Lin-yi, sa localisation...," *Han-hiue*, Vol. 2, nos. 1-3, pp. 120-122, as cited in Wolters, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>H. Otley Beyer, *Pre-Hispanic Philippines*, p. 7. <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 8.

century, according to an estimate by Robert Fox, exported Siamese wares in the Philippines reached approximately twenty to forty percent of the total southern trade.<sup>5</sup>

The most graphic account of pre-Hispanic linkages between the Philippines and neighboring Southeast Asian countries comes from Tome Pires, a Portuguese apothecary in Malacca from 1512-1515.

Describing Filipino traders and settlers in Malaya, Tome Pires wrote as follows:

The Lucces are about ten days' sail beyond Borneo. They are nearly all heathen; they have no king, but are ruled by groups of elders... They take the merchandise to Borneo and from there they come to Malacca.

The Borneans go to the land of the Lucoes to buy gold and foodstuffs as well, and the gold which they bring to Malacca is from the Lucoes and from the surrounding islands which are countless; and they all have more or less trade with one another...

The Lucces have in their country plenty of foodstuffs, and wax and honey; and they take the same merchandise from here as the Borneans take. They are almost one people; and in Malacca there is no division between them...

In Minjam there must be five hundred Lucoes, some of them important men and good merchants, who want to come to Malacca, and the people of Minjam will not grant them permission because now they have gone over to the side of the former king of Malacca, not very openly. The people of Minjam are Malays.<sup>6</sup>

A further interesting observation on early trade contacts was made by Pedro Chirino in his account of the Philippines in 1600:

Added to all this wealth (of the Philippines) is the proximity of China, India, Japan, Malacca and the Moluccas... From India, Malacca and the Moluccas came slaves to Manila, male and female, white and black, children and adults... There also came drugs and spices, precious stones, ivory, pearls, pearl seed, rugs and other rich merchandise. And from Japan much wheat and flour, silver, metals, niter, weapons and many other rare goods. All of which has made and makes living in this land profitable and a matter of envy...<sup>7</sup>

Spanish-era accounts of regional trade are, of course, both more plentiful and less relevant to the period in which we are interested. It is, nevertheless, interesting to note how farflung were the contacts. The Englishman Thomas Forrest, writing of the Maguindanaos and Sulu-

24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Robert B. Fox, "The Philippines in Pre-Historic Times," p. 17 in *Readings: Cultural History of the Philippines,* compiled by Teodoro A. Agoncillo.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Armando Cortesao, "Suma Orlental of Tome Pires," vol. 1, pp. Ixiii, Ixxxi, and xxviii, as quoted in *Travel Accounts of the Islands (1513-1787)*, The Filipiniana Book Guild, Vol. XIX, pp. 1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Pedro Chirino, S.J., *The Philippines in 1600*, pp. 242-243.

anos in the mid-1700's, observes that their vessels sailed to, and frequently plundered, Halmahera, Sulawesi, Java, Borneo, and other smaller islands in what is now Indonesia.<sup>8</sup>

In summary, then, there seems every reason to suppose that the Philippines, far from being isolated, participated actively in the early trade of Southeast Asia. We can even surmise that the major trading and population centers may have been Manila and its environs; the Sulu/western Mindanao area; the Puerto Galera area of Mindoro, mid-way between the first two and a site not only of extensive porcelain discoveries but of a fourteen-foot thick stone fortification overcome by Juan de Salcedo in his 1570 expedition; Cebu City and southern Cebu; and Butuan, a port of call for both Chinese and Muslim Malay merchants when the Spaniards arrived.<sup>9</sup>

### The Indianization of the Philippines

The process by which Southeast Asia may have been Indianized is described with great clarity by G. Coedes in *"The Indianized States of Southeast Asia."*<sup>10</sup> The penetration of Indian culture and religion can be likened to a grafting process in which Brahmanic bearers of Indian culture expanded their presence as trading relations expanded, marrying into the native nobility. The adoption of Indian culture by the elite altered only slowly the cultural and religious patterns of the masses so that indigenous beliefs and customs persisted long after the new ways and thoughts had been adopted in the palaces.

The early settlers of the Philippines may have been, in some cases, members of groups in which this process was already underway. Whether or not this was the case, later trade contacts were unavoidably with peoples who were themselves Indianized, even if Indian Brahmans did not themselves visit the Philippines. It can hardly have been otherwise, for the conversion of Hindu Indonesia to Islam was a comparatively late development. When Marco Polo visited Sumatra in 1292, only the little town of Perlak on the northern tip of Sumatra had been converted to Islam. While the coastal areas of Sumatra were converted during the following century, it was during that century that Madjapahit in Java reached the peak of its power. Not until the early 1400's did Malacca become Muslim, the conversion of Java begin, and the rapid spread of Islam throughout the archipelago take place. Thus, until little more than a century before Magellan's arrival, Philippine contacts with Southeast Asia could, for the most part, only have been with Indianized states, and in areas such as the Celebes, Islam's arrival was even further delayed.11

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Captain Thomas Forrest, A Voyage to New Guinea and the Moluccas, from Balambangan: Including an Account of Maguindanao, Sooloo and Other Islands, as found in Travel Account of the Islands, pp. 224-228, 235, 240, and 315.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>H. de la Costa, S.J., *Readings in Philippine History*, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>G. Coedes, The Indianized States of Southeast Asia, pp. 14-35 and 247-258.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Bernhard H.M. Vlekke, Nusantara, A History of Indonesia, pp. 66-67 and 80-84.

Inasmuch as the Philippines seemingly shared in the trading relationships of Southeast Asia, and since during all but the last 100 years before the Spanish these contacts were largely with areas which were bearers of Indian culture and religion, there would seem to be strong presumptive evidence that the Philippines was exposed to the same influences which ultimately produced Hindu or Buddhist societies in the rest of Southeast Asia.

### **Probable Features of an Indianized Philippines**

Based on religious and cultural features common to other Indianized states of Southeast Asia, we can identify a number of features which one might expect to-characterize the Philippines in the 16th century if it was indeed Indianized to an appreciable extent. These are:

1. A degree of familiarity with Indian religious concepts and terminology. Because the exposure to Indian religious thought would in all probability have come through intermediate countries, and because of a century of absence of contact with an Indian source as Islam intervened, a blending with native religious beliefs might well have blurred the clarity of Indian concepts. Nevertheless, they should still have persisted in recognizable form.

2. The use of Sanskrit as a religious language.

3. A writing system derived from Sanskrit and used to record religious scripture and ritual.

4. The absorption directly into individual Philippine languages of Sanskrit words.

5. Incorporation of the Ramayana tale into the local literature.

- 6. The existence of Indian religious images.
- 7. The adoption of various Indian customs.

It is the author's contention that such evidence, as does exist, is consistent with the presence of each of these elements. To understand this, it is necessary to say a word about evidence and the problem of interpretation.

We know, to cite one feature as an example, that the Spaniards destroyed thousands of idols in the Philippines, striving to totally eradicate all vestiges of a pagan religion. We also know that very few Buddhist or Hindu images have been found in the Philippines. If the idols which the Spaniards found were Buddhist or Hindu images, and if they sought to destroy them all, then we would expect to find very few today. On the other hand, if there were very few Buddhist or Hindu images when the Spaniards arrived, we also would expect to find very few today. Most scholars have interpreted the paucity of Hindu or Buddhist images in the Philippines as meaning that such images were never plentiful. But logically, a few surviving images could be equally consistent with the existence formerly of a great many such images. The difficulty is that the existence of a few images does not constitute proof that there were once many. The present existence of a few images is consistent with the former existence of many, given the known behavior of the Spanish, but it is not a proof.

I have sought to overcome this problem by examining the totality of Indian features which might once have existed and then seeking to determine whether such evidence as does exist is consistent with the existence of an Indian religion. The result is not positive proof that the Philippines was once a Hindu or Buddhist country, in the sense that a Buddhist scripture or a Hindu temple might constitute proof. But a consistent pattern does, nevertheless, constitute evidence. It makes it incumbent upon those who believe that Indian religion were not present in the Philippines to prove that the existence of evidence consistent with Indianization is not in fact indicative.

### Bathala

That the Tagalog term for the Supreme Being is *Bathala* is well established by early Spanish accounts, and that the word is Sanskrit is also well known. But there seems to have been relatively little examination of the significance which may be embodied in the existence of this term.

According to Juan Francisco, the Sanskrit word *bhattara* means "noble lord or great lord."<sup>12</sup> The word has been borrowed by a number of Malay languages, those listed by Francisco being Tagalog, South Mangyan, Maguindanao, Javanese, Balinese, Malay, Visayan, and Pampangan. However, the meaning of the word differs from language to language among the borrowing languages, and it is the evolution from its meaning in Sanskrit to its meaning in Tagalog which appears significant to our study.

Although *batara* appears in Malay and Indonesian, the Malay-Indonesian word for Supreme Being is *Tuhan*, and *batara* retains a meaning similar to the original Sanskrit. *Batara*, in Indonesian, has two meanings: deity or lord and, as the title of a monarch.<sup>13</sup>

But in Bali, unique in that it remains Hindu, the word evolved, and *battara* today is the "Holiest of Holies," the "Supreme Being." In Balinese temples, one finds in the innermost courtyard elevated seats believed to be resting places of Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma, but the holiest of all is the seat of *Battara*.

The author is not a Balinese scholar, and his attempts to elicit in Indonesian on a brief visit to Bali an explanation of *Battara's* place in Balinese Hinduism confronted difficulties similar to those which must have confronted the few early-day Spaniards who attempted to understand the unfamiliar Filipino religion. Also, there appears to be little available in the way of written explanations of *Battara* in relation to Balinese beliefs. *Battara* apparently is abstract, non-personal, and relatively distant from human beings, being apparently the Great Spirit of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Juan R. Francisco, "Indian Influences in the Philippines," *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, Vol. XXVIII, Jan.-Sept. 1963, Nos. 1-3, p. 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>John M. Echols and Hassan Shadily, An Indonesian-English Dictionary, p. 39.

which Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma are the most powerful manifestations.

As shown below, the Tagalog concept of *Bathala* appears to have been closely akin to that of the Balinese. Significantly, however, in Visayan, the word is of secondary importance, meaning only "idol".<sup>14</sup> This would suggest that the word entered these languages either from different sources or at different times if from a single source. It strongly suggests that the Tagalogs, at least, had extensive contact with East Indonesia, which lends support to the supposition, discussed subsequently, that the pre-Spanish Philippine writing system was borrowed from South Sulawesi.

Turning now to the early Spanish accounts of *Bathala*, Juan de Plasencia says, "Among their many idols there was one called *Badhala*, whom they specially worshipped. The title seems to signify 'all powerful,' or 'maker of all things.' "<sup>15</sup>

Francisco Colin's account of *Bathala* is similar to that of Plasencia. "Among their gods is one who is the chief and superior to all the others, whom the Tagalogs call *Bathala Meycapal*, which signifies 'God' the 'Creator' or, 'Maker.' "<sup>16</sup>

The Boxer Codex expands on this:

The Moros (i.e., Tagalogs) of the Philippines have (the beliet) that the earth, the sky and everything therein were created and made by only one God, which they call in their tongue "Bachtala napal nanca calgna salahat," which means God the Creator and preserver of all things. They call him by the other name of *Mulayri*. They say that this their God was in the atmosphere before there was sky or earth or other things, and that it was eternal, and not made or created by anybody and that he alone made and created everything we have said solely on his own will to make something as beautiful as the sky and the land, and that he did it and created from the earth a man and a woman from whom all men and generations in the world have descended.<sup>17</sup>

### Miguel de Loarca relates the following:

According to the religion formerly observed by these Moros, they worshipped a deity called among them *Batala*, which properly means "God." They said that they adored this *Batala* because he was the Lord of all, and had created human beings, and villages. They said that this *Batala* had many agents under him, whom he sent to this world to produce, in behalf of men, what is yielded here. These beings were called *anitos*, and each *anito* had a special office...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>Francisco, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup>Juan de Plasencia, O.S.F., *Customs of the Tagalogs,* in Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson, *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898,* Vol. 7, p. 186 (hereafter referred to as Blair and Robertson).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>Francisco Colin, S.J., *Native Races and Their Customs,* in Blair and Robertson, Vol. 40, pp. 69-70.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>Carlos Quirino and Mauro Garcia, "The Manners, Customs, and Beliefs of the Philippine Inhabitants of Long Ago; Being Chapters of 'A Late 16th Century Manila Manuscript', Transcribed, Translated and Annotated," *The Philippine Journal of Science*, Vol. 87, No. 4, December 1958, pp. 419-420 (hereafter referred to as the Boxer Codex).

When the natives were asked why the sacrifices were offered to the *anito*, and not to the *Batala*, they answered that the *Batala* was a great Lord, and no one could speak to him. He lived in the sky; but the *anito*, who was of such a nature that he came down here to talk with men, was to the *Batala* as a minister, and interceded for them.<sup>18</sup>

### **Discovering the Filipino Belief Structure**

Bathala was the pinnacle of a Filipino belief structure, and in seeking to reconstruct additional elements of this belief structure, one must keep in mind the way in which Brahmanic religions were spread in Southeast Asia. As noted earlier, Brahmanic religions seem invariably to have entered through the nobility, who valued the presence of Brahmans for their aid in matters of ritual, magic, and ceremony. Through intermarriage, the elite became increasingly Indianized in belief and outlook, while the masses only slowly altered their original belief patterns.<sup>19</sup>

Buddhism frequently provided the initial exposure to Indian religions, through its association with maritime activities, but the subsequent Brahman immigrants brought Sivaite conceptions expressed in the cult of the royal linga.

...we have seen that, in many cases, the most ancient evidences of Indianization are the images of the Dipankara Buddha, who enjoyed great favor with the seamen frequenting the southern islands. The role of Buddhism is undeniable; it seems to have opened the way, thanks to its missionary spirit and lack of racial prejudice. But most of the kingdoms founded in farther India soon adopted the Sivaite conception of royalty, based on the Brahman-Kshatriya pairing and expressed in the cult of the royal linga.<sup>20</sup>

In scrutinizing the early Spanish accounts for indications that such a process took place in the Philippines, one must bear in mind that Spanish writings reflect the difficulties of understanding an alien religion through the medium of an alien language. But equally important, the Spanish writers were handicapped in their sources. The more distant from the noble or priestly class was the informant, the more likely were his religious concepts to reflect indigenous beliefs. And the closer to the priests or nobility was the informant, the less likely was he to reveal in any depth his true beliefs, in part because knowledge of certain aspects of Brahmanic religions was reserved for initiates and in part because Spanish opposition to the practice of "paganism" made a policy of minimum disclosure wise.

In scrutinizing the Spanish accounts, one can see that despite the considerable volume written on religion, the Spanish accounts relate largely to external characteristics. They discuss ceremonies, burials, idols, places of worship, priests, and supernatural creatures

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Miguel de Loarca, *Relacion de las Yslas Filipinas,* in Blair and Robertson, Vol. V, pp. 171-173.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup>Coedes, *op. cit.*, in particular, pp. 14-35. <sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 23.

such as *aswangs.* These are all, including *aswangs*, closely related to observed behavior about which an outsider might elicit a considerable amount of information without penetrating deeply into the internalized belief structure supporting the external manifestations.

By gleaning the Spanish commentaries, one laboriously discovers that the Filipinos had a body of religious writing, ceremonies conducted in a foreign language, and epic religious tales related in nightlong performances. Because the Spaniards ignored the contents of these writings, ceremonies, and epics, modern scholars have given their existence scant notice. Yet their existence cannot be ignored. And if one seeks to take them into account, one can hardly conclude other than that some, at least, were Indian-related. To conclude otherwise is to conclude that though the Philippines adopted an Indian writing system and Hindu concepts like "Bathala," it avoided incorporating in its religious writings and ceremonies the ideas and beliefs which invariably accompanied Indian writing systems and religious terminology elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

### Absence of a God-King Concept

Before proceeding further, it is worth commenting on the apparent absence of the concept of a Shivaite god-king in the Philippines. Elsewhere in Asia the coming of Brahmans to the service of the chiefs led to the establishment of kingdoms in which godliness became associated with royalty. Although the Philippines did have distinct social classes, similar to the caste-influenced structures which evolved elsewhere, and although from some Spanish accounts it appears that Filipino chiefs did believe that their ancestors were deified after death,<sup>21</sup> large kingdoms headed by a god-king did not develop.

However, for kingdoms to develop, a fairly dense population seems necessary, and this the Philippines seems not to have had.

But in the Tagalog area at least, there are signs of Shiva worship. Moreover, paramount chiefs were recognized, and not on the basis of force of arms, but on the basis of lineage and wealth.

On Laguna de Bay there is a barrio named Linga. Adjacent to it is Pinagbayanan, whose name signifies the town center. Pottery phallic symbols have been found in graves in Pinagbayanan.<sup>22</sup> For the inhabitants to have named the barrio Linga indicates clearly that they associated the term with the phallic symbols found nearby and that they attached significance to this Shivaist concept. (The term *linga* may well be embodied also in the name Lingayen in Pangasinan).

[In passing, it is also worth noting that there is in Magsingal, Ilocos

30

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup>See, for example, Chirino, *op. cit.*, p. 297. One might also note that a Tagalog term signifying nobility, *"lakan,"* was used in the names of several of the secondary gods.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup>Leandro and Cecilia Locsin in their introduction to Rosa Tenazas' "A Report on the Archaeology of the Locsins University of San Carlos Excavations in Pila, Laguna," Sept. 4, 1967-March 19, 1968, cited in E.P. Patanne, *The Philippines in the World of Southeast Asia*, p. 340.

### INDIAN PENETRATION....

Sur, a museum-park owned by Mr. Angel Cortez in which there is a large *linga*. Mr. Cortez claimed to the author in April 1974 to be excavating the *linga*'s female counterpart (*yoni*) from the same nearby site in which he claimed to have found the *linga*. The author has examined the *linga* but is not qualified to evaluate its authenticity.]

A governmental structure under the direction of a paramount chief enthroned on the basis of wealth and lineage is described in detail by Loarca. Loarca's account is all the more interesting for the fact that he asserted earlier that the Tagalogs lacked government:

In the villages (pueblos), where they had ten or twelve chiefs, one only-the richest of them-was he whom all obeyed. They greatly esteem an ancient lineage, which is therefore a great advantage to him who desires to be a lord. When laws were to be enacted for governing the commonwealth, the greatest chief, whom all the rest obeyed, assembled in his own house all the other chiefs of the village (pueblo); and when they had come, he made a speech, declaring that, to correct the many criminal acts which were being committed, it was necessary that they impose penalties and enact ordinances... Then the other chiefs replied that this seemed good to them; and that, since he was the greatest chief of all, he might do whatever appeared to him just, and they would approve it. Accordingly, that chief made such regulations as he deemed necessary; for these Moros possess the art of writing, which no other natives of the islands have... Immediately came a public crier, whom they call umalahocan... he took a bell and went through the village (pueblo), announcing in each district (barrio) the regulations which had been made... Thus the umalahocan went from village to village (de en pueblo en pueblo) through the whole district (destrito) of this chief; and from that time on he who incurred the penalties of law was taken to the chief, who sentenced him accordingly.23

### **Ceremonies, Scriptures, and Epics**

Ritual chants and incantations were important in the Philippine religious observances, and the *Boxer Codex* reveals that these were in a foreign language. The validity of this highly significant observation is substantiated by the existence in Tagalog and Pampangan of the word *mantala*, of Sanskrit origin and meaning "prayers and mysterious words." Indian *mantras* may be described as magic formulas or prayers, to be repeated for their efficacy even though not fully understood. Interestingly enough, the word *mantra* has entered Visayan as well, but with an alternative Sanskrit meaning of "advise, counsel."<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the *Boxer Codex*, Plasencia's account of ritual chants portrays a similar ceremonial approach:

Their manner of offering sacrifice was to proclaim a feast, and offer to the devil what they had to eat. This was done in front of the idol, which they anoint with fragrant perfumes, such as musk and civet, or gum of the storax-tree and other odoriferous woods, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup>Loarca, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup>Francisco, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

praise it in poetic songs sung by the officiating priest, male or female, who is called *"catalonan."* The participants made responses to the song, beseeching the idol to favor them with those things of which they were in need....<sup>25</sup>

#### The Boxer Codex account is as follows:

Of these (priests), there are men and women who they say do so; that is, say certain prayers or secret words, with some food or liquid offering, asking for the well-being of he who makes that sacrifice...

Those suffering from deadly herbs or poisons, or those with abscesses or ill with some dangerous disease, are cured with words understood only by those who keep the law of Mohammed in the island of Borney, where they were drawn up. While uttering these words, they crush a herb they call *"buyo";* those administering the cure have such faith in these words, as well as the sick ones, that it is a marvelous thing to find the patient later getting well just by hearing them.

The oil of the sesame seed which they use for treatment is made by a certain incantation in the manner of a blessing, using Burneyan words which they carefully guard in order to cure the illnesses described above. They likewise use these words or incantations to make cocks valiant and invincible.

They also use some incantations for their love making, that they might be well loved or that they might not be seen or suspected by their husbands in their courtships, nor by any other person except those whom they want, and for this purpose bring with them the corresponding magic script...

They use supernatural amulets... Finally, they do a thousand and one things in this fashion, and in some cases utter incantations in the Burneyan language, and all of this they value highly.<sup>26</sup>

It seems virtually certain that the "Burneyan language" discussed in the *Boxer Codex* was not in fact from Boneo. There is no precedent for a Bornean language being used as a religious language by other language groups, and no plausible explanation as to how the Tagalogs might have come to use such a language. Of the two remaining possibilities, Arabic and Sanskrit, it seems unlikely that Arabic could have assumed this importance among a superficially and recently Islamic people. Therefore, the foreign language would seem almost certainly to have been Sanskrit.

There is an excellent parallel for this among the Baduis of West Java. The Baduis are a Sundanese-speaking, Hinduized remnant group which withdrew to the interior with the coming of Islam and established a domain from which outsiders are barred. In 1967, the writer was one of a four-man group to visit the Badui area, and one member of the group, a Sundanese-speaking Javanese, was accorded the rare privilege of being taken to the innermost Badui area. In the religious ceremony in which she participated, the priest used a non-Malay ritual language which

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup>Plasencia, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup>Boxer Codex, pp. 420 and 435-436, with the final paragraph modified by translation from the Spanish original on p. 380.

appeared to be Sanskrit, still vital after several hundred years of isolation.

It seems clear from the *Boxer Codex* that the Philippine ritual language was also used for religious writings, which could be understood only by specially educated priests:

They say further that when their ancestors had news of this God which they have as for their highest, it was through some male prophets whose names they no longer know, because as they have neither writings nor those to teach them, they have forgotten the very names of these prophets, aside from what they know of them who in their tongue are called *"tagapagbasa nan sulatan a dios;"* which means *"readers of the writings of God"*, from whom they have learned about this God, saying what we have already told about the creation of the world, people, and about the rest. This they adore and worship...<sup>27</sup>

As literacy was widespread, the inability to read the "writings of god" seems understandable only in terms of the language used being foreign.

Although some Spanish writers denied that religious writings existed, this appears to reflect a desire to deny the existence of what was not approved. Chirino, for example, asserts in one passage that Philippine writing was used only for correspondence, not for religion or government, but elsewhere he states, "But to return to the Indians, two of them were at this time most fortunately saved from perdition... (O)ne, who possessed a book of a certain kind of poem which they call 'golo,' very pernicious because it expresses a deliberate pact with the devil, voluntarily gave it up for burning, which was done."<sup>28</sup>

That the body of religious writing was a large one is suggested by an observation of Beyer as to the extent of destruction of religious writings by the early Spanish priests. Though not indicating his source, Beyer reports that, "one Spanish priest in southern Luzon boasted of having destroyed more than three hundred scrolls written in the native character."<sup>29</sup>

Wang Ta-yuan's *"Tao I Chih Lueh"* of 1349 is also worth noting in that he says that in Malilu, which has been tentatively identified as Manila, widows of important leaders spent the rest of their lives poring over religious texts if they could not remarry a man of equal rank.<sup>30</sup>

The contents of the epics of the pre-Spanish Filipinos are much more an unknown than even the religious writings. For though they were of the same genre as the great Hindu epic, the Ramayana, whether

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup>*Ibid.,* p. 420.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup>Chirino, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup>Beyer, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup>William Henry Scott, *Prehispanic Source Materials for the Study of Philippine History*, p. 74.

the resemblance carried beyond form into substance is impossible to say. The present-day Maranao "Maharadia Lawana" and Maguindanao "Indarapatra and Sulayman" clearly owe their origin to the Ramayana tale.<sup>31</sup> This is significant in the sense that it demonstrates conclusively that, upon exposure to Indian religious/cultural elements, the borrowing process operated as readily in the Philippines as elsewhere in Southeast Asia. However, the Maguindanaos and Maranaos have been in continual close contact with peoples who retained the Ramayana story even after Hinduism lost its force. The tale's existence in the south cannot, therefore, be used as direct evidence of its probable existence in other regions of the Philippines.

Our knowledge is limited, then, to form. Father Francisco Alzina, who came to the Philippines in 1632 and spent 40 years in Samar and Leyte, listed six literary forms among the Visayans. One of these, the *siday*, he regarded as being the most complex and difficult for Europeans to understand, as it abounded in allusions to mythical heroes. The *siday* was an extended narrative, recited or sung, which was presented to enthralled audiences in hours-long evening performances.<sup>32</sup>

Knowing that the Ramayana story is presented elsewhere in Southeast Asia in all-night performances, one can say only that the Alzina account of the *siday* would fit the Indian epic was well as indigenous epics.

The Ramayana story is also an integral element in the dances of Indianized Southeast Asia, which utilize the graceful and symbolic hand movements we have come to associate with Thai and Indonesian dancing. With respect to the dancing, it seems much more likely that a Spanish account of Visayan dancing is describing the classical Indian dance movements. As related by Francisco Colin, the dances were danced to metal gongs, fluctuating from warlike to passionate to measured,

and interposed are some elevations that really enrapture and surprise. They generally hold in the hands a towel, or a spear and shield, and with one and the other they make their gestures in time, which are full of meaning. At other times, with the hands empty they make movements which correspond to the movements of the feet, now slow, now rapid. Now they attack and retire; now they incite; now they pacify; now they come close; now they go away: all the grace and elegance, so much, in fact, that at times they have not been judged unworthy to accompany and solemnize our Christian feasts.<sup>33</sup>

### The Writing System

A central fact concerning the Indian-derived Philippine writing

<sup>31</sup>Juan R. Francisco, *Maharadia Lawana*, p. 2, and Juan R. Francisco, *The Philippines and India*, pp. 118-127, *passim*. Though Francisco has not analyzed the latter epic in the same depth that led to his explicit statement of Ramayana derivation for "Maharadia Lawana," the Indian connection seems evident.

<sup>32</sup>Miguel A. Bernad, *The Christianization of the Philippines: Problems and Perspectives*, pp. 151-152, quoting from an unpublished manuscript by Father Francisco Alzina.

<sup>33</sup>Colin, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

system is that it was remarkably widespread. The early accounts also agree that the widespread literacy included the women as much as the men. Typical of the accounts is that of Chirino, who wrote as follows:

All these islanders are much given to reading and writing, and there is hardly a man, and much less a woman, who does not read and write in the letters used in the island of Manila... They easily make themselves understood and convey their ideas marvelously, he who reads supplying, with much skill and facility, the consonants which are lacking... They used to write on reeds and palm leaves, using as a pen an iron point; now they write their own letters, as well as ours, with a sharpened quill, and, as we do, on paper.<sup>34</sup>

Besides attesting to the high degree of literacy, the Chirino account also identifies reeds and palm leaves as writing materials. Other accounts corroborate this. Dr. Antonio de Morga states, "The common manner of writing among the natives is on leaves of trees, and on bamboo bark.<sup>35</sup>

#### Colin states:

Before they knew anything about the paper (and even yet they do in places where they cannot get it), those people wrote on bamboos or on palm leaves, using as a pen the point of a knife or other bit of iron, with which they engraved the letters on the smooth side of the bamboo. If they write on palm leaves they fold and then seal the letter when written, in our manner. They all cling fondly to their own method of writing and reading. There is scarcely a man, and still less a woman, who does not know and practice that method, even those who are already Christians in matters of devotion.<sup>36</sup>

The use of palm leaves as a writing material is highly significant. Modern-day writers have sometimes sought to promulgate the clearly erroneous idea that the Filipinos had no equivalent of papyrus and that Filipino writing was therefore a laborious process of inscription on bamboo which precluded any but the briefest items.<sup>37</sup> In the source area of the Filipino writing system, Indonesia, religious writings were inscribed on *lontar*, a palmyra palm, the leaves of which are used as papyrus. If Filipinos did not have the *lontar*, they obviously used similar materials, and from a technical standpoint there appears to be no reason why Filipinos were precluded from religious writings any more that were the Indonesians.

Thus, there can be no question that it was the systematic destruction of Filipino writings by the Spaniards, as described earlier, and not a non-existence of significant writings because of inadequate writing materials, which explains the absence of any surviving examples today.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup>Chirino, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-243.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup>Dr. Antonio de Morga, "Sucesos De Las Islas Filipinas," Blair and Robertson, Vol. XVI, pp. 115-117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup>Colin, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup>Bernad, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151.

The Filipino writing system was commonly used for at least two hundred fifty years after the coming of the Spaniards. The first book printed in the Philippines, the *Doctrina Christiana*, was printed in 1593 in Tagalog in the Filipino script. Dozens of signatures in the script from legal documents have been preserved, primarily in the archives of the University of Santo Tomas. A Spanish writer in 1751 observed that almost everybody in the Visayas could write in the native script. Some thirty years later spelling reform for the native script was a current issue of the day.<sup>38</sup> One of the participants in the 18th century reform debate recalled the Filipino reaction to a similar proposal made one hundred fifty years earlier. The Filipino reaction demonstrated that the writing system was of considerable cultural significance, rather than being merely an insensate tool. The lighthearted description of the earlier rejection of reform was as follows:

They, after much praising of it and giving thanks for it, decided it could not be incorporated into their writing because it was contrary to the intrinsic character and nature which God have (*sic*) given it and that it would destroy the syntax, prosody and spelling of the Tagalog language all at one blow, but that they did not mean to give offense to the Spanish lords and would be sure that special use would be made of it when writing words from the Spanish language in Tagalog script.<sup>39</sup>

The probable origin of the Philippine script seems to have been South Celebes in east Indonesia.<sup>40</sup> South Celebes fell within the suzerainty of Madjapahit, which reached its peak from 1350-89,<sup>41</sup> and Islam did not come to the Celebes until the 1500's. It was not until 1605 that the prince of the kingdom of Gowa (adjacent to Macassar) took the politically significant step of adopting Islam.<sup>42</sup> Thus, if the Philippine script came from South Celebes, there seems little question that its introduction occurred at a time when the bearers of the script were actively Hindu.

# **The Linguistic Record**

With respect to Sanskrit borrowings in the Philippine languages, much discussion has centered on whether the borrowings were directly from Sanskrit or from an intermediate Malay language. This misses the point; the significance of the Sanskrit borrowings lies in the nature of the words themselves. To use an analogy with Spanish borrowings by Tagalog, it is of absolutely no significance for the Tagalog belief structure that the Tagalogs borrowed the Spanish words *mesa* for "table" and *silla* for "chair." The Spaniards could have been Christian, Muslim, or pagan; the Tagalog belief structure would have remained the same.

<sup>38</sup>Scott, op. cit., pp. 57-59.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 59, quoting Cipriano Marcilla y Martin, *Estudio de los antiguos* Alfabetos Filipinos (Manila, 1895), pp. 93-94.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 60-64.

<sup>41</sup>Coedes, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-242.

<sup>42</sup>Vlekke, op. cit., pp. 83-84 and 105-106.

By contrast, it was of great significance that the Tagalogs borrowed the Spanish word *Dios* for "God." Belief words are neither easily introduced nor easily displaced. The acceptance of *Dios* was the outgrowth of a prolonged educational and missionary effort on the part of the Spaniards to instill a new set of religious beliefs. Without this major effort, the word would never have gained preference over *Bathala.* And despite four hundred years of Christianity, the old word *Bathala* still lives on in the current vocabulary.

In short, the introduction and internalization of Sanskrit belief and value words would have required extensive and prolonged contact with those from whom these words were acquired.

Approaching the matter from this standpoint, it is the northern and central Philippine languages which are of significance in the study of Indian religious beliefs in the Philippines. Recent glottochronological studies by David Thomas and Alan Healey suggest that the northern Philippine languages separated from the "Chamic" languages (which includes Malay) at about 700 B.C., and that the central Philippine languages separated at about 100 B.C.<sup>43</sup> Since these languages separated well before the introduction of Sanskrit into their areas of origin, the religious words seem unlikely to have been ancient borrowings whose full significance was lost in the course of migrations to the Philippines.

In other words, the borrowed words would almost certainly have been absorbed directly from possessors of a living Hindu tradition. Further confirmation of this supposition is shown by the fact that only ten percent of Sanskrit words listed by Juan Francisco in his "Indian Influences in the Philippines" are common to all three of the major languages: Tagalog, Visayan, and Ilocano.<sup>44</sup> Thus, the borrowings would have had to have taken place after the three languages had differentiated and their speakers were, presumably, in their present geographical areas. Moreover, though Tagalog on the basis of Francisco's analysis has more Sanskrit words than do Visayan or Ilocano, each of these languages has Sanskrit words not found in the others. Thus, the borrowings must have taken place by direct contact of each of the language groups with a non-Philippine source, and not through diffusion from Tagalog.

Among the more significant Sanskrit borrowings, as selected from Francisco,<sup>45</sup> are:

- Bathala "Supreme Being" in Tagalog and other languages; "idol" in Visayan; [fr. Sans. bhattara, "noble lord, lord, great lord"]
- Diwata "Supreme Being" in Visayan; "spirits" in Tagalog; [fr. Sans. "divine beings, divinity"]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup>Teodoro A. Llamzon, S.J., "In the Beginning Was the Word," in *Filipino Heritage: The Making of a Nation,* Vol. 2, p. 398-399.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup>Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup>Francisco, "Indian Influences in the Philippines," pp. 31-38.

- diwa "soul" in Tagalog, Visayan, Ilocano, and South Mangyan; [fr. Sans. *jiva* "living, alive, existing;"]; in Bicolano, means "semi-divine beings" [probably comes fr. Sans. *deva* "goddess," rather than *jiva.*]
- lingga phallic symbol representative of Siva, [fr. Sans. linga.]
  - *likha* Sanskrit term (*lekha*) for "god"or "deity," which Tagalogs applied to the carved statues of stone, wood, gold, or ivory which they kept in their homes.
- mantala "prayers and mysterious words"or "enchantment formula" in Tagalog and Pampangan; "advise" or "counsel" in Visayan; [fr. Sans. "verse or formula of enchantment, instrument of thought, sacred texts, consultation, counsel."]
  - karna Ilocano for "soul" (obsolete), "vigor, force, strength, energy;" [fr. Sans. karma, "action, deed" (it is one's karma which in Hinduism determines the soul's station in its subsequent incarnation)].
  - muksa Tagalog for "death" or "to die," [fr. Sans. moksa, "final delivery, exemption from bodily needs and miseries of life, spiritual salvation" (the more common Tagalog word for "death" or "to die" has an entirely unrelated base)].
- sampalataya Tagalog for "faith, trust, and belief in God;" [fr. Sans. sampratyaya].
  - dupa Tagalog for "incense" and/or "perfume," [fr. Sans. dhupa, "incense, aromatic vapour, fumigation"].
  - manalagna Visayan for "one who tells the horoscope or destiny of a person;" [fr. Sans. lagna, "horoscope, an auspicious moment or time fixed upon as lucky beginning to perform anything"].
    - patianak in Tagalog, "an evil spirit which is believed to cause miscarriage or abortion;" in Visayan sangputanan is "doom, gloom;" [the Visayan and perhaps the Tagalog is fr. Sans. putana, the female demon which kills children or infants, or causes a particular disease in children].
  - hari or ari "king" in various Philippine languages; [fr. Sans. hari, "king," name of Indra, king of the celestials] [fr. Sans. sri, placed before names of persons as a sign of respect, or "lord".]
    - si Tagalog honorific placed before names of persons;

[fr. Sans *sri*, placed before names of persons as a sign of respect, or "lord"].

maharlika — Tagalog for "a free man, rich. he who is not a slave;" [fr. Sans. maharddhika, "rich, he who has great talent or knowledge"].

Though there is little in the Spanish accounts, except in the case of "Bathala," to illuminate the religious philosophy which would have accompanied the linguistic concepts, there is in the *Boxer Codex* an account of a belief in transmigration which may be relevant to this study. According to the account, souls die seven times, which could correspond to Buddhism's seven heavens, and some of those who die return to life in a manner reminiscent of Buddhist *"bodhisattvas."* 

In the past and at present, they have known that they have a soul which, on leaving the body, goes to a certain place that some call *"casan"* and others *"maca."* This, they say, is divided into two large towns with an arm of the sea in between. One, they say, is for the soul of mariners, who are dressed in white; the other is for all the rest, who are dressed in red for greater attraction. They say that the souls which inhabit these places die seven times, and some return to being alive and suffer the same travail and miseries that they suffered in this world in their bodies, but they have the power to take away and give health, which they cause to happen by means of the winds; and for this reason they reverse and ask of them for help by holding drinking feasts.<sup>46</sup>

It should be noted in this regard that in Indian literature, the Gods frequently call upon the wind for assistance.<sup>47</sup>

# **Indian Customs**

There are a number of present-day Filipino customs which appear to be of Indian origin. While a number of writers have pointed this out,<sup>48</sup> there does not appear to have been any systematic attempt to develop a comprehensive and authoritative enumeration. Elements which are coincidentally similar to Indian customs should be eliminated from consideration, as well as pre-Hindu cultural elements common to the region but not associated with the diffusion of Indian scholars for evidence of Indian practices no longer evident today.

For example, among the Filipino customs which the Spaniards encountered was what appears to have been the Indian form of greeting, now vanished from the Philippines though common elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Chirino states that, "The mode of salutation upon entering or meeting anyone is as follows: "They drew the body together and make a low reverence, raising one or both hands to the face, and placing them upon the cheeks."<sup>49</sup>

 $<sup>^{46}\</sup>mbox{The Boxer Codex, p. 429, modified by the writer's translation from the Spanish, p. 374.$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup>Francisco, "Indian Influences in the Philippines," pp. 141-143.
<sup>48</sup>See, for example, Patanne, *op. cit.*, pp. 372-376.
<sup>49</sup>Chirino, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

Illustrative of present-day customs or beliefs which appear to be Indian-derived<sup>50</sup> are that of eating in silence and leaving a small portion of food on the plate, not sleeping with wet hair because of the belief that it will cause sickness, the idea that a major construction work requires a human sacrifice, and throwing of water on passers-by on particular religious days (the feast of St. John the Baptist). A devotional area in the home for family worship before a religious image is a Hindu practice which parallels the practice of the early Filipinos, as described in particularly clear detail by Chirino,<sup>51</sup> and which has been perpetuated in many Catholic Filipino homes.

### The Archaeological Record

The Spaniards destroyed hundreds of "idols" in converting the Philippines to Christianity, and for many decades after the country was nominally Christian, Spanish priests were still ferreting out idols hidden away by secret practitioners of the old religion. Indeed, as late as 1773, a church synod in Pangasinan discussed means of putting a stop to the secret practice of ceremonies of the old religion.<sup>52</sup>

Those "idols" not destroyed by the Spaniards would have been carefully hidden away, perhaps to be forgotten and thereby lost permanently or perhaps to be eventually destroyed by their owners as the old religion became a shameful vestige from the past.

One would, in light of the Spanish destruction, expect a limited archaeological record of religious statuary. Because of this, the few Indian images thus far discovered in the Philippines can with considerable logic be considered a representative of a once-more-prevalent category of object instead of as isolated curiosities. Certainly, their existence cannot be lightly dismissed, particularly when some were crafted locally. Moreover, with each additional discovery the significance of the total grows, particularly when one contemplates the much greater rarity of non-Indian religious statuary discoveries.

Perhaps because there has not previously been a comprehensive listing of Indian origin items discovered in the Philippines, the extent of the findings does not appear to have been fully appreciated. It is therefore worth listing the discoveries to date, partly in the hope that others will come forward with additions to what is in all probability an incomplete tabulation.

#### 1. The Golden Image of Agusan

This is the figure of what is probably a female deity, which was found on the left bank of the Wawa River in Agusan in 1917 after a storm and flood. It is now in the Chicago Museum of Natural History. It is seated cross-legged, is made of twenty-one carat gold, and weighs nearly four pounds. It is probably a Mahayana Buddhist goddess from the late 13th or nearly 14th centuries.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup>Patanne, *loc. cit.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup>Chirino, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-301.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup>Bernad, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup>Francisco, *The Philippines and India*, pp. 38-46.

### 2. Buddhist Clay Image from Calatagan, Batangas

This is a clay medallion discovered during an archaeological dig in 1961. It is locally made, 2.6 inches high and 1.9 inches wide, with a low relief image of the Mahayana Buddhist Boddhisattva Avalokitesvara. The site dates from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries.<sup>54</sup>

### 3. Mactan Avalokitesvara Icon

Excavated about 1921 by Professor Beyer from a site in Mactan, the image is known only from a photograph. The statue is bronze and may be a Siva-Buddhist blending rather than being purely Buddhist.<sup>55</sup>

# 4. Mactan Ganesha

This is a crude copper Ganesha excavated about 1921 from the same Mactan site as number 3 above. It is known only from a photograph. Because of the crude workmanship, it is undoubtedly locally made.<sup>56</sup>

#### 5. Bronze Lokesvara

This was found in Isla Puting Bato, Tondo, Manila. *Lokesvara*, Lord of the World, is the Southeast Asian name for *Avalokitesvara*.<sup>57</sup>

### 6. Puerto Galera Ganesha

This is pictured, without additional explanation, in Patanne's book.<sup>58</sup>

7. Bronze Ornament of Indian Design from Rizal.

This is pictured, without additional explanation, in Patanne's book.  $^{\rm 59}$ 

8. Golden Garuda Pendant from Brooke's Point, Palawan.

This was a family heirloom, purchased from a family in Brookes Point and now at the National Museum of the Philippines.<sup>60</sup>

Gold Ornaments of the Arturo de Santos Collection.

According to Robert Fox, the gold ornaments in the collection are thought to be largely of local manufacture or traded in from Indonesia, for Indian design elements are readily apparent in most items.<sup>61</sup>

#### 10. Miscellaneous.

Beyer stated that there were minor finds of coins, pottery, etc. with

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>60</sup>Juan R. Francisco, "Reflexions on the Migration Theory Vis-a-vis the Coming of Indian Influences in the Philippines," *Asian Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 3 (December 1971), p. 312.

<sup>61</sup>Robert B. Fox, "The Archaeological Record of Chinese Influences in the Philippines," *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Jan. 1967), p. 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 47-53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 55-58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup>Juan R. Francisco, "Indian Imprint," in *Filipino Heritage: The Making of a Nation*, Vol. 3, p. 577.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup>Patanne, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

the Mactan images which were relics from the days of Madjapahit; Fox stated in passing in an article in which the Agusan image was discussed that there were other bronze images of the same period recovered in Davao; as mentioned earlier, *lingas* were found in Pinagbayanan, and there are the possible *linga* and *yoni* from Magsingal, llocos Sur; there reportedly are recent excavations on the eastern shores of Laguna de Bay which have allegedly revealed evidence of cremations.

# Conclusion

The available evidence appears consistent with the contention that the upper layers of Philippine society were Indianized at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards. There was an Indian-origin writing system and widespread literacy; priests who were "readers of the writings of god" and keepers of the religious traditions and who performed religious ceremonies in a foreign language that was most probably Sanskrit; images for worship that were designated by the Sanskrit term *"likha,"* "god" or "deity," a cosmology in which the Supreme Being was the same Supreme Being, *"Bathala,"* found today in Hindu Bali; and languages which had borrowed extensively of Indian religious and ethical terminology.

Moreover, the belief structure was amazingly persistent, despite the introduction of Christianity, a persistence analogous to the persistence of Hindu beliefs in nominally Muslim Java. This persistence even contributed in one region to flight to the interior, by inhabitants from areas surrounding Mt. Banahaw. Even today, Mt. Banahaw is regarded as a sacred mountain, the object of annual pilgrimages by numerous religious sects, some of which retain elements apparently attributable to practices and traditions preserved from the early beliefs. The concept of a mountain as sacred, the dwelling place of the gods, is itself a Hindu belief, observable today not only in Balinese cosmology but also in an annual pilgrimage up Mt. Bromo in East Java. The same pilgrimage tradition, incidentally, is said to be associated with Cuyo, Palawan, where three little mountains dominate a plateau. Gold ornaments and numerous porcelain objects are also reportedly discovered there after rains.<sup>62</sup>

Viewing the totality of pre-Spanish Philippine society, it seems likely that we of the twentieth century have projected four hundred years into the past the present-day absence of pervasive Indian elements and concluded that what is not today could not have been then. The evidence suggests that we should reexamine this view and revise our conclusions about pre-Hispanic Philippine society.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup>Alfred Marche, Luzon and Palawan, p. 218.

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