

The Augustinian Haciendas in Cebu, 1899-1910*

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Cebu is considered nowadays the second most popular and progressive city next to Metro Manila. But in the field of historiography, there are still so many important events and issues about the island that need to be written. Writers of history textbooks only mentioned Cebu in their discussion of the first few years of Spanish rule. Their discussion normally revolves around the encounter of Ferdinand Magellan and Rajah Humabon, the Battle of Mactan, the discovery of the image of Sto. Niño and the struggle of Rajah Tupas against Miguel Lopez de Legazpi. But after the Legazpi expedition moved to Manila in 1571, Cebu vanished in the historical narrative.

To enrich the existing literature on Cebu, this paper will discuss one aspect of the island's local history that very few historians and social scientists have dealt with. Specifically, this paper will focus on the Augustinian haciendas in Cebu. Again, most of the existing literatures on what is popularly known now as "friar lands" are centered on the haciendas in Luzon, particularly those found in the Tagalog region. I think time has come for studies on the friar lands to move out of the Tagalog region and examine also the other haciendas outside Luzon. In this regard, this paper will explore the history of the Augustinian estates in Cebu.

The present study will reconstruct the history of Banilad and Talisay estates based on the documents and interviews that the Ameri-

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can insular government gathered during the first decade of the American period. It will not anymore discuss extensively the history of these haciendas during the Spanish period because a number of authors, like Roth,¹ Cushner,² Endriga³ and Escalante,⁴ have already examined this particular period. Instead, this study will focus more on what transpired during and after the Philippine Revolution particularly at the time that the Augustinians and the insular government were negotiating their sale. The time frame of this study is from 1899 to 1910. The former represents the year the Augustinians sold the two haciendas to the *Compañía Agrícola de Ultramar* and the latter marked the year the estates were offered for sale to the tenants. Part of the objective of this study is to stimulate more studies on local history of Cebu particularly in the field of agrarian history.

The Augustinians in the Philippines

The first batch of missionaries who set foot in the Philippines were the Augustinians. They were led by Fray Andres de Urdaneta, a Basque who originated from a noble family of Villafranca, Guipuzcoa. He was accompanied by two other priests, Fray Martin de Rada and Fray Andres de Aguirre and a lay brother, Fray Pedro de Gamboa. They were members of the Legazpi expedition that successfully colonized the Philippines in 1565. Initially, they were not able to establish their Order because as soon as Legazpi settled in Cebu, he sent back to Mexico his flagship "San Pedro" with Urdaneta and Aguirre on board. Later, Gamboa had to be brought back to Mexico because of poor health. The two remaining Augustinians (Herrera and Rada) had to wait for four years before the next batch of priests arrived. In 1569, two more Augustinians from Mexico, Fray Alonso

¹ Dennis Morrow Roth, *The Friar Estates of the Philippines* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977).

² Nicolas Cushner, *Landed Estates in Colonial Philippines* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1976).

³ Jose Endriga, "The Friar Lands in the Philippines During the Spanish and American Regime." (M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1969). See also Jose Endriga, "The Settlement of the Friar Lands: Promise and Performance," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* (1970): 397-413.

⁴ Rene R. Escalante, *The American Friar Lands Policy: Its Framers, Context and Beneficiaries, 1898-1916*. (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 2002).

de Jimenez and Fray Juan de Alba, joined the group. Two years after, five more arrived and with this number, they declared the Philippines a province of the Order and elected Herrera the first Augustinian provincial superior of the Philippines. Before Legazpi left Cebu, he allotted a big track of land to the Augustinians, where the latter erected a church and dedicated it to the *Santisimo Nombre de Jesus* (Most Holy Name of Jesus).⁵ It became a diocese by virtue of the papal bull that Pope Clement VIII issued on August 26, 1595⁶ and its first bishop was Fray Pedro Agurlo, OSA. By 1586, the Augustinians had already established themselves in Cebu, Negros, Panay Island, Pampanga and in several provinces in the Tagalog region.⁷

The primary concern of the Augustinians in coming to the Philippines was the propagation of Christian faith. In the pursuance of this goal however, they encountered numerous problems and the most serious was how to finance their mission. In places where Catholicism is already an established religion, funding was not so much a problem. But in mission territories like Cebu, the problem as to how to sustain themselves and their missionary activities, was a major concern of the Order. Luckily, the Spanish king extended financial and other forms of assistance to the friars⁸ in general. By

⁵ Pablo Fernandez, *History of the Church in the Philippines, 1521-1898* (Manila: National Book Store, 1979), p. 20.

⁶ The title of the papal bull is *Super specula militantis ecclesiae*.

⁷ For more information about the Augustinian early missions in Cebu see Juan de Medina, OSA "History of the Augustinian Order in the Filipinas Islands" Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson eds. *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898*, vol. 23 (Mandaluyong: Cachos Hermanos Inc., 1973), pp. 158-174. See also T. Valentino Sitoy Jr. *A History of Christianity in the Philippines: The First Encounter* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1985) and Lina Quimat, *Glimpses in History of Early Cebu* (Cebu City: 1980).

⁸ The word "friar" is derived from the Latin word *frater*, which means "brother." Its equivalent in Spanish is *fray*. Spanish missionaries were generally called friars because they used to prefix their name with the word *fray*. In Philippine history, the word "friar" has a specific meaning. It only refers to the four religious orders (*las cuatro corporaciones religiosas*) namely; the Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans and Recollects. Except for the Franciscans, the remaining three religious orders had vast landholdings in the Philippines. Miguel A. Bernad, *The Christianization of the Philippines: Problems and Perspectives* (Manila: The Filipiniana Book Guild, 1972), pp. 219-220.

virtue of the *Real Patronato de Indias*,⁹ the Spanish colonial government became the chief supporter and protector of the Church in the Philippines. On top of the financial help that they gave, colonial officials also gave the friars land grants.¹⁰ On May 27, 1572 for instance, Legazpi gave the Augustinians vast tract of land in Cebu where they erected their monastery.

The practice of giving land grants (*Mercedes*) was the King's way of rewarding and gratifying his loyal subjects. His authority to do so was based on the absolutist doctrine that King Charles I imported from the monarchy of Germany. Under this doctrine, the King was considered the absolute lord and owner of the vast territories that the Spanish *conquistadores* discovered which do not belong to any private individual or corporation.¹¹ These lands were subsequently called *realengas* (royal lands). The King could freely dispose them provided that he does not prejudice the interest of the natives. The King used these lands as dole outs to reward the military officers and bureaucrats who served in the colony. The *realengas* were also used as incentive to encourage *peninsulares* to go to the Philippines. Most of what is now known as friar lands originated from these land grants.

On top of their sacerdotal duties, the Augustinians also helped in the promotion of the material well-being of the natives. They assisted and supervised the local folks in dealing with their day-to-day problems. For instance, the Augustinians helped the Cebuanos construct fortresses against Muslim raids. They also constructed watchtowers and designed a system of signals that would alarm the people every time there was an impending Muslim attack. In this particular regard, credit must be given to Fray Julian Bermejo, OSA. He designed

⁹ Literally, it means "Royal Patronage of the Indies". For more details of this topic, see Lloyd Meham, "The Origin of Real Patronato de Indias" *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol. III (1928), p. 217.

¹⁰ Nicolas Cushner and John A. Larkin, "Royal Land Grant in the Colonial Philippines (1571-1626): Implications for the formation of a Social Elite," *Philippine Studies* 26 (1978).

¹¹ For more details about the absolutist power of the King and the laws that justified the giving of land grant, see the Spanish Decree of February 13, 1894 and "*Concession de tierras en Filipinas*." These two documents are available in English translation as part of the attachment of U.S. Congress, "House Report 2289," *Administration of Philippine Lands* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), pp. 1021-1026. (Hereafter cited as House Report 2289).

a code of signals, which was proven to be very effective in the island's defense against Muslim raids.¹²

Second, the friars in general contributed to the development of agriculture in the Philippines. They introduced work tools like plow, hoe, rake and explained to the natives the most effective way of clearing and weeding their field in order to maximize their production. They also helped in the construction of dikes, canals, roads, bridges, tunnels and drainage system. In San Francisco de Malabon alone, the Augustinians spent \$4,000 for the construction of ditches and dams.¹³ They also brought with them new crops coming from Europe and Mexico. Fray Francisco Espallargas OFM for instance, taught the residents of Bacon, Sorsogon how to harness fiber form abaca plant. Fray Matias Octavio OSA on his part taught the natives of Tambobong how to extract *añil* from indigo plant. Subsequently, the natives used the product to dye and tint their clothes.¹⁴ Another major contribution of the Augustinians to the development of Philippine agriculture was the introduction of the Mexican *trapiche*,¹⁵ a machine was used in the production of sugar. Lastly, there were also Augustinians who taught the natives how to raise silk worms and the whole process of weaving loom. The Augustinians who were responsible of these were Fray Perez in Argao, Fray Alvarez in Santander and Fray Bermejo in Boljon. Herewith is a description of how the Augustinians helped the Filipinos in the field of agriculture.

As soon as baptisms begin, the missionaries look for work animals for them and everything else necessary for agriculture. Frequently, the Father is the first to begin to plow, directing them in this fashion, that they may learn. The same

¹² Fernandez, *History of the Church in the Philippines*, p. 206.

¹³ U.S. Congress, "Senate Document 190" *Land Held for Ecclesiastical or Religious Uses in the Philippine Islands, etc.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 34. Hereafter cited as *Senate Document 190*.

¹⁴ John Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*. (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1992), p. 180.

¹⁵ The machine is made of two wooden cylinders that rotate against its other as they were pulled by a carabao. Sugar cane was inserted in between the cylinders and the juices extracted are channeled into a *caua* (big frying pan). The juice is boiled until it solidifies into sugar crystals. *Ibid.*, p. 230.

is done with the harvest. They do not use any kind of sickles, but go along gathering the grain spike by spike. And since it is very little after all, they finished quite soon. Once they have been taught to plow, it is necessary to teach them also to reap and thresh the grain. This is done by the religious being the first to begin, so that they may imitate them.¹⁶

Because of their limited number, the Augustinians were not able to farm their estates by themselves. Instead, they rented them to the local inhabitants. Some of the lessees, known as *inquilinos*,¹⁷ farmed the lands by themselves while others hired *casamahanes*.¹⁸ With this arrangement, the Augustinians were able to continue with their missionary and parish activities. They simply assigned the task of managing the hacienda and the collection of rent to the lay members of the Order or to the parish priest assigned near or within the hacienda. The income that the friars got from their haciendas was big enough to cover the maintenance and expansion of their operation. In 1891 alone, the income that the Augustinians earned from their haciendas amounted to \$150,000.¹⁹ They used the money to construct churches, convents, seminaries and other charitable institutions. There were also instances when they used the earning of the haciendas to cover the expenses of the missionaries coming from Europe and Mexico. Fr. Pablo Fernandez, OP wrote:

With the produce from the haciendas, the religious orders took care of the support of the procurators or commissary in Madrid, who recruited boatloads of missionaries and transacted in the royal court the concerns of his order. They also maintained hospices in Mexico, where the missionaries on their way to the Philippines lodged while waiting in Acapulco the departure of the galleon from Manila. Other expenses

¹⁶ Antonio Mozo OSA, *Noticia historico-natural de los gloriosos triumphos y felices...* as quoted in Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, p. 180.

¹⁷ Refers to the lessees of the friar lands who paid fix rent, known as "canon" to the owners.

¹⁸ This is the Spanish corruption of the Tagalog term "*kasama*" (literally means "companion"). The term refers to the tenant-farmers who rent land from either the owner or the *inquilino* and in return receive a share of the harvest.

¹⁹ *Report of the Taft Philippine Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 28.

included the maintenance in Spain of houses of formation for missionaries to the Philippines, partial or total expenses of the costly travel of the friars who sailed to the mission and the asignacion, or annual aid sent by the religious orders who had mission in Asia.²⁰

The Augustinians During the Revolution

What happened to the Augustinians haciendas in Cebu could be easily understood if they will be correlated with the other friar lands in Luzon. Despite the geographic distance that separated these estates, they were not insulated from major events that unfolded in the Tagalog region. Probably, the most significant of these events were the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War. Although the concentration of the conflict was in the Tagalog region, yet the response of the government and the friars affected other provinces including Cebu. In this regard, a short background of this event is necessary in order to understand what happened to the Banilad and Talisay estates during the first decade of the 20th century.

During the first one hundred years of Spanish rule of the Philippines, the friars could be considered allies and supporters of the *Indios*. They helped the Filipinos improve their living condition and in doing so there were even instances when they got entangled with their fellow Spaniards. Fray Martin de Rada OSA for instance, wrote a letter to the Viceroy of Mexico on June 30, 1574 to protest some malpractices and abuses of the *conquistadores*. Among the issues that he raised were the violent conquest of towns and villages, enslavement of the natives who were captured in the battle and the collection of excessive tribute.²¹ But in the 19th century, the popularity of the friars started to erode and the number of Filipinos who were asking for their expulsion grew in number as years went by. Some of the issues raised against them were violation of their vow of chastity, accumulation of enormous wealth, exorbitant fees for religious services, unjust treatment of the

²⁰ Fernandez, *History of the Church in the Philippines*, p. 266.

²¹ "Letter of Martin de Rada to the Viceroy of New Spain" in *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines: Some Documentary Source Documents* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, 1965), pp. 264-269. See also Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, vol. 2, pp. 161-168.

secular clergy, opposition to the teaching of Spanish, racial discrimination, meddling in government's administrative functions and many others. Initially, the anti-friar campaigns were only in papers but as time went on the friars were already experiencing threat to their life and property. Later, the threat posed by the anti-friar coalition resulted to what Leon Ma. Guerrero called "diaspora of the Spanish friars."²²

The anti-friar sentiment of the Filipinos was a product of several events and policies that evolved in the course of Philippine history. Contrary to popular belief, the tenants of the friar lands and not the secular priests and ilustrados, were the first group who challenged the authority of the friars. In 1745, the tenants of the friar haciendas in the Tagalog provinces rose in arms against their friar-landlord. Although there were no leaders who instigated the uprising, the tenants acted uniformly and raised similar accusations against the friars. They protested the result of the survey that the government conducted in 1740 and the decision of the friars to ban the natives from foraging in their haciendas. The tenants raised their grievances to the *Juez de Composition de Tierras*²³ but instead of addressing their concerns, the *Juez* sustained the position of the friars. Upon receipt of the favorable ruling, the Dominicans in U.S.T. celebrated their legal victory with pompous display of jubilation. Feeling insulted and desperate, the tenants of the Dominican hacienda in Laguna rose in arms against the owners and destroyed the granaries and the facilities in the disputed lands. The administrators of the hacienda, together with their Chinese workers, fled to Manila before the attackers reached the *Casa Hacienda*. Similar events also took place in the Augustinian estate in Meysapan and some other places in Pasig, Tondo, Bulacan and Batangas. The rebels slaughtered the livestock of the friars and burned their ranch houses. In their attacks, they only destroyed the facilities and infrastructure of the Hacienda. During the siege, casualties were minimal because those persons identified with the friars were able to escape before the attackers arrived.

²² Leon Ma. Guerrero, "Nozaleda and Pons: Two Spanish Friars in Exodus" in Gerald Anderson, *Studies in Philippine Church History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), p. 172.

²³ This is the office that directly represents the interest of the Spanish crown in the Philippines. No person or community is exempted from its jurisdiction in matters of land claims, titles and disputes even if they enjoy privileges from the Spanish king or from the pope.

To quell the uprising, Acting Governor-General Juan de Arenchederra dispatched Pedro Calderon Enriquez to settle the issues and to pacify the rebels. Calderon granted general amnesty to the rebels and promised that the friar haciendas would be re-surveyed anew. He also allowed the tenants to cultivate the disputed land until new measurements were made and asked them to deposit their rent to the treasurer pending the resolution of the real owner of the land that they till. Lastly, Calderon forbade the hacenderos from imprisoning tenants in their private jails. With the adoption of these measures, the agrarian tension subsided and after a couple of years everything went back to normal.²⁴

The second major agrarian unrest in the friar lands happened more than a century after the 1745 uprising. Unlike the first one, the Calamba uprising of 1891 did not spread in other provinces. The uprising could be considered an offshoot of the financial crisis brought about by the collapse of the sugar industry. The tenants joined the mass action because of their aspiration to improve their living condition in the midst of the crisis. They knew that if they would not pay their rent, more cash would be left to them. Led by Nicolas Llamas, the *gobernadorcillo* of Calamba and an in-law of Jose Rizal, the tenants of the *Hacienda de Calamba* accused the Dominicans of charging excessive rent and land grabbing.²⁵ They also refused to pay rent unless the Dominicans could prove that they were the legitimate owners of the hacienda. The grievances that the people of Calamba raised did not produce positive results because the government did not act on their complaints. Instead it granted the petition of the friars to eject those tenants who were not paying rent. This event is well documented in history because one of the victims here was the family of Jose Rizal.²⁶

²⁴ For a extensive discussion of the 1745 Tagalog Uprising see Roth, *The Friar Estates of the Philippines*, pp. 100-116 and Cushner, *Landed Estates in Colonial Philippines*, pp. 58-66.

²⁵ A translation of the petition that the tenants of Calamba sent to Gov. Gen. Emilio Terrero is reprinted in Marcelo H. Del Pilar, *Monastic Supremacy in the Philippines* (Manila: Garcia Publishing House, 1958), pp. 87-93.

²⁶ The Dominican version of the Calamba uprising is found in Fray Felipe Dominguez O.P.'s *Apuntes Sobre la Hacienda de Calamba*. Fray Dominguez, the administrator of the Calamba estate, refuted the accusation of the townsfolk and described the Dominicans as just and considerate landlords. See Jose Arcilla S.J. trans.

It appears that the refusal of the government to attend to the concerns of the tenants did not do any good to both the friars and the colonial government. It only agitated the tenants further and closed the door for a peaceful settlement of the agrarian issues in the friar lands. The situation turned from bad to worse when Gov. Gen. Valeriano Weyler ordered the deportation of those tenants who refused to pay rent. Weyler's move eliminated the hope of the tenants to own the land that they till through peaceful means. They believed that so long as the friars and the colonial officials are around, reforms in the land tenure system would never take place. Consequently, they entertained the possibility of joining radical movements that were working for the expulsion of the friars and the overthrow of the government.

Prior to the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution, the Augustinians were already feeling the heat of the anti-friar movements. In order to diffuse the tension and to remove the stigma that they were greedy landlords, they decided to part with their haciendas. The Augustinians relegated the management of their lands to private individuals. At the time the Americans arrived in the Philippines, the Banilad and Talisay estates were no longer in the name of the Augustinians. But strictly speaking, the friars in general did not part with their haciendas because they still owned more than half of the stocks of their respective company. Testifying before the U.S. Senate, Taft admitted that the friars transferred the ownership of their hacienda to a private company to create an impression that they had already parted with their landholdings.²⁷ They had to do this to facilitate the collection of rent and to erase the popular perception that they were abusive landlords. Fr. Santiago Paya, O.P., the provincial of the Dominicans, admitted to the Taft Commission that:

The real reason we conveyed our property to another party was to have nothing further to do with the administration of these agricultural lands and to remove the complaint which

"Documents Concerning the Calamba Deportation of 1891," *Philippine Studies* 18 (1970): 577-633. See also Fidel Villarreal O.P., *The Dominicans and the Philippine Revolution* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 1999), p. 48.

²⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, *Hearing Before the Committee on the Philippines*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 180.

*was made against us that the friars owned all the lands and were making all the money.*²⁸

The Augustinians were the first Order that transferred the ownership of their landholdings to a private company.²⁹ On February 6, 1893, they organized the *Compañía Agrícola de Ultramar* in Madrid. It had an initial capitalization of 4,050,000 pesetas, divided into 81 shares and each share has a value of 50,000 pesetas. The charter of the company states that it aims to exploit and develop the agricultural potential of the Philippines and other Spanish colonies. Herewith are dummy shareholders and their respective investments:

Shareholder	Investments
1. Celedonio del Va	1,000,000 pesetas
2. Manuel Fernandes del Valle	350,000 pesetas
3. Patricio Garcia Cortina	350,000 pesetas
4. Diego Suarez	400,000 pesetas
5. Claudio Lopez y Bru	1,000,000 pesetas
6. Santiago Lopez	300,000 pesetas
7. Mariano Sainz	400,000 pesetas
8. Jose Sainz	250,000 pesetas

T o t a l - 4,050,000 pesetas

After the creation of the *Compañía*, the Augustinians sold to the company the San Francisco de Malabon, Tala, Malinta and Piedad estates in 1893. The Isabela, Muntinlupa, Dampol, San Marcos, Matamo and Guiguinto estates were sold in 1899. It was also in the same year that they sold to the *Compañía* their estates in Cebu. The last hacienda that the Augustinian sold was the Binagbag estate and it happened in 1901.³⁰ Aside from transferring the ownership, the Augustinians did not appoint anyone among them in the board of the *Compañía* to strengthen their claim that they had already given up

²⁸ "Testimony of Santiago Paya," *Senate Document 190*, p. 20.

²⁹ The Recollects and the Dominicans also followed the move of the Augustinians. The former sold their estates to British Manila Estate Company and the latter to Philippine Sugar Estates Development Company.

³⁰ Not all estates of the Augustinians were sold to the *Compañía*. For instance, they sold their *Hacienda de Pasig* to Warner, Barnes and Company in 1891. Roth, *The Friar Estates of the Philippines*, p. 152.

their estates. They designated Juan Martin Ibañez as general manager of the company and the other members of the Board were Manuel Gutierrez, Ricardo Deza, Felipe Garcia, Francisco Alvarez and Jose Prada. All of them were residents of Manila.³¹

The decision of the friars to transfer the ownership of their hacienda to their respective company did not achieve its intended purpose. When the revolution broke out in 1896, the Katipuneros still routed the friars ferociously. They prioritized in their order of battle the friar-haciendas. The rebels burned the *Casa Tribunal* to destroy the land titles and other records of land ownership. They believed that doing so would deprive the friars of the legal documents that would prove their ownership of the hacienda.³² The Philippine Revolution can be considered the epitome of the anti-friar sentiment and the agrarian unrest in the friar lands. By this time, tenants have already assumed a radical stand. They demanded the expulsion of the friars and the distribution of their landholdings. Those who joined the Revolution believed that their economic life would improve once they became independent cultivators.

By the time the Americans arrived in the Philippines in 1898, the friars were no longer active in managing their haciendas. The violence inflicted on them during the Revolution forced several of them to abandon their lands. Some of them who were not killed fled to Manila and the rest left the country for good. In 1896, there were 1,124 friars in the country. In 1900, their number went down to 472.³³ Because of their mass exodus, many of their landholdings were left unattended in the different *pueblos*. These properties were later confiscated and appropriated by the revolutionary government. Aguinaldo ordered the officers of the Municipal Board to sequester

³¹ For more details about the *Compañía* and the sale of the Augustinian estates, see *House Report 2289*, pp. 965-966. See also *Report of the Philippine Commission* Part I (1903), p. 39.

³² John R.M. Taylor, *The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States*, vol. II (Pasay City: Eugenio Lopez Foundation, 1971), pp. 39-40. Hereafter cited as *The Philippine Insurrection*. The burning of land titles and other records was also confirmed by Fr. Francisco Araya, the provincial of the Recoletos. "Testimony of Very Rev. Francisco Araya" *Senate Document 190*, p. 45.

³³ U.S. Philippine Commission, 1899-1900, *Report of the Taft Commission* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 31.

the properties of the enemies and treat them as property of the government.³⁴ On June 20, 1898, he issued the guidelines as to the manner in which the government should deal with the "booty of war." In this circular, he ordered the town chief to manage the properties left by the Spaniards. He asked the head of the town to make an inventory of these properties and send a copy to the national government.³⁵ Three days later, Aguinaldo created the Department of Treasury, the office that would take charge of the administration of the confiscated properties. During the Revolution the friar lands became the milking cow of the Aguinaldo government. Fray Santiago Paya, O.P. told Taft, "The money they have made out of those lands has been a great element in carrying on the war for them. To take the haciendas away from them now will be a hard stroke against the Revolution."³⁶

The anti-friar sentiment in Cebu was lesser in terms of intensity because of the cordial relationship of Bishop Martin Garcia de Alcocer, OFM and the people of Cebu. Unlike Bishop Hevia of Nueva Segovia and Archbishop Nozaleda of Manila, Alcocer had fraternal relation with the Filipino clergy and the public in general. In the diocese of Cebu, the secular clergy had a fair share in the distribution of the parishes and Bishop Alcocer did not mistrust his subordinates. In fact when he took over the administration of the Archdiocese of Manila in 1901, he brought with him two Cebuano priests, Fr. Emiliano Mercado and Fr. Pedro del Mar, to serve as his assistants. When he turned over the diocese to Bishop Hendrick in 1903, he parted with high praise for the Filipino clergy particularly for Fr. Pablo Singson and Fr. Juan Gorordo. He even recommended the former to be the bishop of Calbayog, Samar. In response to his generosity and goodwill, the Cebuanos spared him from the wrath of the revolutionaries from Luzon. When Gen. Lukban ordered the house arrest of Bishop Alcocer, the secular clergy of Cebu asked Aguinaldo to overrule the order and begged that their bishop be exempted from the Malolos decision to expel the friars.³⁷

³⁴ Taylor, *The Philippine Insurrection*, vol. III, p. 34.

³⁵ Ibid., Rules No. 24 and 31.

³⁶ "Interview of Santiago Paya," *Senate Document 190*, p. 18.

³⁷ John Schumacher, *Revolutionary Clergy* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1991), pp. 137-9; 155.

The spread of the revolution in Cebu came a little bit late. Francisco Llamas, a former municipal treasurer of San Nicolas, Cebu, was one of the prime movers of the uprising in the province. He, together with Candido Padilla, Catalino Fernandez, Luis Flores and a few hundred others, gathered at barrio Labangon, San Nicolas on April 3, 1898. Except for the machetes, pointed poles and a few rifles, the group did have enough arms to match the Spaniards. Initially, the members of the *Guardia Civil* thought that the group was only watching a cockfight. Later, they discovered that armed men were already pitching their camps. The *guardia civil* riflemen and a few other volunteers organized themselves and headed towards Colon. But before reaching their destination, they were engaged by a group of rebels led by Pantaleon Villegas (a.k.a. Leon Kilat). In this encounter, government troops were forced to retreat after losing some of their men. With the defeat of the Spaniards, the rebels took control of the city for the time being.³⁸ The victory of the rebels was cut short by the arrival of the Spanish troops from Iligan, Iloilo and Manila. Spanish cruisers bombarded the rebel stronghold and after the death of Leon Kilat, the revolutionary spirit mellowed down. By April 8, 1898, the Spaniards regained control of the Cebu.³⁹

The defeat of the Spanish armada on May 1, 1898 and their subsequent surrender on August 13, 1898, affected the political landscape of Cebu. These developments resulted to the erosion of the political and economic influence of the Spaniards in the island. Gradually, the local leaders of Cebu occupied the positions vacated by the colonial officials. But their hold on to power did not last long because a few days after the outbreak of the Filipino-American war, American military officials aboard the gunboat *Petrel*, demanded the surrender of Cebu. Right away, local officials called a general assembly to discuss the matter. After carefully examining their

³⁸ For an eyewitness account of the outbreak of the revolution in Cebu, see Elisa Krapfenbauer, "Outbreak of the Revolution in Cebu in 1898" in Erlinda Kintanar-Albuero, *Sumad: Essays for the Centennial of the Revolution in Cebu*, (Manila: De la Salle University Press, 2001) pp. 127-131.

³⁹ Teodoro Kalaw, *Philippine Revolution*. (Quezon City: Garcia Publishing Company, 1969), p. 81. See also Onofre D. Corpuz, *Roots of the Filipino Nation*, vol. II (Quezon City: Aklahi Foundation, 1989), 275-276.

options, they decided to surrender the city to the Americans on February 22, 1899 with a letter of protest written by Luis Flores.⁴⁰

The Purchase of the Friar Lands

When the Americans arrived in the Philippines, the anti-friar sentiment had not yet subsided. In fact it intensified further after the friars sought the help of the insular government in recovering their lands and in collecting the overdue rent. According to them, by virtue of the Treaty of Paris, the American government was bound to respect their property rights.⁴¹ Those Filipinos who appropriated the friar lands were deeply upset by this move of the friars. Aside from the fact that they did not want to pay rent, they did not want to give up the lands they acquired during the Revolution. The Americans took the friar lands issue seriously because it affected their campaign to pacify the Islands.

Before deciding on what to do, the Taft Commission conducted an inquiry on the nature of the friar lands issue and other related concerns. The Commission summoned prominent personalities to shed light on the issue. For the first time in history, interested parties were given the opportunity to raise their grievances against the friars without the threat of being persecuted.⁴² As expected, the two opposing parties testified based on their economic interest and political affiliation.

After listening to the arguments of the parties concerned, Taft was convinced that the friars were the rightful owners of the hacien-

⁴⁰ The text of the letter of protest is found in Kalaw, *Philippine Revolution*, p. 172. For more details about the participation of the Cebuanos in the Filipino-American War, see Resil Mojares, *Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu, 1899-1906: The War Against the Americans* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999).

⁴¹ U.S. War Department, *Special Report of William Howard Taft, Secretary of War to the President on the Philippine Islands* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1909), p. 21.

⁴² The minutes of the inquiry were later published as *Senate Document 190* with the title "Lands Held for Ecclesiastical or Religious Uses in the Philippine Islands, Etc." The Commission interviewed thirty-seven respondents. They included the superiors of the different religious orders, the Bishop of Manila, Jaro and Vigan; prominent Filipinos like Felipe Calderon, Pedro Serrano Laktaw, Maximo Viola, Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera, and Jose Rodriguez Infante; American military officers and many others who expressed their willingness to testify before the Commission.

das. But in his report to McKinley, he cautioned White House officials that to give back the haciendas to the friars would seriously derail the peace process sponsored by the insular government. In his letter to Secretary Elihu Root, Taft recommended that it would be to the interest of the majority to purchase the friar lands and sell them to the tenants.⁴³ He also reported to the Secretary of War that the friars were open to the idea of selling their estates to the government.

The purchase of the friar lands turned out to be a long and tedious process and it took Taft three years before the contract of sale was consummated. After President McKinley gave him the green light, Taft passed by Rome to speed up the negotiation before returning to Manila.⁴⁴ Although the friars and the Vatican agreed in principle to sell the friar lands, the negotiation in Manila did not proceed smoothly. It dragged on when the two parties started to determine the value of the lands and the haciendas to be included in the sale. Because of Taft's determination to settle the friar lands issue, the purchase was consummated on 22 December 1903. The details of the sale are the following:

<i>Vendor</i>	<i>Land Area</i>	<i>Price</i>
1. Dominicans	60,461 hectares	5,473,799.13
2. Augustinians	68,770 hectares	4,407,335.65
3. Recoletos	41,685 hectares	2,205,303.33
T o t a l - 170,917 hectares		12,086,438.11⁴⁵

To put in on record, the American government purchased the friar lands because of political reasons. It wanted to get rid of a class that disturbed the political stability of the colony. White House officials believed that the settlement of the friar lands issue was an inexpensive way of pacifying the colony. As it turned out, the purchase of the friar

⁴³ "Letter of Taft to Root," 26 September 1901, *William H. Taft Papers Series* 8 Philippine National Library, Microfilm Collection, p. 3. (Hereafter cited as Taft Papers).

⁴⁴ For more details about the Taft's mission to Rome, see Philippine Commission, *Correspondence Between the Holy See and Hon. W. H. Taft* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1902) and John T. Farrell, "Background of the Taft Mission to Rome I," *The Catholic Historical Review* 37 (1951).

⁴⁵ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, (1903), pp. 199-203. The currency used here is Mexican dollar. In 1903, one U.S. dollar was equivalent to two Mexican dollars.

lands really brought several benefits to the American government. First, it led to the waning of the anti-friar sentiment among Filipinos. After they have liquidated their assets, many of the friars left the country for good.⁴⁶ Second, the purchase of the friar lands and its subsequent sale to the tenants strengthened their propaganda that they came to the Philippines to promote the welfare of the Filipinos. Before the eyes of the Americans and Filipinos, McKinley's administration would appear benevolent and pro-Filipino. Lastly, the settlement of the friar lands would not affect the American taxpayers because the money they used to pay the friars came from the bonds that the insular government floated.

The Origin and Extent of the Augustinian Haciendas in Cebu

The Augustinian estates in Cebu were not given that much attention by historians because of several reasons. First, the fact that they are located outside Luzon, they became less accessible to Manila-based historians and social scientists. Even during the early American period, colonial officials regarded these haciendas insignificant. As a matter of fact, they were the last haciendas that the Bureau of Lands surveyed and offered for sale. The case of the Talisay estate was the worst because as of 1910, it was still not ready for sale. Second, since there were no major uprising and controversy that occurred in these estates, very few people bothered to write their history. Roth and Cushner, two of the most prominent historians of the friar lands, wrote very little about the Augustinian estates in Cebu. Lastly, the Augustinian Order did not produce historians who have the time and training to write the history of the Order. The Order did not have the likes of Horacio de la Costa, John Schumacher, Jose Arcilla, Pablo Fernandez and Fidel Villaruel of the Jesuit and Dominican Orders. The Augustinian documents found in Blair and Robertson's collection were conspicuously silent on the hacienda issue. This was due to the fact that they were written for apologetic and edification purposes rather than for scholarship. The same observation could also be applied to Cebu-based historians. Resil Mojares' *Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu, 1899-1906* for instance does not have any chapter on the friar lands in

⁴⁶ The Americans were right in making such anticipation. In 1898, there were 1,013 Spanish friars in the Philippines. By the end of 1903, their number dwindled to 246. *Report of the Philippine Commission* (1903), p. 45.

Cebu and so is Erlinda Kintanar-Alburo's *Sumad*.⁴⁷ Hopefully, in the near future, more scholars will pursue the topic to further enrich the local history of Cebu.

Before proceeding further, clarification must be made on the complex names given to the two haciendas and to the question as to how many estates the Augustinians really have in Cebu. It is a common knowledge that the Augustinians owned two haciendas in Cebu, the Banilad-Talamban and the Talisay-Minglanilla estates. But in the records of the province, it appears that there were four estates. This was made so because both haciendas are contiguously extended on two towns. The first hacienda is located in between the boundary of Banilad and Talamban and the second one is in Talisay and Minglanilla. Since the four towns have separate registry records, the two haciendas became four. To simplify the discussion, this paper will reduce the four haciendas into two and they will be referred to as Banilad and Talisay estates.⁴⁸

The land title that the Augustinians gave to the insular official shows that the Banilad estate originated from the land grant (*merced*) that Legazpi gave to the Augustinians on May 28, 1572. Originally, it was referred to as a *sitio de ganado menor* in the plain of the present Mandaue City.⁴⁹ The grant was a little bit vague because it did not pin point the exact location of the estate and other important details that would identify the boundaries of the hacienda. It simply mentioned that the land grant was given for the benefit of the Augustinian convent in Cebu. Until the outbreak of the revolution, the Augustinians were in peaceful possession of the Banilad estate and no interested party ever challenged their claim over the hacienda.

Ramon Diaz Blanco, the chief engineer of the forestry department, surveyed the Banilad estate on 1890. This was the first time that the specific boundaries of the hacienda were identified. The result

⁴⁷ Erlinda Kintanar-Alburo's *Sumad: Essay for the Centennial of the Revolution in Cebu* (Manila: De la Salle University Press, 2001).

⁴⁸ The author does not see any problem as far as the second estate is concerned because indeed the bigger part of the land is found in Talisay. But with regard to the first estate, there is a problem because almost eighty percent of the land is located in Talamban.

⁴⁹ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, (1904), pp. 762-763.

of the survey was published in the *Officials Gazette* of Manila on October 2, 1890. According to the survey, the eastern boundary of the hacienda runs from the north of the ocean upstream of the Grande River up to the lands belonging to the Seminary of San Carlos in Mandaue. The northern boundary extends from the source of Magiga River in Mount Napacpac, passing Mount Canuco and ends in the town of San Nicolas. The western side stretches from the Guadalupe River in the town of San Nicolas. Lastly, the southern boundary starts from the left bank of Guadalupe River to the mouth of the Magiga River. Combining the estates found in the towns of Banilad and Talamban, the total land area of the first hacienda is 1,544 hectares and 8 acres. Of this total, 250 hectares and 2 acres are in Banilad and the remaining 1,294 hectares and 6 acres are situated in Talamban.⁵⁰ When the Hacienda was bought in 1903, its land area decreased to 1,538 hectares and 43 acres.⁵¹

Unlike the Banilad estate, the origin of the Talisay estate is unclear and controversial. The only proof that the Augustinians submitted to the Del Pan, Ortigas y Fisher Law Office⁵² was a certificate of ownership that Don Juan de Monroy issued on December 11, 1738. The certificate was based on the ruling of the Royal Audiencia concerning the land dispute that emerged between the Augustinians and the residents of San Nicolas. The decision stipulated and recognized the claim of the Augustinian over certain lands in places identified as Caripata, Manangas, Cabagohan, Dongol, Talisay, Tamavan and Bulalacao. On May 14, 1739, after all parties were notified, the boundaries of the said land were determined. Three day after, the land was registered in the name of the Augustinians and it would be later known as Talisay estate.⁵³

The boundary of the Talisay estate on its eastern side starts from the Bulalacao River, passing through Mount Buat and ends in Mananga River. The northern boundary begins from Mananga River and extends to the western base of Mount Latauan. Its western boundary goes from the summit of Mount Lubas and ends in the

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 761-762.

⁵¹ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, (1903), p. 200.

⁵² This was the law firm that the Philippines Commission hired to help them review the legality of the land titles of the friar lands.

⁵³ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, (1904), p. 765.

Mount of Ynayangan River. The southern boundary of the hacienda is the whole stretch of the Pacific Ocean. The result of the survey was later published by the Bureau of Interior in the Official Gazette of Manila on October 2, 1890. As mentioned earlier, a big part of the hacienda is located in the town of Talisay (3,977 hectares and 30 acres) and the remaining part is under the jurisdiction of the town of Minglanilla (3,477 hectares and 30 acres).⁵⁴ At the time it was purchased by the insular government, its land area decreased to 7,362 hectares and 90 acres.

As stated earlier, when the revolution broke out, the Augustinians tried to create a scenario that would project that they had already parted with their controversial estates. The move included not only the haciendas in Luzon but also the Talisay and Banilad estates. In a deed executed on October 31, 1897, both estates were mortgaged to Otto Roch y Melladow. It appears that the Augustinians were not comfortable with Otto Roch because in another deed executed on May 8, 1900, the Augustinians redeemed the two estates. On September 21, 1898, the Augustinians sold the estate to Juan Castro y Martin under the condition that they reserve the right to repurchase the hacienda within one year. Six months after, they reacquired the two haciendas and on March 6, 1899, they sold the Banilad and Talisay estates to the *Compañia Agricola de Ultramar*. Rev. Fr. Salvador Font represented the Order and Eduardo Navarro y Ordoñez and Mariano Zaens y Hernando were the signatories of the *Compañia* in this particular transaction. This was the *status quo* when the insular government purchased the Banilad and Talisay estates on December 22, 1903.⁵⁵

Existing literature about the friar lands had very little details on matters concerning the production output and labor system of the Augustinian estates in Cebu. But since they were owned and managed by the Augustinians, one could easily infer that the systems and practices that the Augustinians implemented in Luzon were also applied in Cebu. As mentioned earlier, the Augustinians planted sugar cane, the most lucrative cash crop during the Spanish period, in the Cebu estates. In 1840, the province of Cebu became the

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 764-765.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 761-766.

third largest producer of sugar next to Pampanga and Bulacan.⁵⁶ Moreover, one could easily assume that the Augustinians also adopted the *inquilino* system in Cebu. It would be impossible for them to do otherwise because they had very few members in the country. For them to be able to farm their haciendas by themselves, they need several thousand workers and big capital investment. The Augustinians may have the latter but with regard to the former, their number did not exceed three digits at any given time. In 1898, there were only 346 Augustinians⁵⁷ in the country and more or less this was the average population of the Order in the Philippines.

The Purchase and Sale of the Banilad and Talisay Estates

The Philippine Organic Act of 1902⁵⁸ and the Friar Lands Act of 1904⁵⁹ were the laws that gave Taft the mandate to purchase the friar lands and sell them to the tenants. These laws authorized the Philippine Commission to acquire lands using the right of eminent domain. Under Section 64 of the Philippine Organic Act, this authority applies not only to public lands but also to lands owned by corporations, private individuals and the Church as well. Both laws also contain provisions that put maximum ceiling on the amount of land that an individual or corporation could purchase. Under Section 15 of the Philippine Organic Act, private individuals were only allowed to purchase not more than 16 hectares (approximately 40 acres). For corporations and associations, the ceiling was 1,024 hectares (approximately 2,500 acres). The government imposed ceiling on land ownership to ensure that there will be enough land for everybody. Lastly, both laws also categorically stipulated that in the redistribution of the friar lands,

⁵⁶ Resil Mojares, *Theater in Society: Society in Theater: Social History of a Cebuano Village, 1840- 1940* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1985), p. 24. See also Gregorio Sancianco, *The Progress of the Philippines* trans. Encarnacion Alzona (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1975), p. 145.

⁵⁷ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, Part I (1903), p. 45.

⁵⁸ Public Act No. 235, "An Act Temporarily to provide for the administration of the affairs of civil government in the Philippine Islands, and for other purposes, in U.S. Congress, *Public Laws of the United States of America*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 691-712. See section 64 and 65.

⁵⁹ Philippine Commission, "Act No. 1120" *Public Laws Enacted by the Philippine Commission* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905), pp. 312-319.

priority must be given to the actual occupant of the land. Section 65 of the Philippine Organic Act states "Actual settlers and occupants at the time said lands are acquired by the government shall have the preference over all others to lease, purchase or acquire their holdings within such reasonable time as may be determined by said government." This land-to-the-tiller program was unprecedented in Philippine history and could be considered a radical development in the struggle of the tenants to own the lands they tilled. The American policy makers believed that once the tenants are freed from their landlords, their economic life would improve significantly. They also expected that this would subsequently result to political stability and agrarian peace in the countryside.⁶⁰

At the time the insular government purchased the Banilad and Talisay estates, only half of its total land area was cultivated. In the case of Banilad estate, only 664 hectares were devoted to rice production and 96 hectares were declared residential lots for the tenants and owners. The remaining 778 hectares and 43 acres were classified as forested and uncultivated lands.⁶¹ The Talisay estate was devoted to the production of sugar, maize and rice. In terms of land distribution, 1,820 hectares were planted with sugar cane and maize and 886 hectares for rice production. The remaining 4,656 hectares and 90 acres were uncultivated and a significant portion of it were declared residential lots.⁶²

The government did not use straight computation in determining the value of the Banilad and Talisay estates. They classified the two haciendas into different levels and for each level they attached a corresponding price. Herewith is the classification and price that they used in computing the total price for the two haciendas:

<i>Hacienda</i>	<i>Classification</i>	<i>Land Area</i>	<i>Price/hectare</i>	<i>Total Price</i>
1. Banilad	Rice lands 1 st class	319 hectares	\$300.00	95,700.00
- do -	Rice lands 2 nd class	345 hectares	\$200.00	69,000.00
- do -	Improved lots	96 hectares	\$200.00	19,200.00
- do -	Uncultivated lands	778 hectares		
		43 acres	\$ 15.00	11,676.45

⁶⁰ For more details about the friar lands policy, see Escalante, *The American Friar Lands Policy: Its Framers, Context and Beneficiaries*, pp. 68-92.

⁶¹ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, Part I (1903), p. 200.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 201.

2. Talisay	Cultivated lands 1 st class	1,820 hectares	\$300.00	546,000.00
- do -	Cultivated lands 2 nd class	886 hectares	\$200.00	177,200.00
- do -	Cultivated lands 3 rd class	930 hectares	\$150.00	139,500.00
- do -	Uncultivated lands	3,726 hectares		
		90 acres	\$ 25.00	93,182.00
- do -	Two warehouses			47,000.00
- do -	One house			6,000.00

Grand Total - 1,204,458.95⁶³

At the time the Bureau of Lands was preparing the sale of the estates, it allowed the former tenants to remain in the respective field that they tilled. But they were required to pay rent like what they were doing before the coming of the Americans. The insular officials lowered the rent to make it affordable to the tenants. They based the amount of the rental on the productivity of the land. Herewith is the schedule of rent in the Talisay estate.

1. Urban lots
 - a. First Class P 1.00
 - b. Second Class .50
 - c. Third Class .25
2. Rural lots
 - a. First Class .20
 - b. Second Class .10
3. Irrigated lands
 - a. First Class 12.00
 - b. Second Class 10.50
 - c. Third Class 8.00
4. Unirrigated lands
 - a. First Class 8.00
 - b. Second Class 6.00
 - c. Third Class 4.00
 - d. Fourth Class 2.00
 - e. Fifth Class 1.00⁶⁴

Under the Friar Lands Act, tenants who could not afford to pay in cash were given ten years within which to settle the amount. All

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

⁶⁴ *House Report 2289*, p. 1,234.

delayed payments were charged four percent interest per annum. Buyers were given the option either to pay in U.S. dollar or its equivalent in local currency. During the 10-year grace period, the government kept the title of the lands. Only after the payment of the last installment did the government awarded the title to the buyer.

In determining the value of the lands, the government considered the location, quality and facilities found therein. In every locality, the Bureau of Lands created a committee composed of three members who would appraise the land: one from the Bureau of Lands, another from the Bureau of Agriculture, and the last a tenant coming from the locality where the land is situated.⁶⁵ Ideally, the last member should be familiar with the background of the hacienda and the condition of the locality.

In his testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives, J.H. Sleeper, the Director of the Bureau of Lands, reported that the Bureau was having a hard time convincing the tenants of the Talisay estate to enter into a lease contract agreement with the government. Sleeper mentioned that there were nearly two thousand cases of this kind. The Bureau was reluctant to evict the tenants because it would give them more harm than good. Aside from the potential conflict that would surely arise, it would also make the hacienda unproductive. Politically and financially, both effects were unwanted. In this connection, the Director asked his men to patiently convince the tenants to either enter into a lease agreement or buy the land that they till.

It appears that the land-to-the-tiller program of the insular government did not make any significant headway during the first decade of American rule. *House Report 2289* reveals that out of the 8,900 hectares⁶⁶ that the government purchased from the Augustinians in Cebu, only 1,263 acres were sold to the tenants as of September 30, 1910.⁶⁷ All in all, there were only 468 Cebuanos who availed the land-to-the-tiller program.⁶⁸ The figure is very small

⁶⁵ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, (1907), p. 201.

⁶⁶ This figure is the total land area of the Banilad (1,538) and Talisay estates (7,362).

⁶⁷ *House Report 2289*, p. 135.

⁶⁸ For a complete list of the names of the purchasers and the amount of land they purchased, see *House Report 2289*, pp. 77-80.

considering that according to the 1903 Census the total population of the two estates was approximately 35,000.⁶⁹ Clearly, the figures were not that promising and impressive considering that seven years had already passed after Taft bought the friar lands.

There are several reasons that could explain the low turn out of buyers in Cebu. Foremost, there was really no major and real demand on the part of the tenants for the appropriation of the Augustinian estates. Compared with the other friar lands in the Tagalog region, the Banilad and Talisay estates were generally peaceful and less problematic. Second, the government did not conduct massive information campaign to explain the positive side of being an owner-cultivator. For some Filipinos, the shift from tenant to owner entails some risks and unless they were properly guided and motivated, they would rather stick to their old status than to gamble with the American offer. The tenants realized that if they will buy the land, they would have to pay four to six times higher than the amount of their rental. Lastly, the selling price of the friar lands appears to be exorbitant if correlated to the purchasing power of the tenants. It appears that the amount that Taft paid to the friars was very high. Personally, Taft was aware of this and argued that his settlement of the friar lands should not be taken as a business venture. His primary consideration was to get rid of an issue dangerous to the peace and prosperity of the country. He asked his critics that in evaluating the success of the friar lands policy, one should not focus on its profitability but on the political and agrarian conflict that it settled.⁷⁰

Another factor that made the friar lands so expensive was the decision of the insular government not to subsidize the land-to-the-tiller program. In the computation of the selling price to the tenants, all cost incurred by the government relative to the purchase and administration of the estates were passed on to the buyers. On top of the amount paid to the friars, the government added the cost of the survey, the interest of the bond, salaries and wages of the administrators and other expenses like transportation, legal fees, printing of documents

⁶⁹ *House Report 2289*, p. 593.

⁷⁰ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, Part I (1903), pp. 42. See also Elliott, *The Philippines: To the End of the Commission Government*, (Indianapolis: The Boobs-Merill Company, 1917), p. 49.

and many others. To cite an example, here is the computation of the Banilad estate.

A. Expenses incident to purchase:	
1. Purchase price	211,999.52
2. Preliminary survey	936.02
3. Attorney's fee	114.58
B. Interest on Purchase from Oct. 26, 1904 to December 31, 1908	38,572.16
C. Cost of Survey	
1. Salaries and wages	15,466.52
2. Supplies	2,147.08
3. Transportation	346.08
4. Miscellaneous	675.02
Cost of Administration	
1. Salaries and wages	4,343.68
2. Supplies	162.21
3. Transportation	172.30
4. Miscellaneous	1,681.98
5. Printing	205.13
D. Other Expenses	
1. Attorneys' fee	401.04
2. Traveling expenses incident to the sale	1,200.00
3. Cost in Court of Land Registration	948.38
<i>Sale value of the estate as of December 31, 1908</i>	279,371.70⁷¹

Like what happened to the haciendas in Luzon, the sale of the Banilad and Talisay estates was also marked by some anomalous transactions. The implementing officers did not religiously observe the acreage limitation and the pro-tenant provision of the Friar Lands Act. Many buyers and lessees who were neither tenants nor occupants were able to buy and lease some portions of the friar lands.⁷² Moreover, there were also cases wherein lessees and

⁷¹ *House Report 2289*, p. 330.

⁷² For more details about the anomalous transaction involving the friars lands, see Escalante, *The American Friar Lands Policy*, pp. 141-157.

buyers were allowed to buy or lease lands more than the ceiling imposed by the policy. Out of the total 8,847 sales recorded in 1910, 82 buyers violated the 16-hectare limitation. In the case of Banilad Estates, the following persons violated the acreage limitation:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Transaction</i>	<i>Hectares</i>	<i>Sale Value/Rental</i>
1. Adriana Sevillana	Sale	19	P 1,184.58
2. Victoria Rallos	Sale	25	1,509.84
3. Juan P. Gordoro	Sale	18	25,995.91
4. Mauricio Bascon	Lease	16	4.00/year
5. W.G. Coverly	Lease	37	41.00/year
6. Filomena Denzon	Lease	18	38.00/year
7. Rafaela	Lease	18	10.00/year
8. J.F Knowies	Lease	23	49.00/year
9. Robert Lambs	Lease	86	55.00/year
10. Martin Llorente	Lease	48	131.00/year
11. Tomas Osmeña	Lease	39	96.00/year
12. Maria Pulbeyre	Lease	28	43.00/year
13. Miguel Sanson	Lease	21	54.00/year
14. Vicente Teves	Lease	20	53.00/year
15. Matias Valle	Lease	19	31.00/year
16. Jaime Vaño	Lease	28	70.00/year ⁷³

Summary

The discussion above shows that the Augustinians played a significant role in the development of Philippine agriculture during the Spanish period. Of all the Spaniards who went to the Philippines, the friars could be considered the most successful land managers and entrepreneurs. In their aspiration to make their landholdings productive, they introduced various techniques in farming and brought with them several crops and farm technologies from Europe and Mexico. They also invested big amount of money for the construction of irrigation facilities, road networks, bridges, warehouses and other farm improvements. Lastly, their ability to recruit farm workers contributed a lot in the development of their haciendas. Taking all these into consideration, it is not surprising to know that the friar lands became the best agricultural lands in the country during the Spanish period.

⁷³ *House Report 2289*, p. 195-196.

Initially, the Augustinian regarded their haciendas as one of their most valuable assets. The earnings that they got from them were used to finance their operations and other undertakings in the Philippines. But towards the last quarter of the 19th century, the Augustinians were already having problems in managing their lands. Many of their *inquilinos*, particularly those in the Tagalog region, were already restless and showing signs of radicalism. Some of them allied themselves with certain groups who were lobbying for the expulsion of the friars and the liberation of the Philippines from Spanish rule. They conducted massive anti-friar propaganda to discredit and lessen the influence of the friars. To remedy the situation, the Augustinians and the other Orders as well, sold their haciendas to private corporation which they also owned. They were hoping that this move would erase the impression that they were greedy and oppressive landlords.

It appears that the ploy of the Augustinians did not achieve its intended result. During the revolution, their estates remained in the hot list of the rebels' order of battle. Because of the threat that the *Katipuneros* posed to them, the Augustinians abandoned their haciendas for the time being. This development led to the confiscation and appropriation of the friar haciendas by the revolutionaries. From then on, the Augustinians would no longer have the opportunity to reclaim their haciendas. Despite their legal right over their lands, the American government refused to help the Augustinians reclaim their lands. To settle the issue permanently, the American government decided to buy the friar lands and sold them to the tenants. They were hoping that doing so would put an end to the conflict that persisted between the friar-hacenderos and the tenants.

The Baniad and Talisay estates, despite its distance from the other Augustinians estates in Luzon, were also affected by the events that took place in the Tagalog region. In the sales transaction that the Augustinians concluded with the insular government, they included the two estates in Cebu even if they were not that problematic. Obviously, the Augustinians wanted already to put an end to the agrarian disputes that they had been dealing with for several years already. In the same manner, the policy that the

American officials adopted to settle the agrarian issues in Luzon were also applied to the haciendas in Cebu. They were hoping that by transforming the tenants into owner-cultivators, agrarian peace would exist in the countryside.

The author personally admits that this study is still incomplete and very limited. It only presented a general history of the Banilad and Talisay estates based on the perspective of the owners and the insular officials. To complement this study, it is to the interest of everybody if Cebu-based historians will pick the topic and discuss it from the point of view of the tenants. It is interesting to know the version of the tenants and to verify whether the friar lands policy had significant effects on their economic life. It is also worth knowing whether the friar lands really went to the hands of the tenants or to some unscrupulous local officials identified with the government. Hopefully, this study has given the necessary information that future researchers will need in dealing with the Augustinian haciendas in Cebu. □

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