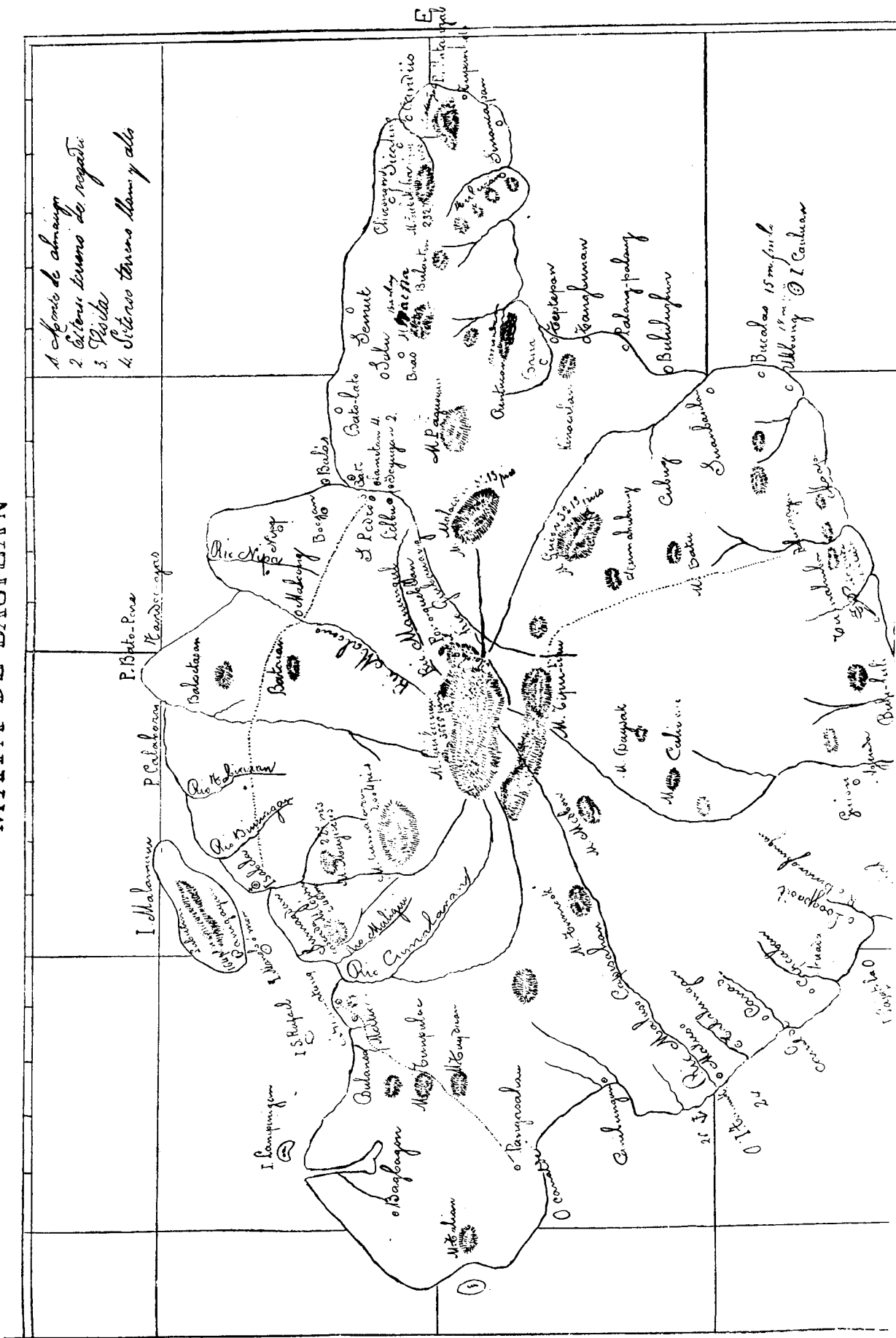


MAPA DE BASILAN



Notes on the Island of Basilan, (1892)

Introduction

One day in December, the national dailies carried a vignette on the transformation of the island city of Basilan into a province by virtue of a presidential decree.* The next year, Presidential Decree No. 593 defined the boundaries of Basilan City and created seven new towns.** Aware that Basilan was once a Jesuit mission territory, this writer, out of curiosity for its past and a desire to chance upon some roots of the Muslim unrest down south, inquired at the Jesuit Archives at the Loyola House of Studies in Quezon City. Its generous custodian, Fr. Leo Cullum, S.J., handed this writer a box containing several folders. One folder had two bound manuscripts which we would designate Manuscript A and Manuscript B. Both were anonymously written in 1892 and entitled *Apuntes sobre la isla de Basilan*. Manuscript A looks older, more decrepit and harder to read in some moth-eaten parts. Manuscript B was apparently written a little later judging from its better organization and patches of emendations and additions. What this writer offers in this issue is an annotated English translation of the text in Manuscript B which can well fall under the category of local historical source.

* *Bulletin Today*, December 26, 1973, pp. 1 & 18. *Daily Express*, December 26, 1973, pp. 1-2

** *Daily Express*, December 9, 1974, pp. 1 & 3.

Apuntes sobre la Isla de Basilan (1892)

La hermosa, fértil y rica isla de Basilan, que se halla casi en el extremo del Sur de este precioso Archipiélago de Filipinas, confina al (N.) con el estrecho denominado estrecho de Basilan que consta de unas 16 millas marítimas, y cuyo estrecho la separa de la provincia de Zamboanga. Al Sur y (O.) tiene el mar de Joló. Al (E.) confina con el mar de Mindanao.

Consta de unas 12 leguas de (E.) a (O.) y de unas 8 de (N.) a (S.).

Cuenta como islas adyacentes el grupo de las islas de Pilas situadas al (O.), cuya isla central se halla de paso para Joló y distante unas 20 millas de la silanga de Basilan y habitada la principal por moros sámales.

Sobre el grupo de Pilas existe una excelente Carta Geográfica levantada por la Comisión Hidrográfica al mando del Capitán de fragata, D. Simón de Manzanos, en 1879 y publicada en 1881 en Madrid. Formaba parte de la Comisión el que ha sido durante los años 1892 y 1893 Gobernador de Basilan, D. Francisco de A. Vázquez y Pérez de Vargas, quien tuvo la amabilidad de ofrecermela la referida Carta Geográfica.

Consta ese grupo de Pilas de unas 12 islas que son las siguientes: Isla Pilas que es la mayor y la habitada por moros sámales; isla Mamangal, que forma un excelente puerto con Pilas; la célebre y tan conocida de los Sres. marinos que navegan por estos mares Balúk-Balúk; las islas Sangbuy, conocidas por *Orejas*

de liebre; isla Tenga, isla Mataja, isla Dasalan, isla Calud-lud, isla Cujangan, Palajangan, Minis, Mamanak, Pasig-posilan, etc.

También son islas adyacentes las que se hallan al (S.) de Basilan denominadas Bubuan, Salupin, Lanauan y Bucutua, Tapiantana, habitadas algunas de ellas por moros sámales y distantes de la costa (S.) de unas 12 a 14 millas. Existe también de este grupo de islas una Carta Geográfica levantada por la Comisión Hidrográfica al mando del Capitán de fragata, D. Fabián Montojo y Salcedo, en 1884 y publicada en 1886. Tiene además esta extensa carta una gran parte de la isla del (S.) de Basilan.

Consta en los Estados de la Misión de la Compañía de Jesús que los PP. Jesuítas ejercían sus ministerios en Basilan ya por los años de 1637; en esta época, pues, ya ondeaba el estandarte de la Cruz y el pabellón de España; época del famoso Capitan Gral. D. Sebastián Hurtado de Corcuera, verdadero conquistador y terror de la raza mora de Joló y Mindanao, quien, teniendo sus miras en la sujeción de la morisma, fué a combatirla en sus mismas trincheras de Joló y Mindanao, sujetando así al mismo tiempo a Basilan, en cuyas islas, por su configuración, tenía esa raza infinidad de escondrijos para maquinare y realizar diabólicos planes contra la sencilla raza visaya y contra nuestra sacrosanta Religión.

En esta época contaba Basilan varias iglesias y fuertes, a menos en la parte (N.) que mira a Zamboanga, refiriendo la historia que el P. Angel, de la Compañía de Jesús, fué Misionero célebre en Basilan, donde convirtió algunos moros principales y varios sacopes Basilanos.

Pero en 1646 parece que, por razón de tener que concentrar las fuerzas en Manila, se retiró de Basilan la fuerza, desde cuya época hasta 1845 en que ocupamos de hecho a Basilan, poco se refiere de esta isla, si no es alguno que otro documento en que se habla de la amistad de los moros Basilanos con el Sultán de Joló.

En un manuscrito que hallo en esta Misión, se refiere que en 10 de Junio de 1845, D. Ramón Lobo, Jefe de Marina en Zamboanga, y D. Cayetano Figueroa, Gobernador de Zamboanga, vinieron a esta tierra de Pasanhan, (N.) de Basilan, y le pusieron el nombre de Isabela en honor de Doña Isabel II, reina de España,

y sentaron en este sitio el pabellón español. Dió motivo el francés que gestionaba establecerse o tomar Basilan, según la historia de Mindanao por Santayana.

No ignorando el Gobierno francés, como se verá más abajo, que a España pertenecía Basilan, quiso sin embargo con diplomacia probar de ocupar esta isla, porque reunía condiciones tales, y mejores aun, de lo que Francia deseaba que reuniese el puerto y sitio que deseaba ocupar en aquel entonces en este extremo Oriente.

Juzgo a propósito deferir aquí lo que dice el historiador Santayana referente a Basilan, para tener idea exacta de cómo ocupamos de hecho a Basilan y de la política del Gobierno francés.

En los primeros días del mes de Noviembre se presentó y fondeó en la rada de Zamboanga la goleta *Sabine*, al mando de M. Guerin, quien requirió del Gobernador que gestionase la entrega de tres individuos de la tripulación de uno de sus botes, prisioneros de los pirates de Maluso, distrito de Basilan, donde residía el afamado Datto Usuk, que dieron muerte al oficial que la mandaba y a un marinero. Obtúvose el rescate de los tres prisioneros; pero luego se presentó otro buque de guerra francés, la corbeta *Victorieuse* que se puso a las órdenes del Capitán Guerin, quien notificó al Gobernador de Zamboanga el bloqueo de Basilan e islas adyacentes, dirigido a exigir del Datto Usuk completa satisfacción por aquellos asesinatos. Protestó el Gobernador contra el bloqueo, alegando que en todo caso debía este limitarse al sitio de Maluso; pero el bloqueo se llevó a efecto, no obstante la protesta. Llegaron otros dos buques de guerra de la misma nación, el vapor *Archimide* y la fragata *Erigone*, al mando del Vice-Almirante Cecille, que llevaba a su bordo al Ministro Plenipotenciario M. de Lagrené.

Arribó a la sazón a Zamboanga la fragata de guerra española *Esperanza*, al mando del Brigadier Bocalán, quien sostuvo con M. Cecille una activa y fogosa correspondencia sobre el objeto de sus sospechosas gestiones en Basilan, la cual cesó, refiriéndose ambos a la resolución de los respectivos Gobiernos, y alejándose los buques franceses, con excepcion de la goleta *Sabine*, que quedó estacionada en el canal entre Basilan y Malamaui.

El Brigadier Bocalán y el Gobernador de Zamboanga exigieron completa sumisión de la mayor parte de los pueblos de Basilan, que aun no le habían prestado, con derogación de cualquier promesa que hubieren hecho a los extranjeros, y dispusieron que por los soldados y presidiarios de la plaza se construyese un fuerte provisional en Pasanhan, costa (N.) de Basilan a vista de la corbeta francesa, la cual, habiéndose cruzado varias contestaciones entre su Comandante y los españoles, levó anclas y desapareció. Hasta aquí Santayana,”

Francia dió perfectamente a entender que España era señora y dueña de Basilan al exigir al Gobernador de Zamboanga que gestionase la entrega de los tres individuos prisioneros de los moros de Maluso, y estos a la vez mostraron ser súbditos de España al entregarlos tan luego España los requirió. Manifestó también Francia mucho empeño en tomar Basilan, porque, apesar de la protesta del Gobernador de Zamboanga contra el bloqueo de todo Basilan, lo llevó a efecto. Y también manifestó grande interés en tomar Basilan, aunque con política, con la llegada de los buques de guerra francesa en tal sazón y coyuntura; y finalmente, por el plano que por este tiempo levantó de la excelente silanga de Basilan el Vice-Almirante francés Cecille con varios oficiales franceses que estaban a sus órdenes para el mismo fin.

No es de admirar el interés e insistencia en tomar Basilan, puesto que esta isla satisfacía las aspiraciones de Francia. He aquí lo que se halla en la misma historia de Santayana.

“París, 7 de Noviembre de 1843. Ha dispuesto el Rey, como ya consta a M. de Lagrené, que se establezca una Estación Naval en los mares de la India y de la China, en objeto de proteger y, si es preciso, defender nuestros intereses políticos y comerciales.

La Francia no posee en el día en aquellos mares ningún punto en que los buques puedan hacer provisiones, reparar sus averías y curar sus enfermos. La división francesa tendrá que acudir a la colonia portuguesa de Macao, al establecimiento inglés de Hong-Kong, o al arsenal de Cavite en la isla española de Luzón. Esto no puede ser. No conviene a la Francia estar ausente de una parte tan extensa del globo, donde otras naciones tienen establecimientos. También el pabellón francés debe flotar en los mares de China en un punto en que nuestros buques hallen seguro abrigo y toda clase de auxilios.

Es necesario fundar allí, como los ingleses en Hong-Kong, y nosotros mismos en las islas Marquesas, un establecimiento militar para nuestra marina, un depósito para nuestro comercio.

Este establecimiento debe reunir muchas condiciones esenciales: proximidad al imperio chino; puerto grande, cerrado, donde los buques no padezcan en los [sic] frecuentes [sic] y terribles tormentas de aquellos parajes; situación aislada y de fácil defensa; clima sano, en el cual nuestros [sic] tripulaciones puedan restablecerse en poco tiempo de las enfermedades causadas por el calor de los trópicos; y, en fin, manantiales puros y abundantes para que nuestros buques puedan renovar el agua.

Sobre este particular no se pueden dar a M. de Lagrené instrucciones precisas; se la indicarán algunos sitios designados por exploraciones anteriores que puedan servir de base a la política de Francia.

Al (S.) de las Filipinas, sometidas a España, está la isla de Basilan, que debe explorarse con cuidado; sobre esta isla el Sultan de Joló ejerce una autoridad disputada. Un establecimiento en este punto podría pronto tener grande importancia por estar en el derrotero del Océano Pacífico, como Hong-Kong está en el derrotero de Indo-China." Hasta aquí el resumen del documento francés que se halla en Santayana.

Todos los oficiales de la escuadra francesa, que navegaron por estas aguas en 1844 y 1845, convinieron en que Basilan reunía las condiciones que deseaba el Gobierno francés, a saber; puerto grande y cerrado, situación de fácil defensa, clima sano, manantiales puros y abundantes, y proximidad a la China. Teniendo tales condiciones, no es de maravillar que el Ministro francés, que en 1843 estaba negociando este asunto, dijese en 1860, que en vista de la perspectiva que presenta el extremo Oriente no puede menos de sentir que la isla de Basilan no sea nuestra.

He puesto lo que antecede, antes de hablar en particular de la riqueza de esta isla que se ha de explorar, ya porque son escasas las noticias escritas sobre Basilan, ya también para que sirva para conocer mejor la importancia tan poco conocida, por no ser estudiando, de esta hermosa isla de Basilan.

Condiciones de la isla para el cultivo

Esta isla de Basilan es sumamente privilegiada para establecer poblaciones de colonización, digna de los capitalistas más importantes.

Las condiciones necesarias y que más favorecen a las poblaciones colonizadoras son clima sano, feracidad, aguas buenas y abundantes, llanuras suficientemente elevadas del nivel del mar para construir extensas y bonitas poblaciones que se dediquen a labrar la tierra; y, hablando de países tropicales, que esté exento de las tormentas que tantos perjuicios causan a los pueblos y a las plantaciones que se hallan entre los trópicos; cuyas condiciones se hallan perfectamente en esta isla, contando además con excelentes y abrigados fondeaderos para ser auxiliada siempre de la Armada y favorecida por los buques mercantes para importar lo necesario y exportar los ricos y abundantes frutos que produzca. ¿Qué más se desea para colonizar esta isla? Sólo falta tal vez que se conozca, y se den algunas garantías y seguridades a los colonos que desean explotar la riqueza de esta isla para que no se arredren en vista de las dificultades extrínsecas que se hallen en esta isla, que tal vez los únicos son la falta de brazos y el terror que causa la raza mora, de la cual se halla habitada gran parte de esta isla.

Clima sano

Que sea sano el clima de Basilan lo acredita la experiencia de medio siglo de residencia no interrumpido en la Isabela de Basilan; y, aunque al principio de ocuparlo, hubo algunas calenturas malignas por razón del desmonte, pero hace ya muchísimo tiempo que es raro el caso de calenturas malignas y más raro aun el caso de disenteria [sic]. Algunos casos hay de tisis entre los indios, causados los más por su poca precaución é ignorancia. Los españoles, en general, siempre han gozado de salud, siendo raro el caso de enfermedad, sino es alguno que otro que ha perdido su salud y su vida por causas ajenas al clima.

Y lo que se dice, aunque se refiere especialmente a la cabecera, se puede afirmar en general de toda la isla, según la experiencia que se tiene de ella, y por las personas ancianas y que conocen la isla, y los moros que habitan en ella. Testigo de la salud de

Basilan es también el sitio de la visita de S. Pedro de Guibauan, distante unos 20 millas por el (E.) de Isabela, donde hace 10 años que va el P. Misionero, y otros tantos años que vive allí un grupo de cristianos y moros al mando de Pedro Cuevas, y se ha notado que es sitio sano y libre de enfermedades endémicas.

Y, si las defunciones en general son más de lo que al parecer deberían ser, es debido a que los buques de la Armada traen enfermos de otros sitios a la Enfermería de la Estación Naval de este pueblo, y aun se han mandado a veces enfermos del Ejército. El año de 1891 se mandaron varios enfermos de las tropas que recorrían Barás, Paran-Paran y Tucuran durante la expedición de Lanao en tiempo del Capitan Gral. Wailer [sic].

Ya que de la sanidad del clima de Basilan hablo, es oportuno referir, para confirmar lo dicho, lo que referente a la epidemia ha acontecido a la Isabela en tres épocas que ha atacado a Zamboanga, población cercana a esta isla. En la última epidemia, que fué en 1889, no hubo en esta población caso alguno. En la penúltima epidemia del año 1882 hubo solo 16 defunciones, que fueron poquísimas comparadas con las muchísimas víctimas que causó en Zamboanga. Y en la epidemia del año 1863 solo se lamentaron 5 defunciones, y las cuales aun ofrecen duda si fueron de epidemia. Y, aunque en los dos pueblos moros limítrofes de Pasanhan y Panigayan, si hubo muchas más víctimas, juzgo que se debe atribuir en gran parte al poco cuidado que de sí tuvieron, y en especial al agua medio salobre que beben, en particular los de Panigayan, y sabido es que el agua es uno de los elementos que más influye en las epidemias, tanto que en la misma Villa de Zamboanga, donde me hallaba en el año 1889 asistiendo a muchos enfermos coléricos, noté que en los sitios de aguas turbios fallecieron muchos más que en los demás sitios. Prueba de ello es el sitio de Zamboanga llamado Tabúk, sito en el Magay, donde fueron muchísimos los fallecidos de la epidemia.

Fertilidad

La feracidad de Basilan es notable; basta mirar el aspecto general de la isla que presenta bajo un aspecto majestuoso una vegetación exuberante, llamando la atención de cuantos la observan, especialmente desde el estrecho de su nombre, navegando de

Zamboanga para esta Cabecera; pero, hablando en particular, tenemos experiencia de su feracidad por los productos que actualmente ya se cosechan. Se dan perfectamente los productos de crecido valor, como son el coco, cacao, café, abacá, caña, azúcar, y los productos que cultivan los indios con más asiduidad como el palay, camote, plátano, juntamente con los árboles frutales de manga, maran, lanzones, piña, limones, etc.

Y si bien es verdad que el cacao tiene una especie de filoxera hace unos tres años, pero va desapareciendo, y se espera que desaparecerá poco a poco.

De todos estos frutos dan testimonio plantaciones de algunos indios que han abierto terrenos a uno y otro lado de la Cabecera de Basilan desde hace unos diez años. Y confirma lo dicho la grande hacienda de D. Ramon de Larracochea, español peninsular, que hace unos doce años que plantó al Sur de esta Cabecera y a dos millas unos 20,000 plantas de café y 2,000 de cacao.

El palay da unos productos asombroso [sic] en el sitio de Guibauan de cuyo sitio hablaré más abajo; pasa de ciento por uno de producto, cultivándolo bien.

Montes

El monte denominado Guibauan, conocido y llamado por los moros Lemutun, es el más elevado al parecer y mide 3.660 piés. Se extiende de (O.) a (E.) y tiene su principio muy cerca de la Isabela, prolongándose hasta muy cerca del monte o pico denominado Panocobon. Este pico está como en la testera del fertilísimo terreno de S. Pedro de Guibauan donde reside Pedro Cuevas.

En la parte (S.), de este pico, y muy cerca de él, se halla la famosa ranchería de Bajelugbung. Mide este pico 2.141 piés.

El monte de Matangal, que se halla en el extremo de esta isla por el (E.), mide 2.327 piés, sirve de rumbo a los buques al navegar hacia estas aguas desde Cotabato [sic] o Davao.

El piquito inmediato al Matangal, dirigiéndose hacia la Isabela se denomina Sicaling, y el inmediato a este se llama Paguengan, luego se halla el que está muy cerca al río Guibauan llamado Abinabin.

Por la parte (O.) de la isla se hallan los llamados tres picos que sirven de rumbo al salir de Zamboanga para este silanga de Isabela; mide 1.318 piés.

Los nombres de los otros montes algo elevados no se han podido averiguar aun con exactitud. La altura se ha tomado o sacado de la Carta Geográfica, núm. XIV, de la Comisión Hidrográfica, donde constan las alturas de los picos más elevados de esta isla.

Por la elevación de los montes y por su número, que es crecido relativamente a la extensión de la isla, se desprenden la riqueza y abundancia de aguas de esta isla.

Maderas

Cuenta también buenas maderas, como el molave, cubi, agutud, camagon, yati, ipil, camunin, guiyo, guiso, lanete, sandana, mala-tapoy, calantas, bacauan, y algunos otros.

Manantiales o ríos puros y abundantes

Comenzando por el (N.E.), y a unas dos leguas de Matangal, se halla el río de Guibauan, en el cual a una hora del mar donde se halla la célebre llanura y terreno de regadío de Guibauan, se puede hacer abundantemente aguada. Acercándose hacia la Cabecera, y a una legua y media, se halla el tan conocido río Maloong. Luego los ríos de Balactasan, Tabianan y Binuangan.

En la Cabecera está el célebre y tan nombrado chorillo que surte admirablemente de agua a la Cabecera y además las dos aguadas, una de las cuales es perenne. Mas hacia el (N.O.) de la Isabela se hallan el río Sumagdan, Maliguit y el abundante río de Cumularan que consta de dos brazos; luego se halla el río de Atung-atung, el río de Matican, el de Bulansa y el de Bagbagun, ríos todos a distancias proporcionadas para formar en ellos bonitas poblaciones agrícolas.

Por la parte del (S.), y comenzando por la punta (O.), se hallan los ríos Pangasahan, Canibungan, Maluso, Tabalungan, Mangal, Guion, y cuya agua es cristalina, perenne y abundante. Tumanbung, Bugbug, Palunsayan y el célebre río de Bajelugbung cuya agua es también cristalina, perenne y abundante.

Llanuras

Existen varias y extensas llanuras, especialmente por la parte (N.) de la isla, y todas son suficientemente elevadas del nivel del mar para ser mejor labradas y dar buenos productos.

A orillas del río de la Isabela por la parte (O.) hay una extensa llanura de unas dos leguas de (N.) a (S.) por dos leguas de (E.) a (O.), cuya llanura se extiende [sic] desde este río hasta casi el río Cumularan, y está además cruzada en el medio por el río Sumagdan. En este sitio debía haberse formado la población de la Isabela, porque, sin perder nada de las ventajas de que goza por el agua y la silanga, tendría la inmensa ventaja de esa gran llanura, la cual sin duda alguna habría contribuido a que creciese la Isabela mucho más de lo que ha crecido hasta hoy.

No sabemos las razones que tuvieron los fundadores para no poner el pueblo en la otra parte del río; se cree que fue por la morisma que habitaba en aquel sitio, pero ahora ya no existe allí la morisma; y aun, sin perder el pueblo actual, podría hacerse un puente en dicho río, y luego trazar un plano de población para los que quisiesen edificar casas en dicho sitio.

Después del río Cumularan, todo lo restante de la isla por la parte (O.) es casi una llanura continuada, prestándose admirablemente para población los sitios de Balagtanay, donde hay ancho terreno de regadío, Atung-Atung, Maticán, Bulansa, Bagbagun y Pangasahan, sitios bañados todos por los ríos que llevan el nombre del sitio correspondiente nombrado.

Por la parte (N.E.) de la Isabela hay la llanura de Balag-tasan, propuesta más de una vez por algunos gobernadores de esta isla para formar pueblo, pero no han sido atendidos sus proyectos. Dista como dos leguas de la Cabecera.

Un pueblo en este sitio daría grande importancia a la Cabecera, y serviría de baluarte contra los moros del (E.) y (S.E.), y de paso para comunicar con la visita de S. Pedro de Guibauan. Serviría asimismo para hacer escala al ir a Zamboanga o al regresar, especialmente en tiempo de tormentas.

Los terrenos de Nipa y Boajan, algo más al (N.E.), también son preciosos. Estos sitios se unen ya con el célebre terreno del río Guibauan, en cuyas orillas existe un extenso, fértil y ventilado

terreno de unas 6 leguas de largo por 4 de ancho, que, dividiéndose en casi dos mitades, la una de las cuales está en terrado de regadío natural, sin costar nada, o muy poco, a la mano del hombre, y la otra mitad es para terrenos de plantaciones de cocos, café, cacao y abacá etc. por ser suficientemente elevado.

El terreno de regadío es tan fructífero que da más del ciento por uno.

En este sitio está instalado el célebre Pedro Cuevas desde el año 1882, habiendo adelantado el cultivo según sus fuerzas y las de sus subordinados. Fué este punto declarado visita por el Exmo. Sr. Capitan Gral. Terrero en 24 de Abril del año 1885, cuando estuvo visitando la Isabela de Basilan.

Existe una capillita, en mal estado, de unas 20 varas de largo por 8 de ancho, con una casita al lado para el misionero cuando va a ejercer los ministerios en este sitio. (Hoy ya existe otra capilla al otro lado del rio de Guibauan. Esta capilla ya se cayó.)

Se levantó el primer harigue de esta capillita estando presente el Sr. Brigadier La Corte, en cuya presencia bendijo el sitio el R. P. Joaquín Sancho, Superior que era entonces de la residencia de Zamboanga, y a cuya visita le acompañó el P. Pablo Cavallería, quien prosiguió hasta tener levantada la capilla, con el trabajo que se deja entender en tales circunstancias, y sigue el referido P. visitando dicho punto y celebrando ya hace algunos años la fiesta de S. Pedro a su tiempo debido. Pedro Cuevas fué nombrado teniente absoluto de esta visita con el fin de que cooperase a la pronta reducción de los moros basilanos de aquel punto primero, y después de los demás puntos y pueblos. Algunos moros de ese punto han abrazado nuestra Santa Religión, y la habrían abrazado muchos más si la cooperación hubiese sido la prometida y esperado.

Por el Sur existe también buenos sitios para poblaciones, como son los de Guion, Maluso y otros que nos son ya algo conocidos.

Los sitios que no tienen llanura permiten perfectamente también las plantaciones de crecido valor como el cacao, coco, café etc. En una palabra, toda Basilan se conoce por feraz para unas u otras plantaciones, y, aunque se hallan en algunos sitios bastantes piedras, pero, como la mayor parte de ellas están desprendidas

de la tierra como pedruscos quebrados, sin duda por alguna explosión volcánica, permiten la plantación de arbolado.

Reúne también esta isla la inapreciable ventaja de estar exenta de las tormentas tropicales por estar en el límite de ellos; y, aunque se levanten algunas veces algo los mares de la costa (N.), pero con respecto a los sembrados casi nunca son tan terribles que los destrocen; circunstancias muy dignas de ser atendidas por los colonizadores, quienes saben cuántos perjuicios causan las tormentas tropicales en algunos pueblos de estas islas.

Fondeaderos

Aunque esta isla no tuviese otro fondeadero que la preciosa silanga, sería bastante digna de ser ocupada. Tiene esta preciosa y nunca bastantemente alabada silanga unas tres millas de largo con un ancho medio de unos 600 metros, formada por la isla de Basilan y la isla de Malamaui, con fondo bastante para buques de mucho calado, marcado en las Cartas Geográficas publicadas ya por comisiones Hidrográficas.

Se halla esta silanga en la parte (N.) de la isla, y a dos tercios de distancia de la parte (E.) de la isla, y a un tercio de la parte (O.). Puerto abrigadísimo de todos los vientos y temporales, como es bien conocido desde hace muchos años.

Todos los que por primera vez lo ven, lo contemplan admirados y claman: ¡esto es precioso!

En el Sur existen también buenos fondeaderos, como el de Bajelugbung, el de Maluso, y de uno [y] otro lado de la punta Matangal, y en general está abrigado todo el Sur de esta isla de los vientos y temporales del N.E. y N.O.

Infieles y sus costumbres

La raza de infieles de esta isla es de la raza mora, única causa tal vez de estar, apesar de su fertilidad, tan poco poblada de cristianos labradores. Esta raza se divide en moros sámales y moros yácanes. Los sámales son los que se dedican algo a la pesca y a la construcción de embarcaciones, llamadas *vintas*, las cuales les sirven admirablemente para piratear. Con estas vintas que, la mayor parte no constan más de unas 9 o 10 varas, hacen

sus viajes a Joló, a Singdangan, a Pollok, Cottabato y Tucuran en Mindanao. Las manejan con mucha destreza, y rara vez se pierden por razón de los malos tiempos.

Aunque con la llegada de los buques de vapor a estas islas se dió un golpe mortal a la piratería moruna, sin embargo siguen pirateando siempre que pueden hacerlo impunemente, y hasta en sus rancherías moras, si no pueden en los pueblos cristianos. En sus piraterías acostumbran matar a los varones que les pueden hacer resistencia, y se llevan los niños, mujeres y los intereses.

La segunda clase de moros, llamados yácanes, son los que viven en el interior de la isla, dedicándose al cultivo, pero es tan escaso su cultivo que apenas cosechan palay para medio año, comiendo lo restante del año camote cajoy y otras plantas silvestres. Estos no son navegantes, pues apenas saben manejar embarcaciones, y muchos ni saben nadar. Pero, con respecto a la costumbre mora de vivir de lo ajeno, se practica entre estos como entre los sámals; roban niños y mujeres en otras rancherías, ya en guerras ya con engaños, estando en vigor la ley del más fuerte, Así que el dato, panglima e imán son los únicos que pueden ser ricos, si riquezas hay entre los moros.

La muger [sic] que enviuda, ya es sabido que pasará con sus hijos al dato, o será trasportada para ser vendida con sus hijos, habiéndole tomado antes todo el ajuar doméstico. Esta raza mora es algo más débil que la raza Sámál.

Estos moros, al parecer, proceden de distintas islas, como de Borneo, Joló y Mindanao, y se cree que nunca han tenido una dependencia rigurosa de sultán alguno, pues han hecho los basilanos tratados y reconocimientos, prescindiendo de todo sultán o autoridad mora de otra isla.

Su falsa religión se compone de ceremonias tan ridículas y tan caprichosas que molestan sumamente a cualquiera que se ponga a observarlas. Omito hablar en particular de su religión y costumbres, porque ya escribí algo en el cuaderno séptimo de las Cartas de los PP. de la Compañía de Jesús de la Misión de Filipinas, publicadas en 1887.

Su ignorancia es tan extramadas [sic] que con solo un hecho que apunte creo será bastante para probarlo. Al visitarlos, me llevo alguna vez un hierro imantado para entretenerles, y ¿se

querrá creer que acuden los moros a tropel para tocar sus anzuelos de pescar con el hierro imantado, para que atraiga el pescado al echar el anzuelo en el mar?

Su saber más profundo consiste en saber leer y escribir. No se pregunte ni hable con ellos de Historia, ni de Geografía, ni de Matemáticas, ni de Ciencia alguna, porque nada saben contestar. Y todas sus conversaciones no se levantan de las cosas caseras y familiares.

Aquí viene bien hacer notar aquellos que quieren colonizar y atraer a estas gentes a la civilización sin religión. Cosa imposible pretenden; el moro nunca dejará sus malas costumbres, ni sus miras de piratear, ni adelantará, y, mientras no sea cristiano, nunca se amoldará a vivir como los cristianos de nuestros pueblos, y por tanto nunca será de utilidad para la nación española. Tres siglos de experiencia en estas islas prueban esta verdad.

Población cristiana

La población cristiana de la Cabecera consta de unos 1.000 cristianos, parte de los cuales se dedica a los trabajos que se ofrecen en el pueblo. La otra parte se dedica al cultivo de la tierra.

Hay en esta Cabecera un Gobernador P.M., que suele ser el Comandante de la Estación Naval, con grado de Teniente de Navío de la clase, y un P. Misionero con un H. Coadjutor de la Compañía de Jesús. En la Estación Naval hay un Teniente de Infantería de Marina, un Sargento, cuatro Cabos y unos 8 soldados, y además hay un Contramaestre con unos 30 marineros. Hay además un ler Médico de la Armada y un Contador de Navío. Existe en la Estación un Arsenal con sus operarios para algunas reparaciones de los buques del Estado. Existe en Malamaui un gran depósito de carbón para el Estado.

Además hay un fuerte donde hay un Teniente, un Sargento, dos Cabos y unos 50 soldados.

Existe un grupo de unos 100 cristianos en la visita de S. Pedro de Guibauan a orillas de este mismo río, que se dedican exclusivamente al cultivo.

Los labradores se han extendido a uno y otro lado de la Isabela, habiendo ya unos 100 vecinos por la parte del (E.) y otros 100 por el (O.) y unos 30 en la isla de Malamaui.

Causa del poco adelanto de este pueblo

La poblacion agrícola ha aumentado, aunque poco, desde hace unos 10 años, y habría aumentado mucho más; pero, por la morisma, pocos son los que se animan a abrir tierra en el interior.

Además, con ocasión de los buques, varios jóvenes nacidos en esta embarcan en calidad de marineros, o de maestranza, y algunos no regresan más, y muchos jóvenes de otros pueblos, embarcados, se casan con solteras de este pueblo y terminan por fin por radicarse en el pueblo del varón, cuyo número, según la estadística de los libros parroquiales, es mayor que el de los marineros llamados "cumplidos" que quedan en este.

Además, se ha incendiado dos veces el pueblo. El primer incendio fué el 11 de Enero de 1859, y el otro el 19 de Marzo de 1865, cuyos incendios han sido también causa del poco adelanto en este pueblo.

Finalmente, según el humilde parecer del P. Misionero, ha sido obstáculo del poco crecimiento de este pueblo el reducido sitio en que está situado y de tan malas condiciones para la construcción de edificios, puesto que están la mayor parte sobre el lodo de las mareas.

Pero este obstáculo fácilmente se puede remediar.

Constrúyase un puente que una este sitio con el terreno llamado Tabuk y se tendrá una llanura de cerca dos leguas hacia el Sur y de otros dos leguas hacia el (O.) y (S.O.) y con la ventaja de tener agua abundante en ambos extremos y aun en el mismo centro.

Hágase un plano de población y señálense solares a este sitio a los que levanten casas y edificios y bien pronto y en muy poco tiempo crecerá el pueblo mucho más de lo que ha crecido hasta el presente.

Para la seguridad de las familias contra la morisma, póngase un pequeño destacamento a distancia conveniente, cuyo destacamento lo puede dar el mismo fuerte actual.

El P. Misionero juzga, después de haberlo bien considerado ante Dios Nuestro Señor y por la experiencia que tiene y consultado con personas de consideración y con varios principales de este pueblo, que se debe construir y levantar una grande y hermosa iglesia en el referido sitio llamado Tabuk, con lo cual se conseguirá tener un grande solar llano y extenso para plaza, de que carece en el sitio donde está actualmente. Y además se aisla lo conveniente la iglesia de los edificios de nipa y de poco valor, para librarla de un incendio, pues dos veces se quedó reducida a cenizas por la aglomeración y contiguidad de edificios de nipa y malas condiciones, en las cuales comenzó el fuego que cada vez devoró el pueblo.

Para cohibir la audacia moruna, que además de ser una gran rémora, porque el solo nombre de moro arredra al indígena, y que se ha atrevido a entrar por tres veces en la cabecera, juramentándose por los años de 1889, 1891 y 1892, haciendo cada vez una o dos víctimas cristianas, serviría admirablemente fundar otros pueblos, especialmente en la parte del (S.), cuyos pueblos podrían asegurarse con alguna fuerza.

Es sabido que por el (S.), como no hay población cristiana, se juntan los moros cuando quieren tramar algun crimen contra esta Cabecera. Servirían tambien esos pueblos para impedir la comunicación de moros de otras islas con los de esta, pues se cree con fundamento que, por ser imbuidos por ideas de los moros de islas cercanas, han entrado en la idea criminal de juramentarse, cuyo crimen, como tal, fue desconocido hasta 1889.

Esta es una sucinta idea de la isla de Basilan, que se podrá completar mucho más, a no tardar, por otras personas presentes o venideras.

Se pone la adjunta Carta Geográfica que de mucho, pienso, podrá servir, y más tarde completar y corregir.

Notes on the Island of Basilan

The beautiful, fertile and rich island of Basilan¹ which is almost at the southern extremity of this precious archipelago of the Philippines fringes on the north the strait called the Strait of Basilan which is about sixteen maritime miles² and separates the island from the province of Zamboanga.³ On the south and west, is the Jolo Sea. On the east, it fringes the Mindanao Sea. Its extent is about twelve leagues from east to west and about eighth from north to south. Its neighboring islands are the group of Pilas islands located in the west whose central island is on the

¹ On the belief that there were iron deposits in this island, the Muslims named it Basilan meaning "island of iron". Its geographical position is about 122° East and 6° 30' North. This island and the small adjacent islands comprise the Basilan group which is the most important of the several groups constituting the Sulu archipelago. Politically, it was a part of Zamboanga City until 1948 when the entire group was declared the chartered city of Basilan. On December 25, 1973, President Ferdinand Marcos created the province of Basilan. Comprising the new province were the entire island of Basilan, the municipal districts of Lamitan and Maluso, the municipality of Isabela excepting its poblacion which became Basilan City. Then the next year, Presidential Decree No. 593 defined the boundaries of Basilan City and created the seven new towns of Lantawan, Sumipsip, Tipo-Tipo, Tuburan, Tapiantana, Malamawi and Pilas. Isabela remains the provincial capital. The area of the island of Basilan in square miles is 495-0673. *Census Atlas of the Philippines* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1940), V, 54. Cited hereafter as CAP. Archives of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, II-11-Mohammedaism-C. Cited hereafter as APP.

² The Strait has a width of 6.5 miles and a length of 44 miles. In 1961, Ileana Maramag, a popular writer, wrote that it took them two hours to cross the Strait in a small launch from Zamboanga City to Isabela, Basilan. Ileana Maramag, "The Proud People of Sulu," *Sunday Times Magazine*, June 18, 1961, XVI, 24.

³ A peninsula on the western part of Mindanao divided at present into 2 provinces — Norte and Sur,

way to Jolo about twenty miles away from the Basilan channel and whose main island is inhabited by Samal Moros.⁴

There is an excellent geographical chart of the Pilas group drawn up by the Hydrographical Commission under Capitán de Fragata⁵ Don Simón de Manzanos in 1879 and published in 1881 in Madrid. Don Francisco de A. Vázquez y Pérez de Vargas who has been governor of Basilan during the years 1892 and 1893 and had the kindness to offer me the referred geographical chart was a member of the Commission.

That Pilas group consists of about twelve islands which are the following: Pilas island which is the largest and inhabited by Samal Moros, Manangal island which forms an excellent harbor with Pilas, the famous and so well-known by sailors who sail about these seas — Balukbaluk, the Sangboy islands — known as Rabbit's Ears, Teinga island, Mataja island, Dassalan island, Caludlud island, Cujangan island, Palajangan, Minis, Mamannak. Pasigposilan, etc.⁶

There are also neighboring islands south of Basilan named Bubuan, Saluping, Linawan, Bucutua, Tapiantana, some of which

⁴ The word "Moro" comes from the Latin *maurus*. It was used by the Spaniards to denote "first, the inhabitants of Mauritania in north-western Africa, then the Moslems, who based their invasion of Spain on that province, and, finally, the Mohammedans generally." Thomas J. O'Shaughnessy, S.J., "Philippine Islam and the Society of Jesus," *Philippine Studies*, IV (Ignatian Number, 1956), 239, footnote No. 2.

Muslim Filipinos resent the name Moro, and rightly so, since from the lips of a Christian Filipino, it is a categorical expression denoting a contemptuous, ill-bred and violet person. Neither do they want the name Mohammedan, for they are not worshippers of Mohamed. They prefer Muslim, a religious designation meaning "one who does Islam". Peter Gowing, *Mosque and Moro* (Manila: Philippine Federation of Christian of Christian Church, 1964), p. 13.

⁵ The corresponding rank in the US Navy is Commander.

⁶ The Pilas group consists of more than twelve islands. The following are the islands and their areas in square meters: Balukbaluk — 6,822,200; Bantolinos — 9,964; Cujangan — 1,111,600; Dasalan — 5,416,000; Kaludlud — 1,985,900; Lakit 1 — 2,200; Lakit 2 — 1,056; Lakit 3 — 900; Mamannak — 667,900; Manangal — 4,809,600; Mataja — 1,420,000; Minis — 716,600; Orell — 196,300; Palajangan — 636,100; Pasigposilan — 195,100; Pilas — 25,327,900; Salkulakit — 6,400; Saloro — 757,600; Sangboy 1 — 2,290,600; Sangboy 2 — 2,127,700; Siringo — 340,100; Tagatu — 236,500; Tamila Rock — no area given; Teinga — 1,152,700; Tiguilabun — 98,300; Tinutungan — 55,144. CAP, V, 54.

are inhabited by Samal Moros and are about twelve to fourteen miles off the southern coast. There is also a geographical chart of this group of islands drawn up by the Hydrographical Commission under Capitán de Fragata Fabian Monojo y Salcedo in 1884 and published in 1886. Moreover, this extensive chart contains a large part of the island⁷ south of Basilan.

It is evident in the ESTADOS DE LA MISION of the Society of Jesus that the Jesuit Fathers were already performing their ministries in Basilan around 1637.⁸ At this time, then, the standard of the Cross and the flag of Spain were already waving,⁹ the time of the famous Captain General Don Sebastián Hurtado de Corcuera,¹⁰ real conqueror and terror of the Moro people of Jolo and Mindanao, who having in mind the subjection of the Moros sallied forth to fight them in their very entrenchments in Jolo and Mindanao, likewise subduing Basilan at the same time. In these islands, on account of their terrain, these people had an

⁷ It is either Bubuan or Saluping, since these are the nearest to the southern coast.

⁸ After Gen. Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera defeated Sultan Kudarat in 1637, a peace treaty was signed. One of the terms was freedom for the Jesuits to do missionary work in the Sultan's domains. Corcuera asked the King for Jesuits, whose zeal he praised, to evangelize Mindanao and Basilan. In the same year, Mindanao and Jolo were given to the Jesuits as their mission field. Thomas J. O'Shaughnessy, S.J., "Islam — Surrender to God," *Philippine Studies*, XV (January, 1967), 120. Francisco Colín, *Labor Evangélica de los Obreros de la Compañía de Jesús en las Islas Filipinas* (3 vols.; nueva edición — Pablo Pastells; Barcelona: Imprenta y Litografía de Henrich y Compañía, 1900), III, 796.

⁹ The Spanish flag waved over an unconquered people. In a conference with the French Minister Plenipotentiary in 1844, the native chieftains disclaimed any admission of Spanish sovereignty, explaining that the Spanish flags flown on some of their "paraos" were nothing more than a sign of acknowledgement to avoid being pestered in Zamboanga but which were removed on the return trip. Agustín Santayana, *La Isla de Mindanao, su historia y su estado presente, con algunas reflexiones acerca de su porvenir* (Madrid: Imprenta de Alhambra y Compañía, 1862), p. 60.

¹⁰ Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera, the Governor General in 1635-1644 led a formidable Christian Filipino-Spanish force against the Muslims of the south in 1637. His exploits were celebrated with civil and religious festivities for days in Manila on his triumphant return. His victory over the Muslims became one of the controversial origins of the popular moro-moro plays. But like many heroes, he, too, found his place in the garbage heap of history. After his *Residencia*, he was imprisoned in Fort Santiago stripped of honor, property and friends except his faithful confessor, Fr. Juan de Barrios, S.J. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. Robert Soller, "Moro-moro," *Sunday Times Magazine*, May 22, 1960, XV, 14. Felipe M. De Govantes, *Compendio de la Historia de Filipinas* (Manila: Imprenta del Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1877), pp. 174-77; 186-87.

infinite number of hiding places for plotting and carrying out diabolical plans against our simple Visayan¹¹ people and against our sacred religion.

At this time, Basilan had various churches and forts, at least in the northern part facing Zamboanga. History relates that Fr. Angel, S.J.,¹² was a renowned missionary in Basilan where he converted some upper class Moros and various Basilan *sacopes*.¹³ But in 1646, it seems that for reason of the necessity to concentrate the forces in Manila,¹⁴ the force was withdrawn from Basilan, from which time until 1845 in which we actually occupied Basilan,¹⁵ little is reported about this island except some or other

¹¹ "Bisaya" became the word for slave among the Muslims in Mindanao because the Visayan islands were the main source of slaves for Muslim raiders during the Spanish times. Gowing, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

¹² Fr. Francisco Angel, S.J., was a zealous Jesuit missionary born in San Clemente, Cuenca (Spain) on April 14, 1603. He came to the Philippines as a missionary in 1626 and devoted most of his religious life in Mindanao where he was once held captive by Mongcay, Sultan of Buhayen. He died on February 24, 1676 in Catbalogan, Samar. Miguel Saderra Masó, *Misiones de la Compañía de Jesús en Filipinas, 1581-1768 y 1859-1924* (Manila: Tipografía Pontificia de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, 1924), p. 51. Combés, *op. cit.*, cols. 262-67; 273-79; 696.

¹³ Sacopes or vassals are the Sultans' and the Datos' native-born subjects who profess the Muslim faith. Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-07.

¹⁴ After previous raids had weakened the Spanish naval forces, Dutch men-of-war sailed into Philippine waters in 1646, during Governor General Diego Fajardo's reign, to dislodge the Spaniards from the Philippines for good. The Dutch master-plan was to hold a squadron in reserve, a second squadron to seize the Chinese junks off the northern coasts, a third to intercept the silver-laden hidalgo ships at San Bernardino and then all three to converge and deliver the coup de grace on Manila. For all the forces and material the Governor could muster, he could send only two aged, lumbering galleons — the *Encarnación* and the *Rosario* — against an enemy vastly superior in number and fire-power. However, when the guns fell silent and the smoke cleared at Playa Honda, the Dutch had already turned tail for the Moluccas. Since then the Filipino-Spanish victory has been celebrated as La Naval de Manila. Neither were the Dutch successful under Admiral Martin Gertzen when they sailed back the following year. José Montero y Vidal, *Historia General de Filipinas* (3 vols.; Madrid: Est. Tip. de la Viuda e Hijos de Tello, 1895), I, 277-82. Letter of Lorenzo de Orella y Ugalde to the King, Manila, January 4, 1669, Colección Pastells de Madrid, Filipinas, XV, 273-273v as quoted in Horacio de la Costa, S.J., *Readings in Philippine History* (Manila: Bookmark, 1965), pp. 53-54.

¹⁵ The actual "occupation" of Basilan being referred to was the establishment of the seat of government at La Isabela, Basilan on July 10, 1945. *Infra*, note 17.

document in which the friendship of the Basilan Moros with the Sultan of Jolo is spoken of.¹⁶

In one manuscript which I found in this Mission, it is related that on June 10, 1845,¹⁷ Don Ramón Lobo, Jefe de Marina in Zamboanga, and Don Cayetano Figueroa, Governor of Zamboanga, came to this region of Pasanhan, north of Basilan, and gave it the name of Isabela in honor of Doña Isabela II, queen of Spain, and set up the Spanish flag in this place.¹⁸ The cause was the French who took steps to establish themselves or take Basilan, according to the history of Mindanao by Santayana.¹⁹

The French government, as it will be seen much later, not unaware that Basilan belonged to Spain, nevertheless wanted to try in a diplomatic way to occupy this island because it combined such and even better conditions than what France desired — that the harbor and territory which she wanted to occupy at that time in the Far East are together.²⁰

¹⁶ This friendship was a natural outcome of the many ties, e. g., kinship, that bound Basilan to Jolo. At one time, Jolo had a "queen", Tuambaloca, who was a native of Basilan. Combés *op. cit.*, col. 264.

¹⁷ Isabela was established on July 10, 1845, a month after their arrival. A letter of Pablo Banque to Hermenegildo Jacas, Isabela de Basilan, March 2, 1884 in *Cartas de los Padres de la Compañía de Jesús de la Misión de Filipinas* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipo-Litográfico de M. Pérez, hijo, 1887), Cuaderno VI, 21. Cited hereafter as CPJ.

¹⁸ Isabela was established at the mouth of the stream called Pasanjan at the northwestern tip of the island. Its complete name was La Isabela which was designated Cabecera of Basilan on September 12, 1849. Its port was a very ideal haven for ships. In fact it was a naval station with a dry dock and hospital. The Spanish force that built it to counteract the French menace came from Zamboanga. To protect the place from Muslims, the Spaniards built a fort made up of four fortified ramparts erected on four salient angles with a surrounding moat. It was on a very strategic point of the town, for it covered very well the approaches from the mountains, river and the channel between the islands of Basilan and Malamaui. Its strength was put to the test on September 29, 1849 when 3,000 Muslims from Jolo led by the Datos of Boal and Samalant, Imam Buyok and Panglima Hasian tried to take it by surprise in a coordinated land and sea attack. The defenders under their commandant, José María de la O. repulsed them with heavy losses. Undaunted, the attackers renewed the siege the next day but once again they lost heavily in lives and prisoners. Montero y Vidal, *Historia General*...., III, 144-45. *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), III, 114. Henceforth cited as RPC. CPJ, March 2, 1884, VI, 21.

¹⁹ Santayana, *op. cit.*

²⁰ French ambitions to establish relations with the Philippines seem to have dated as early as 1685 when an agent of the French China Company

I judge it fitting to relate here what the historian Santayana says with regard to Basilan in order to have an exact idea of how we actually occupied Basilan and of the French government's policy.

"This island, watered with Spanish sweat and blood, so close to Zamboanga, was the object of occupational plans of the French government in the year 1844.²¹ In the early days of the month of November, the goleta²² *Sabine* appeared and anchored at the bay of Zamboanga under the command of M. Guerin who

sent home a report from Siam dealing with the advantages of trading with the Philippines.

Then during the reign of the Directory, the French realized that the might of their greatest rival, England, came from her maritime supremacy which was made possible by her chain of bases and colonies. A French naval officer submitted in 1797 to the government his "Project d'établissement aux Philippines et à la Cochinchine" which pointed out the importance of establishing an arsenal and shipyards for their fleet and that the Philippines "seems to combine all the advantages we are looking for, no less by its location than by the number of its inhabitants and the value of its products..." Whether or not the French government took up the project is not certain. But certainly on April 23, 1843, Theosen Francisco Paje, skipper of the French corbete, *La Favorita*, negotiated a treaty with the Sultan of Jolo, giving French subjects access to any Joloano port and privileges equal to the most favored nation. The treaty appears in José Montero y Vidal, *Historia de la Piratería Malayo-Mahometana en Mindanao, Joló y Borneo* (2 vols.; Madrid: Imprenta y Fundición de Manuel Tello, 1888), II, 47-48.

A little afterwards, the French Minister, M. E. Lagrene, concluded a treaty (historians invariably date it 1844 and 1954) of navigation and commerce with the Sultan Mahamad Pulalon Raguya of Jolo, including the cession of the island of Basilan for 100,000 pesos for a term of 100 years. However, the terms of the treaty were not fulfilled, for the French King, Louis Philippe, decided not to ratify it. *Ibid.*, II, 48-49; 379. Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-62. Najeeb M. Saleeby, *The History of Sulu* (Manila: Filipina Book Guild, Inc., 1963), p. 94. Archives Nationales Paris, Fonds coloniaux, C¹ 5, 6-9; C¹ 22, fols. 159-159v (cited hereafter as ANP) as quoted in Horacio de la Costa, S.J., *Asia and the Philippines* (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1967), pp. 115-16; 127-29. Capt. Edward Belcher to Consul Farren, on board H.M.S. Samarang, Manila, March 11, 1845, Public Relations Office, F.O. 72/684 as quoted in de la Costa, S.J., *Readings...*, p. 207.

²¹ The plans were laid down by the Minister of Foreign Affairs — Francois Guizot — and King Louis Philippe to catch up with other foreign powers in the scramble for bases and territories in the Far East, but it was Guizot, a former university professor, who "put his finger on a small blob in the map of Southeast Asia, the island of Basilan." Gordon Craig, *Europe Since 1815* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965), pp. 80-83. de la Costa, *Readings...*, pp. 206-07.

²² A goleta is a schooner which carries two masts, sometimes three, with fore-and-aft sails. Usually it has a fore-topmast for unfurling top-sails and top-gallant sails.

demanded from the Governor²³ to negotiate the surrender of the three members of the crew of one of his small boats who were prisoners of the pirates of Maluso,²⁴ district of Basilan, where the noted Dato Usuk²⁵ was residing. These pirates put to death the officer of the crew and one sailor.²⁶ The rescue of the three prisoners was effected but afterwards another French warship appeared, the corbete²⁷ *Victorieuse*, which was put under the command of Captain Guerin who notified the Governor of Zamboanga of the blockade of Basilan and adjacent islands to exact complete satisfaction for those murders from Dato Usuk. The Governor protested against the blockade, alleging that, at all events, this ought to be limited to the district of Maluso, but the blockade was carried out in effect in spite of the protest. Two other warships of the same nation arrived — the steam vessel *Archimede* and the fragata²⁸ *Erigone* — under the command of Vice Admiral Cecille, which carried aboard the Minister Plenipotentiary, M. de Lagrene.²⁹

Then the Spanish war frigate *Esperanza* arrived in Zamboanga under the command of Brigadier Bocalan³⁰ who held an energetic and spirited correspondence with M. Cecille concerning the motive of their suspicious actions in Basilan. The correspondence stopped with both parties referring themselves to the

²³ Governor Cayetano Figueroa.

²⁴ This place is presently located at the western coast of the island about 30.83 kilometers from the poblacion of Isabela.

²⁵ He was the chieftain of Maluso. Montero y Vidal, *Historia de Pirateria...*, II, 379.

²⁶ They were members of an exploring party put ashore by a French naval vessel in 1843. In retaliation, the *Sabine* attacked the principal village of Basilan in 1844, de la Costa, *Readings...*, p. 207.

²⁷ A corvette. It is smaller than a frigate and is ordinarily fitted with a mizzen mast.

²⁸ A *fragata* is a frigate which is a three-masted ship intermediate between a corvette and a ship of the line.

²⁹ In other documents, his name sometimes appears as La Grene. He was astute in the ways of carrot and stick diplomacy. In the retaliatory attack on Basilan in 1844, he was on board the *Sabine*. He later proceeded to Jolo and effected the above-mentioned (see Note 20) cession of Basilan to France. On October 24, 1844, he signed on board the *Archimede* the commercial treaty of Whampoa and, on December 28, the edict of free exercise of Christianity in the five ports opened to foreigners and religious tolerance to Christian Chinese living in the interior of the Chinese empire. de la Costa, *Readings...*, p. 207. Santayana, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

³⁰ He was Don Agustin Bocalan. His rank was "Brigadier de Marina," roughly an equivalent of Rear Admiral.

decision of their respective governments, and the French ships moved away with the exception of the goleta *Sabine* which remained stationed in the channel between Basilan and Malamaui.

Brigadier Bocalan and the Governor of Zamboanga immediately demanded complete submission from the majority of the populace of Basilan which they had not yet rendered to the government, with abrogation of whatever pledge they might have made to foreigners, and they gave instructions that a temporary fort should be constructed in Pasanhan, northern coast of Basilan, by the soldiers and convicts, within sight of the French corbeta which, having taken charge of various altercations between its commanding officer and the Spaniards, weighed anchor and disappeared.³¹ Thus far Santayana."³²

France perfectly made it understood that Spain was mistress and proprietress³³ of Basilan upon demanding from the Governor of Zamboanga to arrange for the surrender of the three prisoners of the Moros of Maluso, and these in turn showed themselves as subjects³⁴ of Spain upon surrendering them as soon as Spain demanded them.

France also manifested much determination in taking Basilan because, notwithstanding the protest of the Governor of Zamboanga against the blockade of the entire Basilan, she carried it out in effect. And she also manifested great interest in taking Basilan, though tactfully, with the arrival of the French warships at such a time and occasion; and finally, on account of the sketch of the excellent Basilan channel which the French Vice-Admiral

³¹ Guizot's dispatch to Lagrene on August 5, 1845 which appears in Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-66 outlined the reasons why the French gave up their intentions on Basilan. Beset by serious problems in Africa, Tahiti, Río de la Plata and other places, they were little inclined to go into fresh and faraway ventures with dubious usefulness, sacrifice and success.

³² Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44. These passages, with some variations, are also in Montero y Vidal, *Historia de Piratería* . . . , II, 378-80.

³³ The real motives of the French seem to have been misinterpreted. Actually de Lagrene was convinced that Spanish pretensions on Basilan had no solid basis. The French negotiated with the Governor because the government had control over the "Moros" of Maluso. At that time, Pedro Cuevas (see Note 43) was already an effective instrument in the hands of the government. Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

³⁴ Against the backdrop of centuries of Muslim resistance against Spanish domination, it is hard to go along with the author on this. It must have been an acquiescence for convenience in the face of superior force.

Cecille drew up about this time with several French officers who were under his command for the same purpose.

The interest and persistence in taking Basilan is not to be admired, since this island satisfied the aspirations of France. I have here what is in the same history of Santayana.³⁵

"Paris, November 7, 1843. The King³⁶ has decided, as it is already evident to M. de Lagrene, that a naval station should be established in the Indian and Chinese waters for the purpose of protecting, and if necessary, defending our political and commercial interests.

France does not possess at present in those waters any territory where the ships can put in for supplies, repair their damages and heal their sick. The French fleet will, therefore, be forced to seek a base at the Portuguese Colony of Macao, the English settlement of Hongkong or the arsenal of Cavite³⁷ on the Spanish island of Luzon. This cannot be. It is not profitable for France to be absent from so great a part of the world where other nations possess establishments. The French colors must also float in the Chinese waters over the naval station where our ships will be sure to find a haven and every kind of help.

It is necessary to establish there, as the English did at Hongkong and as we ourselves did in the Marquesas islands, a base for our fleet and a distribution center for commerce. This base ought to combine many essential conditions: promixity to the Chinese empire, large protected harbor where the ships would not suffer in the frequent and terrible storms of those places, isolated and easily defensible location, healthful climate in which our crews could recuperate in a short time from the maladies caused

³⁵ Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-68.

³⁶ King Louis Philippe intervened a lot in foreign affairs during Guizot's incumbency. He was personally full of courage but many of his subjects considered his foreign policy devoid of courage. Craig, *op. cit.*, pp. 83 & 90.

³⁷ This was, indeed, very true. In the 18th century, French merchant ships and even naval vessels, e.g., the frigate *Precieuse* and Marquis de Castries, in need of repairs and supplies put in at Cavite or Manila. They were attended to with the blessings of Governor José Basco y Bargas, an old salt himself, until the Royal Philippine Company made known its displeasure. ANP C¹ 4, 57-57v; C¹ 16, 93-93v as quoted in de la Costa, *Asia* . . . , pp. 125-26.

by tropical heat, and finally, clean and abundant springs so that our ships can take in fresh water.³⁸

Regarding this matter, exact directions cannot be given to M. de Lagrene. Some places specified by previous explorations which can serve as a base for French politics will be indicated to him. South of the Philippines under the control of Spain is the island of Basilan which ought to be explored carefully. Over this island, the Sultan of Jolo exercises a disputed authority. A base in this place could immediately have a great significance, since it is on the sailing route of the Pacific Ocean just as Hong-kong is on that of Indochina." Thus far the summary of the French document found in Santayana.

All the officers of the French squadron who sailed about these waters in 1844 and 1845 agreed that Basilan combined the conditions that the French government wanted, namely, large and protected harbor, easily defensible location, healthful climate, clean and abundant springs and proximately to China.³⁹ With such conditions, it is not astonishing that the French Minister who was negotiating this case in 1843 said in 1860 that in view of the prospect that the Far East presents, he cannot help but feel that Basilan island is not ours.

I have put down the preceeding matter before speaking in particular of the wealth of this island which has to be exploited, either because the written information about Basilan is scanty or also in order that it may serve in knowing better the so little known importance, since it is not being studied, of this beautiful island of Basilan.

CONDITIONS OF THE ISLAND FOR CULTIVATION. This island of Basilan is exceedingly gifted for the establishment of colonizing communities worthy of the most important capitalists.

³⁸ Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-56. This enumeration of conditions is also in Montero y Vidal, *Historia General*...., III, 106-10.

³⁹ In Lagrene's dispatches of 1845 to Guizot, he examined the applicability of each of these conditions to the island of Basilan. The island met all except the presence of clean and abundant springs within the environs of the port in Malamaui or in Basilan itself. The lone source of water was a mile and a half or two from the mouth of the "Gumalarand" [Cumularan] river which was inaccessible to rowboats or dories. Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-56.

The conditions that are necessary and of more help to colonizing communities are: healthful climate, fertility, good and plentiful water, plains sufficiently above sea level for building extensive and beautiful communities that would devote themselves to tilling the land and, speaking of tropical countries, that it should be free from the storms that cause so much damage to towns and plantations in the tropics. These conditions are perfectly present in this island. Moreover, it relies on excellent and sheltered anchorages for constant support from the fleet and help from merchant ships in importing essential items and exporting the rich, abundant products that it would produce. What more is needed for settling this island? Perhaps it only needs to be known, and some guarantees and securities should be given to the settlers who wish to exploit wealth⁴⁰ of this island in order not to lose courage in view of the extrinsic difficulties that may be obtaining in this island which perhaps are solely the lack of laborers and the terror inspired by the Moros with which a large part of this island is inhabited.

HEALTHFUL CLIMATE. The experience of an uninterrupted half century of residence in Isabela, Basilan affirms that the climate of Basilan is healthful. Although there were some malignant fevers at the start of its occupation on account of the clearing of trees, the case of malignant fevers has been rare for very long time and the case of dysentery is still much rarer.⁴¹ There are some cases of tuberculosis among the Indios brought about more by their little precaution and ignorance. In general, the Spaniards have always enjoyed good health, as the case of of illness is rare, but there are some who have lost their health and their life for reasons foreign to the climate. And what has been said, though referring especially to the Cabecera, can be affirmed in general of the entire island through the experience

⁴⁰ Fr. Pablo Cavallería, S.J., a missionary at Isabela, Basilan from 1881-1887 and 1891-1899, wrote, "This island is very rich and it ought to be attended to by the government because it has conditions which would greatly interest the government." APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-C.

⁴¹ The most common diseases were dysentery, malaria, leprosy, scabies, smallpox, cholera, buboes, tuberculosis, sores, and venereal diseases. For remedies, they used only plain medicine, bettle nut, a herb called macabuhay, mangosteen, etc. *Ibid.*

obtained there and through the old people and those who know the island and through its Moro inhabitants. The location of the Visita of San Pedro de Guibauan,⁴² some twenty miles away east of Isabela, where the missionary Padre has gone for ten years, and the other odd years during which a group of Christians and Moros under the authority of Pedro Cuevas⁴³ have lived there, is also a proof of the healthfulness of Basilan, and it has been observed that it is a place safe and free from endemic diseases.

⁴² This "Visita" (a village occasionally ministered to by a non-resident priest) is six leagues from Isabela.

⁴³ If the setting were not the lush plains of Basilan but the barren wasteland of Australia, it would not have made much difference. Pedro, a native of Bacoor, Cavite, was a convict at the penal settlement of Zamboanga. With fellow convicts, he killed the Spanish officer of the guards and escaped, eventually making his way across the Strait of Basilan.

In one village, he challenged Dato Kalun to a fight. With only a lance and a shield, the Muslim had no chance. Pedro shot him with the gun he had snatched from his guards. His victory earned him the name Dato Kalun and the allegiance of the chieftain's people. Because of the aura of invincibility spun around him by the superstitious Muslims, his reputed bravery, brutality but, most of all, his gun, villages easily fell under his control.

Seeing the powerful influence of this man over the untractable populace, and prodded on by the Basilan Jesuits, Governor Fernando Primo de Rivera granted him and his 22 followers conditional amnesty from all their crimes on June 9, 1882. Later he was commissioned "teniente absoluto mayor". It was a stroke of genius, for with the generous cooperation of this escaped convict, the government maintained order in the island and the Church carried on its work of evangelization.

Pedro settled down at San Pedro de Guibauan, now Lamitan, with his baptized Yakan wife, Uraya, and his sister, Florencia. He prospered into a planter, rancher and practically the lord of Basilan. He died in 1904.

Today there stands a monument in memory of Pedro Cuevas at the plaza of Lamitan. In this place, there lives a highly respected former Deputy Governor of Basilan by the name of Dato Unding. He is Pedro, Jr., son of the Tagalog renegade turned Dato, proprietor, and exemplary Christian. CPJ, November 19, 1882, V, 259; February 21, 1883, 1883 V, 265; October 20, 1883, VI, 10-11; June 29, 1884, VI, 42; August 25, 1886, VII, 20-21; December 31, 1886, VII, 27; June 7, 1889, IX, 10; August 24, 1889, IX, 18-19; January 23, 1890, IX, 31-32; September 24, 1891, IX, 79; May 30, 1894, X, 51. APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-C; XVI-9-Je/9/1882. Julián González Parrado, *Memoria Acerca de Mindanao* (Manila: Estab. Tipo-Litográfico de Ramírez y Co., 1893), p. 82. Ileana Maramag, "The Yakans of Basilan," *Sunday Times Magazine*, June 4, 1961, XVI, 24. (This article carries a picture of Pedro, Jr., standing in front of his father's monument.) Charles Forbes-Lindsay, *The Philippines* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1906), pp. 506-09.

Frs. Cavalleria and Llausas referred to Pedro Cuevas as Panglima Kalun because, according to Cavalleria, the man Pedro fought with was a *Paglima* (see Note 70), not a Dato. APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-C. CPJ, Pedro Llausas to Fr. Superior, Isabela de Basilan, October 20, 1883, VI, 10 & 11.

If the deaths, in general, are more than what apparently ought to be, it is because the navy boats transport the sick from other places to the hospital⁴⁴ of the naval station of this town, and sometimes even Army patients have been sent in. In the year 1891, several patients were sent from the troops that were scouring Baras, Paran-Paran and Tucuran during the Lanao expedition of Captain General Weyler's⁴⁵ time.

Since I have spoken of the healthfulness of the climate of Basilan, in order to confirm what has been said, it is proper to relate what refers to the epidemic that had broken out three times in Isabela and had attacked Zamboanga, a town close to this island. In the last epidemic in 1889, there was not a single case in this town. In the second to the last epidemic of the year 1882, there were only sixteen deaths⁴⁶ which were very few compared with the very many victims that it claimed in Zamboanga. In the epidemic of the year 1863, only five deaths were mourned, and which were even doubtful whether they were caused by the epidemic. Although there were many more victims in the two Moro villages conterminous to Pasanhan and Panigayan, I believe that, for the part, it ought to be attributed to the little care⁴⁷ on their part and especially to the semi-brackish water which they drink, in particular, the people of Panigayan.⁴⁸ It

An old group picture of Pedro, his wife, daughter, and female servant appears in CPJ, X, 77.

⁴⁴ This was located in a small cove of the port. CPJ, Francisco Foradada to Juan Ricart, Isabela de Basilan, June 7, 1889, IX, 7.

⁴⁵ Valeriano Weyler was governor of the Philippines in 1888-1891. He led a sizeable force against the Magindanaws and Maranaws on January 1889. An epidemic took a toll of his forces at Baras, forcing him to suspend his operations. Dean Worcester, an eye-witness, said, "I was at Zamboanga when the wreck of General Weyler's expedition to Lake Lanao began to return. There had been no adequate provision for the medical care of the force in the field, and the condition of many of the soldiers was pitiable in the extreme. Disabled men were brought in by the shipload, and the hospitals at Zamboanga, Isabela de Basilan and Jolo were soon filled to overflowing." Dean Worcester, *The Philippines Past & Present* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 332.

⁴⁶ Fr. Banque, S.J., reported 18 deaths in Isabela. CPJ, Pablo Banque to Hermenegildo Jacas, Isabela de Basilan, March 2, 1884, VI, 24.

⁴⁷ In the 19th century, health conditions in Manila were far from ideal; understandably more so in rural areas.

⁴⁸ This place lost 218 out of its 400 inhabitants in 1882. It is about six kilometers west of present day Isabela. Cavalleria characterized the "Moros" of Panigayan as more peaceful than Jolo's and more affable because he did not see anyone carrying a kris or lance or bolo while in Jolo no one was seen without a bladed weapon. CPJ, March 2, 1884, VI, 24; November 19, 1882 V, 260-61.

is well-known that water is one of the more potent elements in epidemics so much so that in the very Villa de Zamboanga⁴⁹ where I was in 1889, assisting many cholera-stricken people, I observed that in places with turbid water, many more died than in other places. A proof of it is the place in Zamboanga named Tabuk, located in Magay, where there were very many who died from the epidemic.

FERTILITY. The fertility of Basilan is remarkable. It is enough to look at the over-all vista of the island which presents under a majestic panorama a luxuriant vegetation that attracts the attention of all who behold it, especially from the strait bearing its name, while sailing from Zamboanga to this Cabecera. But particularly speaking, we experience its fertility through the crops which are harvested at present. High-valued products are perfectly grown, like the coconut, cacao, coffee, abaca, sugar cane and those which the Indios cultivate more assiduously, like the palay, camote, banana, together with the fruit-bearing trees of mango, maran, lanzones, pineapple limes, etc.⁵⁰ Though it is true that the cacao had a kind of phylloxera about three years ago, it is disappearing and is expected to disappear little by little.

The plantations of some Indios who have opened lands from one side of the Cabecera of Basilan to the other, some ten years ago, give evidence of all these products. The large hacienda of Don Ramon de Larracochea,⁵¹ Spaniard born in Spain, who about twelve years ago cultivated about 20,000 coffee plants and 2,000 cacao two miles south of this Cabecera, confirms this statement. The palay yields an astonishing harvest in Guibauan which place I will speak of much later. Its yield exceeds one hundred percent when well cultivated.

MOUNTAINS. The mountain named Guibauan, known and called Lemutun by the Moros, is seemingly the highest and

⁴⁹ In two months, 1200 died in Zamboanga. CPJ, Isabela de Basilan, June 7, 1889, IX, 7.

⁵⁰ Fruits and plants native to the Philippines, Malacca and India abounded in the island so much so that it was tagged "el almacén y huerta de Zamboanga" [the storehouse and orchard of Zamboanga]. Colín, *op. cit.*, I, 44. CPJ, March 2, 1884, VI, 19.

The French Minister, de Lagrene, observed the suitability of the soil for cinnamon, cloves, pepper, and nutmeg. Santayana, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁵¹ He was "interventor de Hacienda" [Estate Controller] of Isabela. He started his plantation in 1881. CPJ, September 24, 1891, IX, 79.

measures 3,660 feet. It extends from west to east and has its foot very near Isabela, stretching very close to the mountain or peak called Panocobon. This peak is almost in the forefront of the very fertile land of San Pedro de Guibauan where Pedro Cuevas dwells. The famous Rancheria de Bajelugbung is in the southern part of this peak and very close to it. This peak measures 2,141 feet.

The Matangal mountains which is in the farthest end of this island in the east measures 2,327 feet. It serves as a point of reference for ships in sailing towards these waters from Cotabato or Davao.

The small peak next to Matangal, stretching towards Isabela, is named Sicaling, and the next one to this is called Paguengan, and then there is the one that is very near the river Guibauan called Abin-abin.

The so-called Three Peaks rising 1,318 feet which serve as a point of reference on leaving Zamboanga for this channel of Isabela are in the western part of the island.

The names of the other rather tall mountains have not yet been able to be precisely ascertained. The altitude has been taken or extracted from the geographical chart, Number XIV, of the Hydrographic Commission where the altitudes of the highest peaks of this island appear. Through the heights of the mountains and their number which is relatively large for the area of the island, the wealth and abundance of the waters of this island are released.

TIMBER. The island has also good timber, like the Molave, Cubi, Agutud, Camagon, Yati, Ipil, Camunin, Guijo, Guiso, Lanete, Sandana, Malatapay, Calantas, Bacauan and some others.

CLEAR AND ABUNDANT SPRINGS OR RIVERS. Starting from the northeast and about two leagues from Matangal is the river Guibauan in which an hour away from the sea where the famous plain and irrigated land⁵² of Guibauan is, it can be copiously watered. Approaching the Cabecera and a league and a half away is the well-known Maloong river; then the rivers Balactasan, Tabianan and Binuangan.

⁵² Fr. Cavalleria described this land as the best of Basilan, ideal for crops like cacao, coffee, etc., CPJ, August 23, 1891, IX, 76.

At the Cabecera is the famous and so well-known stream that admirably supplies the Cabecera with water, and likewise the two torrents, one of which is perennial. Farther towards the northwest of Isabela are the rivers Sumagdan, Maliguit and the copious river of Cumularan which is two fathoms deep; then the river of Atung-atung, the river of Matican, that of Bulansa and that of Bagbagun — all rivers at distances appropriate for developing in them lovely agricultural communities.

In the southern part and starting from the western promontory are the rivers Pangasahan, Canibungan, Maluso, Tabalungan, Mangal, Guion and — whose water is crystalline, perennial and abundant — Tumanbung, Bugbug, Palunsayan and the well-known river of Bajelugbung whose water is also crystalline, perennial and abundant.⁵³

PLAINS. There are several extensive plains especially in the northern part of the island and all are sufficiently above sea level. Thus they can be better tilled and yield good produce.

By the banks of the river of Isabela in the western part, there is an extensive plain about two leagues from north to south by two leagues from east to west whose flatness extends from this river till almost the Cumularan river, and moreover, it is furthermore transversed in the middle by the river Sumagdan. The poblacion of Isabela should have been built in this site because, without losing any of the benefits which it enjoys from the water and the channel, it would have the immense benefit from that great plain which, without any doubt, would have contributed to the growth of Isabela much more than its present growth.

We do not know the reasons the founders had for not establishing the town on the opposite bank of the river. It is believed that it was due to the Moros dwelling in that place but, at present, they are no longer there, and even without ruining the present town, a bridge could be built over the same river, and then a town plan drawn up for those who would like to erect houses in the said place.

⁵³ Fr. Banque reported that more than 33 rivers watered Basilan. CPJ, March 2, 1884, VI, 20.

After the river Cumularan, all the rest of the island in the western part is almost an uninterrupted plain. The locations of Balagtanay where there is a wide irrigated land, Atung-atung, Matican, Bulansa, Bagbagun, and Pangasahan, all places laved by the rivers that bear the name of the correspondingly named place, are admirably suitable for population.

In the northeastern part of Isabela, there is the plain of Balagtasan proposed more than once by some governors of this island for forming a town but their plans have not been attended to. It is about two leagues away from the Cabecera. A town in this place would give a great importance to the Cabecera and serve as a bastion against the Moros from the east and south-east and, at the same time, for communication with the Visita of San Pedro de Guibauan. It would serve likewise as a stopping place on the way to or from Zamboanga especially in time of storms.

The lands of Nipa and Boajan, a little closer to the north-east, are also precious. These places are already contiguous to the famous land of the river Guibauan on whose banks there is a wide, fertile and open land of about six leagues in length by four in with. It splits itself into almost two halves. The first half is on a land naturally irrigated without expense or with very little human effort, and the other half is land for plantations of coconuts, coffee, cacao and abaca, etc. for being sufficiently elevated. The irrigated land is so fruitful that it yields more than one hundred one per cent.

The famous Pedro Cuevas is settled in this place since the year 1882. He had increased the cultivation of the soil through his own and his subordinates' efforts. This locality was declared a Visita by His Excellency Captain General Terrero⁵⁴ on April 24, 1885 when he was visiting Isabela, Basilan. There is a small dilapidated chapel about twenty "varas"⁵⁵ long and eight wide with a little hut beside it for the missionary when he comes to perform his ministries in the place.⁵⁶ The first post of this small

⁵⁴ Emilio Terrero y Perinat was Governor of the Philippines from 1885 to 1888.

⁵⁵ A "vara" is a unit of linear measure varying from 32 to 45 inches in Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries.

⁵⁶ Author's footnote: "Today, there is another chapel at the opposite bank of the river Guibauan. This chapel already fell to the ground."

chapel was raised with Brigadier La Corte⁵⁷ attending and in whose presence the place was blessed by Rev. Fr. Joaquin Sancho⁵⁸ who was then Superior of the Residence of Zamboanga. In this visit, Fr. Pablo Cavalleria accompanied him and carried on the work, which is understood in such circumstances, till he had erected the chapel. The Father referred to continues visiting the said place, celebrating for some years now the fiesta of San Pedro at its proper time. Pedro Cuevas was appointed "teniente absoluto"⁵⁹ of the Visita so that he would cooperate in the speedy reduction of the Basilan Moros, first, of that locality and, afterwards, of other localities and towns. Some Moros of that area have embraced our holy religion and many more would have embraced it had the cooperation been the promised and expected one.

In the south, there are also good locations for towns, like those of Guion, Maluso and others which are already rather known to us.

The plainless places perfectly leave room also for plantations of high value, like the cacao, coconut, coffee, etc. In brief, the entire Basilan is known to be fertile for some or other plantations, and though there are considerable stones in some places but since a greater part of them are detached from the ground like broken pieces of marble, without doubt through some volcanic eruption,⁶⁰ forests can grow up.

⁵⁷ Occasioned by some disturbances in Sulu on April 1881, Brigadier General La Corte took charge of the government of Mindanao. Fr. Joaquín Sancho, S.J., described him as a good man who helped them in getting the indult of Pedro Cuevas and his companions. CPJ, Joaquín Sancho to Fr. Superior, Zamboanga, June 29, 1884, VI, 38. Saleeby, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁵⁸ Fr. Joaquín Sancho, S.J., held various jobs while in the Philippines from September 6, 1882 to July 1892. He was Superior of the Residence of Zamboanga from 1891 to 1892. He came to Basilan to return Fr. Cavalleria's visit. Saderra Masó, *op. cit.*, p. 72. CPJ, Zamboanga, June 29, 1884, VI, 38.

⁵⁹ Cuevas' complete title as it appears in CPJ, December 31, 1886, VII, 27 and October 20, 1883, VI, 10-11 was "Teniente Absoluto Mayor" which is translated as "Lieutenant Major" in Letter of Isabel Aspillera, Embajada de España, to Francisco Mallari, Manila, April 22, 1974 and "Absolute Lieutenant-in Chief" in Emma Helen Blair & James Alexander Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1893* (55 vols.; Cleveland: Arthur A. Clarke, 1903), XLIII, 255.

⁶⁰ Fr. Banque mentioned the presence of some enormous rough stones, black as coal and heavy as iron, scattered at great intervals, which seems to be explained by a mighty and terrible volcanic eruption. CPJ, March 2, 1884, VI, 20.

This island also combines the inestimable advantage of being free from tropical storms, since it is at the edge of these, and although sometimes the seas of the northern coast become somewhat tempestuous, with regards to the grainfields, the storms are almost never so terrible as to destroy them — circumstances very worthwhile minding by settlers who know how much damage tropical storms cause in some villages of these islands.⁶¹

ANCHORAGES. Though this island would not have another anchorage than its precious channel, it would be sufficiently worth the while to be occupied. This precious and never sufficiently extolled channel has a length of about three miles with a wide middle of about six hundred meters formed by the island of Basilan and the island of Malamau with sufficient depth for very deep draught ships marked in geographic charts already published by hydrographic commissions.⁶²

This channel is in the northern part of the island and two-thirds distant from the eastern part of the island and one-third from the western part; a most sheltered harbor from all winds and storms as it is well-known for many years. All those who see it for the first time behold it with admiration and exclaim, "This is precious!"

In the south, there are also good anchorages, like that of Bajelugbung, that of Maluso and the other side of the Matangal headland, and, in general, the entire south of this island is sheltered from the winds and storms from the northwest.

UNBELIEVERS AND THEIR CUSTOMS. The race of unbelievers⁶³ of this island comes from the Moro race, perhaps the only reason why in spite of its fertility, it is very sparsely populated by Christian farmers. These people are divided into Samal Moros and Yakan Moros. The Samals⁶⁴ are those who

⁶¹ Basilan is near the equator and lies south of the typhoon belt.

⁶² In his report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lagrene described this beautiful body of water as $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, between a quarter and third of a mile wide, as open as the Bosphorus or Dardanelles yet perfectly sheltered from all winds and rough seas, smoothed down by one or two and a half-knot current, and a safe place where the fleets of all nations could perfectly ride at anchor. Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

⁶³ It is a misnomer to call the Muslims unbelievers. They believe in God — Allah.

⁶⁴ The Samals who are also called Lutaos, meaning fishermen or people of the sea, live mostly in boats though some inhabit coastal settlements in

fairly devote themselves to fishing and the construction of boats called *vintas*⁶⁵ which admirably serve them for piracy. With these *vintas*, majority of which do not comprise more than about nine to ten "varas", they make their journeys to Jolo, Sindangan, Pollok, Cotabato and Tukuran in Mindanao. They handle them with much skill and are rarely lost for reason of bad weather.

Although a mortal blow was dealt to Moro piracy⁶⁶ by the coming of steam-driven vessels⁶⁷ to these islands, nevertheless they continue their piracy everytime they can do it with impunity even in Moro settlements, if they cannot do it in Christian villages. In their piracy, they customarily kill the men who can resist them and carry away the children, women and their belongings.

The second kind of Moros called Yakans⁶⁸ are those who live in the interior of the island, engaging in farming but what they

houses built over the water. There are various Samal groups, like the Bajaos, Lutaos, Samars and Orang Lauts, speaking somewhat different dialects. Till the 1960's about 160,000 inhabited the southern part of Sulu archipelago. Combes, *op. cit.*, col. 779. Gowing, *Mosque....*, p. 5.

⁶⁵ Eyewitnesses in the past described the *vinta* as a small light craft about eleven meters long and one and a half wide, equipped with a bamboo mast, bright-colored square sails woven with fantastic patterns, outriggers and frame for mounting *lantakas* (brass cannons), hewn from a soft wood called Manakayan, caulked with coconut-husk fibers, tarred and lashed with rattan strips APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-C. Vic Hurley, Southeast of Zamboanga (New York: E. P. Dutton, Co., 1935), p. 42.

⁶⁶ There is no scarcity of writings on "Moro piracy" or "Moro depredations". That such events transpired, cannot be denied. As Cesar A. Majul said, "That a great deal of cruelty, tears and suffering have followed the wake of their [Muslims'] depredations and persistent struggle against aims to conquer them is not to be denied." Cesar A. Majul, "The Role of Islam in the History of the Filipino People," *Asian Studies*, IV (August, 1966), 315.

What is lacking is a fresh and bold reinterpretation from the Muslim as well as Spanish vantage point. Centuries gone by have already cooled off passions — hopefully. Scholars from both sides must be able to face the events with sobriety and ask searching questions. They should not be satisfied with the time-worn issues of religion and survival. They should instead take a harder look at the social and political angles but much harder still at the economic, for there are strong evidences that both Muslim and Spaniard were not beyond the pull of economic motives.

⁶⁷ Muslim "pirates" in their fast sailing crafts met their nemesis as early as 1848 when Gov. Narciso Claveria acquired from England three steam-powered gunboats — the *Elcano*, *Magallanes*, *Reina de Castilla* — which were used in breaking the backbone of the Balangingi "pirates". The addition of 18 more in 1860 finally made the Philippine seas a little safer for commerce and navigation — at least for some time. CPJ, Pablo Pastells to Juan Capell, Manila, April 20, 1887, VII, 346. Santayana, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67. Saleeby, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁶⁸ The Yakans of the Basilan hinterlands are said to be the real Basilanos and among the most peaceful of the Muslims. They used to flee from

have tilled is so small that they hardly havest rice sufficient for half a year. For the rest of the year, they eat cassava and other wild plants. These are not sailors, since they hardly know how to handle boats and many do not know how to swim either. But with regard to the Moro custom of living on loot, it is practised among these people as among the Samals. They capture children and women from other settlements either in war or by treachery⁶⁹ as the law of the mighty is in force. Thus the Dato, Panglima and Imam⁷⁰ are the only ones who can be rich, if there

the Samals for fear of being enslaved but united with them in war for matter of common concern. Until the 1960's, there were about 45,000 in the interior of Basilan. Like their predecessors, they are still landlubbers but are reputedly skillful in vinta-making. APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-C. Maramag, "The Yakans...." p. 26. CPJ, April 20, 1887, VII, 347.

⁶⁹ In 1964, Gowing wrote about the existing slavery among Muslims especially around Lanao Lake. They acquire slaves in various ways: "acquisition from other slave owners in payment of debts; slaves reproducing themselves; persons selling themselves into slavery; persons being sentenced to slavery by *agama* courts (rare nowadays); and, every now and again, kidnapping (mostly women and infant children). Sometimes unwanted children are sold as slaves." But highly educated Muslims, like Dr. Mamitua Saber, have been actively campaigning for the eradication of slavery among their people. Gowing, *Mosque....*, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁰ Dato — head of a clan and below a Sultan in rank.

Panglima — a district chief or administrative officer below a Dato.

Imam — a religious minister in charge of ceremonies like baptism, marriage, burial, and assisting the dying. At times he could act as judge and jury in the administration of justice.

Fr. Cavalleria wrote that Basilan Muslims recognized two kinds of authorities: the non-religious and the religious. In hierarchical order:

Non-Religious	Religious
1. Dato	1. Sherif
2. Panglima	2. Talipa
3. Maharadja	3. Imam
4. Salibansauan	4. Tatip
5. Paduca	5. Bilal
6. Satia	6. Tatji
7. Mandarin	7. Santili
8. Orang-kaya	8. Bertapa
9. Panjulu	
10. Panjalapa	

APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-D, 4, 18-19. See Melvin Mednick, "Some Problems of Moro History & Political Organization," *Philippine Sociological Review*, V (January, 1957), 44-45. Cesar A. Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1973), p. 342.

It is interesting to know that the Basilan Muslims never liked having a Dato because they regarded one as an enslaver. However, when Pedro Cuevas became a Dato, they like him because he did not enslave them. APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-D, 19.

are riches ⁷¹ among the Moros. It is already known that the widowed woman will pass over with her children to the Dato or be carried away to be sold with her children after having taken from her all the household effects. This Moro group is somewhat weaker than the Samal group.

Apparently these Moros come from different islands like Borneo, Jolo and Mindanao, and it is believed that they were never absolutely subject to any Sultan, since the Basilanos have struck up treaties and recognitions disregarding every Sultan or Moro authority from another island.⁷²

Their false religion consists of ceremonies so ridiculous and so whimsical that they absolutely vex whoever sets about to observe them. I pass over in silence, in particular, their religion and customs because I already write something in the "Cuaderno septimo" of the LETTERS OF THE FATHERS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINE MISSION published in 1887.⁷³

Their ignorance is so extreme that with only one incident that I will point out, I believe it will be enough to prove it. On visiting them, one time, I brought along a magnetized iron to entertain them, and would you like to believe that the Moros ran pell-mell to touch their fish hooks with the magnetized iron so that the fish would be attracted when the hook is cast into the sea?

Their most profound knowledge consists in knowing how to read and write.⁷⁴ Do not ask or speak with them about His

⁷¹ Persons of authority among Muslims do have riches otherwise a Sultan or a Dato would be hard put to support his followers and maintain a large court with many servants, fighting men, and meet other imperatives of his official position.

⁷² This is contrary to what others claim that Basilan was never politically independent. In pre-Spanish times, Basilanos were subject peoples, for Sulu datos governed them and Sulu sultans exacted tribute from them. In the Spanish era, Lagrene proceeded to Jolo after attacking Basilan in 1844 (see Note 20) to confer with the Sultan "whom the Basilanos acknowledged as their suzerain". And the Sultan of Jolo maintained that Basilan was one of the islands belonging to his dominion by right of ownership or at least by rule. de la Costa, *Reading...*, p. 207. Saleeby, *op. cit.*, p. 3. Mednick, *op. cit.*, p. 42. Combes, *op. cit.*, col. 264. Santayana, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁷³ In this cited work, Fr. Cavalleria writes of Muslim religion and custom.

⁷⁴ There seems to be an explanation for this. At least in the 19th century, the Muslims had schools called *pangajian* where learning was

tory or Geography or Mathematics or any science because they are at a loss what to answer. And all their conversations do not rise above simple and ordinary things.

At this point, for those who wish to colonize and attract these people to a civilization without religion, it is convenient to note well that they attempt an impossible thing. The Moro will never abandon his bad customs or piratical intent, neither will he progress, and as long as he is not a Christian, he will never adapt himself to live like the Christians of our towns, and, therefore, will never be useful to the Spanish nation.⁷⁵ Three centuries of experience in these islands confirm this truth.

CHRISTIAN POPULATION. The Christian population of the Cabecera consists of about 1,000 Christians,⁷⁶ part of whom are engaged in the works of the shipyard of this town, in the service of the employees of the administration and of the govern-

confined to knowing how to read the Koran and write in their common language. APJ, II-11-Mohammedanism-B, *Apuntes sobre la raza mora*, pp. 5-6; II-11-Mohammedanism-C.

Of modern-day Muslims in Cotabato, a scholar said that "Traditional Moro schooling was confined to wandering Imams who held informal classes in which students learned to read, but not to interpret, Arabic script. This schooling produced Moslems who could participate in the services in the mosque and this was considered to be the principal aim of education." Chester Hunt, "Ethnic Stratification and Integration in Cotabato," *Philippine Sociological Review*, V (January, 1957), 25.

Present day Muslims would neither get beyond reading and writing nor appreciate education unless they are given irresistible incentives like up-to-date school buildings, facilities, teachers and, especially, relevant education policies. Underscoring the last item, the Andromeda report of March 27, 1959 (much of which is still applicable today) stated: "How can you encourage the 'Moro' children to appreciate school education, to love their Christian brothers when all they read and learn in their textbooks shamefully point to their ancestors and forefathers as pirates, bandits and cutthroats?" Alejo S. Santos, "The Sulu Problem," *Philippine Sociological Review*, VIII (January-April, 1960), 35-36. Gowing, *Mosque....*, p. 47.

⁷⁵ There were Spaniards who differed with this opinion. For the progress of the Muslims, Ladislao Nieto proposed, among other things, "reform and extension of public education, the establishment of a university and a breakdown of the rigid emphasis on Catholicism". Document No. 334, Zamboanga and Jolo, Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago.

A document in the Jesuit Archives of the Philippine Province, apparently by Gen. Juan G. Parrado, advocates the integration of the Muslims into the community requiring only of them that they obey the laws, and that no attempt be made to change their religion. APP, II-11-Mohammedanism-1893.

⁷⁶ At the termination of the Spanish administration in 1898, Isabela and five nearby villages had 1,368 Christians excluding the sailors at the naval station. CPJ, III, 33-34.

ment employees and in the available jobs in town. The other part is engaged in the tilling of the soil.

In this Cabecera, there is a Politico-Military Governor⁷⁷ who is usually the Commandant of the naval station with the rank of navy first lieutenant and a missionary Padre⁷⁸ with a Coadjutor Brother⁷⁹ of the Society of Jesus. At the naval station, there is a Marine lieutenant, a sergeant, four corporals and about eighteen privates, and furthermore, there is a boatswain with about thirty sailors. Furthermore, there is a navy doctor first class and one ship purser. At the station, there is a shipyard with workers for any repairs of government ships. In Malamaui, there is a big deposit of coal for the State. There is, furthermore, a fort with a lieutenant, a sergeant, two corporals and some fifty soldiers.

There is a group of about six hundred Christians in the Visita of San Pedro de Guibauan on the banks of this same river [Guibauan] who devote themselves exclusively to farming. The farm workers have spread out from one side of Isabela to the other with about one hundred inhabitants already in the eastern part and about one hundred in the west and about thirty in the island of Malamaui.

REASON FOR LITTLE PROGRESS OF THIS TOWN. The agricultural population has increased, however little, for about ten years and would have increased much more but because of the Moros, there are a few who take heart to clear land in the interior.⁸⁰ Moreover, because of the ships, several youngmen

⁷⁷ With the introduction of steam-powered navy boats, a satisfactory peace reigned in Mindanao. Basilan and the pacified parts of Mindanao were divided into six districts under a politico-military government. The Spanish-held territory in the Sulu archipelago including Basilan was designated as the sixth district. Montero y Vidal, *Historia General*...., III, 144. Saleeby, *op. cit.*, pp. 1 & 112. (The royal order creating the politico-military government appears on pp. 113-16.)

⁷⁸ Fr. Cavalleria was the missionary Padre from 1881 to 1887 and 1891 to 1899. *Misión de la Compañía de Jesús en las Filipinas: Estado General en 1891, 1892, 1893* (3 vols.; Manila: n. p., 1891, 1892, 1893), I, II, III, n. p.

⁷⁹ The Coadjutor was Brother Miguel Pujol, S.J., who was in Isabela from 1891 to 1893. *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ "Moros" and Christians by this time already felt the deep subterranean rumblings of the Muslim-Christian conflict that exploded in the 20th century into a large-scale bloody confrontation. The conflict that had been fundamentally religious in origin expanded into complicated socio-

born in this place embark with the rank of sailors or naval dockyard workers, and some do not return anymore, and many youngmen from other villages who have embarked marry with maidens of this town and they finally end up settling down in the village of the man. Their number, according to the statistics of the parish records, is bigger than that of the so-called retirable sailors who remain in this town. Moreover, the town has been burned twice. The first conflagration was January 11, 1859, and the other, March 19, 1865, which conflagrations have also been the cause of the little progress in this town. Finally, according to the humble opinion of the missionary Padre, the limited site in which this town is located has been the cause of its little growth and of the unfavorable conditions for the construction of buildings because most of them are on the sludge of tidal areas. But this obstacle can be easily remedied. A bridge should be constructed that would link this place with the land called Tabuk and would have a plain of about two leagues towards the south and of another two leagues towards the west and southwest with the advantage of having abundant water in both ends and even in the very center. A town plan should be made and lots should be designated in this place for those who would erect houses and buildings and, pretty soon, and in a very short time, the town will grow much more than its present growth. For the security of families against the Moros, a small detachment should be stationed at a convenient distance which detachment the present fort itself can supply.

The missionary Padre is of the opinion, after having considered it before God our Lord and through his own experience and consultation with important persons and various "principales" of this town, that a big and beautiful church⁸¹ ought to be constructed and raised in the said place called Tabuk and with it, a big, flat and extensive lot should be obtained for a plaza which the present site present site does not have. And furthermore, for convenience, the church is isolated from thatched and

economic-political proportions. As a result, there is a need more than ever for both Muslims and Christians to sincerely know each other's way of life and brain-storm for ways and means to remedy existing irritants, if they are to live in peace and harmony under one flag.

⁸¹ Some reform-minded clergymen and lay Catholics of the now generation who criticize the Spanish missionaries for building big churches need some historical therapy. Church buildings were not only places of worship

low-cost buildings to protect it from fire, since it was reduced to ashes twice on account of the cluster and proximity of nipa structures and the unfavorable conditions which the fire started that devoured the town each time.

To restrain Moro audacity which besides being a great obstacle because the mere name Moro scares away the native and they have dared enter the Cabecera three times as juramentados⁸² during the years 1889, 1891, 1892, each time victimizing one or two Christians, it would be admirably beneficial to establish other towns especially in the southern part which would be capable of being protected with some force. It is known that in the south, since there is no Christian community, the Moros come together when they wish to plot some crime against this Cabecera. These towns would also be beneficial in preventing the intercourse of Moros from other islands with those of this island, as it is reasonably believed that because they are infused with ideas of the Moros of nearby islands, they have adopted the criminal idea of becoming juramentados which crime as such was unknown till 1889.⁸³

This is a concise picture of the island of Basilan which will not take long to be much more completed by other persons of the

but also meeting places in time of peace, shelters in conflagration and typhoons, and citadels in raids and sieges.

⁸² "Juramentado" is the past participle of the Spanish verb "jurar" meaning — to swear in. Applied to the Muslims, it originally meant "(a) Muslim warriors who after specific religious rites and a night of prayer with panditas (learned men particularly in religious studies) would on the next day rush at the Christian invaders with the determination to kill as many as possible and not to expect to return alive. The over-riding hope of such dedicated warriors was to merit paradise as a recompense. (b) Muslim warriors who battled with such religious ferocity such that they had been judged as fanatical by their enemies." Majul, *Muslims* . . . , p. 353.

A juramentado differs from an amok, since the latter indulges in a killing spree without any religious motivation. But the ideal meaning of juramentado has so evolved over the years that, in popular conception, juramentado and amok have become mutually interchangeable terms.

For an anthropological study on the juramentado, see J. Franklin Ewing, "Juramentado: Institutionalized Suicide Among the Moros of the Philippines," *Anthropological Quarterly*, XXVIII (October, 1955), 148-55.

⁸³ Writing in 1892 from Isabela, Cavalleria reported the absence of juramentados until 1888 because Basilan Muslims kept the Muslims of other islands away, since they habitually came to rob and capture people. Juramentados appeared after the Basilanos had openly associated with them. Thus he attributed this development to the corrupting influence of

present or future generation.⁸⁴The attached geographic chart has been added which I think will be of much use and completed much later and corrected.

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Ateneo de Naga

neighboring islanders. But a plausible explanation for the upsurge of juramentados in the 1880's seems to be the failure of duly constituted sultanate authorities to stop non-Muslims from invading their territory which was reputedly a part of dar-al-Islam [Islamic territory]. Consequently, the obligation fell upon the individual Muslim. Majul, "The Role. . .," p. 314.

For a deeper understanding of this historical development and the probable root cause of present-day Muslim unrest down south, see Thomas J. O'Shaughnessy, "Islamic Law and Non-Muslim Governments," *Philippine Studies*, XII (July, 1964), 439-45.

⁸⁴ With its better organization and patches of emendations and additions, this manuscript (Manuscript B) seems to be an attempt to make this "concise picture of the island of Basilan... much more completed".