

Ethnography of the Ifugaos in the 19th Century

INTRODUCTION

Among the several ethnic groups that inhabit the eastern part of the Cordillera Central and the Valley of Cagayan, that is, the vast region watered by the Magat and Ibanag (Cagayan) rivers and their many affluents, the Ifugaos prominently stand out for their relatively advanced degree of culture at the present, and their love for independence and fierce habits in the past.

The word "Ifugao" comes from "Ipugo", which literally means "from the hills" (Pugo means "hill", while the prefix "I" in their language is equivalent to the English "from"). The Spaniards changed "Ipugo" into "Ifugao". However, the Belgian missionary of the former Mountain Province, Fr. Francis Lambrecht, C.I.C.M., who made extensive anthropological researches on this people, believes that the word "Ifugao" means "we the people of the earth."¹ Although this word had been used earlier, historians believed that it was mentioned for the first time in 1796 in the unpublished work of Father Francisco Antolin "Noticias de los Infieles Igorrotes en lo interior de la Isla de

¹ Emmanuel V. Sunga, *Dominican Missionary Labors Among the Mayaw-yaws in the 19th century* (an unpublished masteral thesis), University of Santo Tomas, Manila, 1978, p. 11. Also: Lourdes S. Dulawan, "The Ifugaos," *Unitas*, Vol. 40, No. 1, March 1967, p. 6.

Manila, de sus Minas de oro, cobre y su Comercio; y de varias entradas y Pacificación.”²

Geographically, they occupied the mountainous region lying west of northern Nueva Vizcaya and south of Isabela, overlooking the Christian towns of Bagabag, Santiago (formerly Carig), Echague (called Camarag before) and Cauayan.

They are classified into four groups: the Kiangans, the Silipans, the Mayaoyaos and the Bunhians, although the last ones, due to the smallness of their territory and their great similarity to the Mayaoyaos, logically should be integrated into these ones, forming one group with them.

The missionaries first got in contact with the Kiangans from 1750 to 1760, often when leading punitive expeditions at the head of their Christian converts into the neighboring mountains. We hear about the Mayaoyaos for the first time in 1787 on the occasion of an armed encounter between a rebellious band of Christian apostates, aided by the Mayaoyaos, and the loyal forces of Commandant Mateo Cabal.

The first Dominican missionary to get in touch with the Mayaoyaos, as far as we can know, was Father Manuel García, who in 1807 accompanied two military expeditions against them. In the second, Father García already mentions the town of Mayaoyao, although he calls its inhabitants by the generic term of “Igorrotes”.³

The Silipans, or Halipans to be more precise, were not subdued until 1848, and before that date were not recognized as a distinct group from the Mayaoyaos. They were looked upon by the few Dominicans who sparingly mentioned them in their writings as cruel and treacherous, as a sort of people who found pleasure in killing and stealing by laying in ambush treacherously.⁴

Although all of them basically agree in their beliefs and customs, yet for purposes of greater order and clarity we prefer to arrange them in our discussion in three groups: Kiangans, Silipans and Mayaoyaos, under the following headings: Topography, racial origin, language, physiognomy, clothing and personal orna-

² William Henry Scott, *The Discovery of the Igorots*, New Day Publishers, Quezon City, Philippines, 1974, p. 171.

³ Sunga, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁴ “El P. Malumbres al P. Provincial”, Diadi, Nueva Vizcaya, 6 de Enero de 1887, *Correo Sino-Ananimita*, Vol. XXI, Manila, 1887, pp. 173-192.

ments, implements and weapons, houses, social classes, government and legislation, religion (belief in a Supreme Being, sickness, death, burial and life after death, priesthood and sacrifices, auguries and superstitions marriage, fidelity and divorce).

And we shall consider them only from the ethnographic point of view, referring the reader for matters pertaining to discovery, conquest and evangelization to: "Spanish contacts with the Ifugaos (1736-1898)," in *Philippiniana Sacra*, Vol. XIII, No. 38, May-August, 1978, pp. 194-249.

The way of living of the Ifugaos has been extensively studied from a modern perspective, even to the point of saturating the mind of the reader; but little attention has been given them from the historical viewpoint, due perhaps to lack of accessibility to the archival sources. For this reason, we wish to study them as they were in the past, as the Dominican missionaries saw them in their contacts with them in the 19th century, and as reflected in their writings.

Modern writers often depart from the way the 19th century missionaries described them, either because they have changed some of their habits as a sequel of their greater contact with civilization, or perhaps due to a better approach or more accurate academic helps;⁵ however, the contribution in this regard of the former heralds of the Gospel, bolstered by an occasional lay-researcher, must not be belittled in any way. It is true that some lived in the midst of them for a few years only, but how can we disregard or call into doubt the observations bequeathed to us by Father Juan Fernández Villaverde (+1897), who lived with them or close to them for almost thirty years?

In describing the ethnography of the Kiangans, the author has drawn extensively from two main sources, viz.: *Descripción de la religión, usos y costumbres de los quianganes, bungianes y mayaoayaos*, by Father Ruperto Alarcón, a manuscript formerly kept in the Dominican archives and recently translated into English and published by William Henry Scott in the *Journal of the Folklore Institute*;⁶ and Father Villaverde's "Informe sobre la

⁵ William Henry Scott, "The Ifugaos a Hundred Years Ago," *Unitas*, loc. cit., pp. 64-65

⁶ It was also published in Spanish, although not in its entirety, by Julian Malumbres in *Historia de la Isabela*, 1918, pp. 440-471, and by Pablo Fernández, O.P., in *Voz Estudiantil*, Febrero-Marzo, 1956, pp. 40-46, Agosto, 1956, pp. 56-64.

reducción de los infieles de Luzón", which appeared in 1879 in *Correo Sino-Anamita*, and was later translated and partially published with the title "The Ifugaos of Quiangan and vicinity" in *The Philippine Journal of Science*, 1909, by Dean C. Worcester. As secondary sources of information, the writer used Gaínza's "Descripción del Quiangan," still in manuscript, and other pieces of documentary evidence, gathered from here and there, as will be seen in the footnotes.⁷

Practically all we know about the Silipans is found in Schadenberg's "Ethnography of Northern Luzon," translated and published in *German travellers on the Cordillera* by Doctor W. H. Scott.

Regarding their neighbours (the Mayaoyaos) we have better sources, as: *Observaciones de los usos y costumbres de los Mayaoyaos* and *Reseña del Mayoyao*, written respectively by Frs. Remigio R. del Alamo (+1849) and José T. Vilanova (+1855), translated into English by Doctor Antonio Piñón, and published in *Acta Manilana* in April of 1967 by Pablo Fernández, O.P.⁸

Almost all we know about the Bunhians is integrated with the information we have received from their neighbors, the Mayaoyaos. However in *Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XXI, we come across a letter written by "Father Malumbres to Father Provincial", dated at Diadi (Nueva Vizcaya) on January 6th, 1887, in which he speaks somewhat at length about this racial group. Regarding their geographical position, he states that they are bounded by the Gaddangs in the north; in the south by the Silipans; in the east by Isabela, and in the west by Mayaoyao. And together with the vicissitudes of his journey there at the end of the year

⁷ Regarding the Ifugaos, the following may also be consulted for further details: "Diario de P. Remigio Rodríguez del Alamo, misionero de Cauayan, en su primer viaje al país Mayaoyao", MS in the Archives of the University of Santo Tomas (AUST), Section FOLLETOS, Vol. 115, pp. 217-254; Ramón Jordana y Morera, *Bosquejo Geográfico e Histórico-natural del Archipiélago Filipino*, Madrid, Imprenta de Moreno y Rojas, 1885, pp. 67-68, No. 14; *Censo de las Islas Filipinas*, Tomo I, "Geografía, Historia y Población," Washington, 1905, pp. 572-584.

⁸ The Spanish originals can be found in AUST, FOLLETOS, 115, pp. 113-132 and 101-112. To these two sources we may add a third one, viz.: *Descripción topográfica del terreno habitado por los infieles desde Abra a Pangasinán y desde Ilocos a Cagayán*, 1855, by Father Francisco Gaínza, MS in the Dominican Archives, San Juan del Monte, Rizal, Section CAGAYAN, Tomo 35, doc. 11.

1886, he adds some interesting data on births, marriage, deaths, agriculture, industry and commerce.⁹

In writing this article for *Philippiniana Sacra* it has been our purpose to be of service to students and the general public in the text, and to the scholars in the footnotes.

We preserve the orthography of the names as they appear in the 19th century sources, except in the terms Kiangán, Silipán and Mayaoyao.

THE KIANGANS¹⁰

Topography

Kiangán was bounded on the north by the valleys of Asín and Sapao, on the east by the territory of Silipán, on the west by the valley of Labutan, and on the south by the river Magat, where its flatlands formed its main frontier. The main river passing through Kiangán was the Ibúlaó which flowed into the Magat, a tributary of the Río Grande of Cagayan (Ibanag). The Ibúlaó was flanked by steep mountains. The traveller, as observed by Fr. Francisco Gaínza, had to pass through the precipices of Kiling and Vaguan amidst big boulders and descend the steep valley until he entered Kiangán. On top of the Ibúlaó were the two colossal mountains of Panguintanian and Bulayan.¹¹

The Valley of Kiangán was bounded by mountains: on the south, Mambalag; on the north, Atare; on the southeast, Mungilat;

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 173-192.

¹⁰ The first contacts between the lowlanders, or Christians, and the mountaineers, or Ifugaos, were initiated in the sixties of the eighteenth century. Because of the predatory habits of the Ifugaos, the Christians often found themselves in the need of undertaking punitive expeditions against the Kiangans and their neighbours the Silipans and Mayaoyaos. Due to these expeditions and also to commercial relations, the Kiangans were less ferocious than the other ethnic groups. (Cfr. Julián Malumbres, O.P., *Historia de Nueva Vizcaya y Provincia Montañosa*, Manila, 1919, pp. 58-60).

¹¹ Fr. F. Gaínza described his itinerary to Kiangán: "After two hours of walking and wading, you enter a small river called Nayum and after sometime you reach Mount Dulayan from where you can see Bagabag, the last Christian town. When you reach the Ibúlaó, you have to wade through the deep precipices of Kiling and Vaguan; you continue walking until you reach the entrance of Kiangán. After the tortuous descent, the beautiful and picturesque view of Kiangán will greet you (Francisco Gaínza, O.P., "Itinerario a Quiangan", MS in University of Santo Tomas Archives (AUST). Section of FOLLETOS, Vol. 115, p. 69 ff.).

and on the east, Capuyan. The sight of the village amidst tall mountains engendered a strange feeling of euphoria; that of an ecstatic state of sinking slowly. The lower level in the valley of Kiangnan had a vast and sprawling lagoon.¹²

The town of Kiangnan was very badly located at the center and lowest portion of the small plain of the valley. Indeed, the surrounding fields were six feet higher than the site of the town.¹³

The "rancherias" were like island settlements generally on wooded hills in the middle of fields. They had plenty of coconut and bonga trees.¹⁴ In fact, Kiangnan was endowed with beautiful tropical trees, shooting high up in the air with the splendor of their august grandeur. There were also copious quantities of wood and bamboo.¹⁵

Kiangnan was an agricultural town. The entire valley was well cultivated. The fields were well irrigated with many streams which flowed from the high mountains. The abundant gifts of nature coupled with the people's industry gave the Kiangnans a definite advantage in agriculture over their neighbors. Canals were constructed where water was abundant. In spite of very crude implements, the people managed to construct many terraces of great heights. Water descended from the mountains as cascading waterfalls.¹⁶

Rice was planted in the months of January or February when the rainy season had already ended. Water from the streams above was conducted into the fields through much labor and skill. On the gentle slopes the terraces were made of earth in the shape of mounds whose heights varied from two to five feet. Very little effort was exerted in the construction of this kind of terraces, but they were quite uncommon. More common were the

¹² *Ibid.*; See also: *Letter of Father José Lorenzo, O.P., to Father Juan Alvarez del Manzano, O.P.*, dated at Kiangnan, June 27, 1862, in *Revista Católica*, Barcelona, 1862, Tomo XVI—Segunda serie, p. 284.

¹³ Molano, Juan, "A description of Kiangnan in 1801", in W. H. Scott, "Notes on the History of the Mountain Provinces II," *University of Baguio Journal*, Vol. VII (-1972), pp. 133-137.

¹⁴ Bettlenut trees.

¹⁵ Alexander Schadenberg, "The Ethnography of Northern Luzon" in *German Travellers on the Cordillera* (1860-1890), edited and annotated by W. H. Scott, Manila, The Filipiniana Book Guild, 1975, p. 162.

¹⁶ *Letter of Father Ramón Suárez to Father Francisco Gainza*, dated at Bagabag, January 20, 1849, MS in APSR; Tomo 25, doc. 12. Gainza, *Itinerario al Quiangan*, pp. 170-171

terraces constructed of stone in the form of dikes somewhat sloping toward the top, necessarily higher the greater the angle of the mountainside. They reached about 15 feet in height.¹⁷ The irrigated rice fields were fenced in order to prevent any damage by animals. If the path led through the fields the fences were provided with gates; they were cleverly constructed so that they closed automatically. This was effected by two long elastic pieces of bamboo.¹⁸

The Kiangans never made use of the plow to cultivate their fields; they did it by hand with some long wooden poles. This work began in September and ended in January and February, which was the planting season.

The main food was camote, which easily grew anywhere. Indolent and obstreperous persons often stole rice from other people's granaries and animals from their neighbors' backyard.¹⁹ Meat was rarely eaten. The natives raised pigs and chickens, killed and ate on special occasions. Besides rice and camote which were generally planted, there were many who had gardens of various kinds of vegetables, tobacco, and sugarcane. Tobacco was of poor quality either because it was harvested out of season or the soil was not suited.²⁰

Racial Origin

Kiangans were one of the many Malay tribes residing in the Philippines. Their language was a mixture of Gaddang and Igorot. Fr. Gaínza, in one of his unpublished documents, stated that some people believed that the Kiangans were descendants of the Chinese who escaped from the squadron of Limahong in the Gulf of Lingayen (1574), although he added that it was difficult to prove this opinion because the fugitives were only few, and how could they have multiplied so rapidly and occupied the different mountains in the past two centuries?²¹

¹⁷ Juan Villaverde, O.P., "Informe sobre la reducción de los infieles de de Luzón," *El Correo Sino-Anamita, or Correspondencia de las Misiones del Sagrado Orden de Predicadores en Formosa, China, Tong-king y Filipinas*, Manila, Imprenta del Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1879, Vol. XIII, p. 23-24.

¹⁸ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

¹⁹ Ruperto Alarcón-William Henry Scott, "A description of the customs of the peoples of Kiangnan, Bunhian and Mayaoyao, 1857", *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. II, No. 1 (Reprint), pp. 91-92.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ "Descripción del Quiangan", p. 71.

Fr. Alarcón held the opinion that their cloying pronunciation, the type of cult they practised, their complexion, their slit eyes, all these made very probable the conclusion that attributed a Chinese origin to these people.²²

As for their language, Fr. Alarcón wrote about its relation to the Chinese dialects, noting that some Chinese were shipwrecked in 1852 and reached Kiangnan. He marvelled at the similarity between the pronunciation and gesture of the Chinese and the pagans in Kiangnan.²³

Physiognomy

The Kiangnans were of regular height, more pronounced features than their neighbors the Gaddangs and the Mayaoyaos and of muscular build. However, they were smaller and weaker than these neighbors. Hardly could one see a well-proportioned woman. Their eyes and even their facial angle could easily be distinguished from those of their neighbors or other heathen tribes of the province. They did not possess the haughtiness nor the rustic features of the Mayaoyaos. Fr. Prieto, one of the first missionaries to get in contact with them, believed that the Kiangnans were worse than the Mayaoyaos in that the former had caused more damage to their neighbors' lives and properties than

²² "It should be borne in mind that the continent of China is not very far away, that in all ages that prolific people has sent to these Isles innumerable adventurers." (Alarcón-Scott, p. 80).

²³ "It is true that we did not understand what they were saying, but everybody knows in China there are many dialects and that people of different provinces, and even of the same, cannot understand one another without Mandarin, or the official language. The great variety of languages noted among the natives and even among the Christians, must be the effect of such fierce instincts. In these mountains, one cannot take a day's journey without changing dialect which is a hindrance to their conversion. When I flattered myself that I understood something of their speech after having spent two years in Bunhian, I transferred to take charge of the mission in Kiangnan and found that I was unable to understand a word of the language here. Later I noticed that there are three distinct dialects to be found in these nearest Christian towns, and in order not to increase the confusion, I tried to have those being catechized learn the Christian faith in the language of these towns. They have such a bad pronunciation that despite their contact with the Christians, they mutilate whatever they learn of that language, which is; as a matter of fact, just as uncultured as that of the savages. They habitually reject the pronunciation of the letter R, which they sometimes change to L and sometimes to D. The S they change to H (i.e., J. in Spanish), and they have other changes which you have to have a very accustomed ear to recognize. In this matter, the Mayaoyaos are the most confused because they have less dealings with the Christians." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81, 96.

any other Ifugao tribe, although the expeditions sent against them had somewhat repressed their refractory traits.²⁴

Clothing and Personal Ornaments

The men cut their full bristly hair at finger's length and above the eyebrows across the forehead. Sometimes they appeared to have bangs about 5 inches long, and they went bareheaded, though occasionally they wore turbans of bark or cotton around their heads.²⁵

The women wore their hair long, parted and twisted around their head into two strands decorated with beads, colored seeds or teeth. They made their clothing from hand-woven cotton materials. For the man it consisted of a narrow string pulled between his legs and tied around the waist. The women wore a kind of skirt which was fastened below their hips and consequently was very loose and often fell off when they were running, or was deliberately removed.²⁶ In cold season, many men and women used blankets. These fabrics they bought for the most part from the Christian towns in exchange for labor, but the women also wove them from cotton and a kind of hemp called *aramay*, a branchy plant cooked in water.²⁷

The Kiangans loved ornaments which they proudly displayed on their bodies. The women wore earrings of metal, shell or fruit strings of beads in their hair. The men wore earrings made of wire, kidney-shaped pieces of metal, or just pieces of wood. Necklaces and armlets made of bear tusks were worn on

²⁴ Gaínza, "Descripción del Quiangan", *loc. cit.*, p. 77. Lieutenant Colonel Guillermo Galvey, with his military frankness and even rudeness, called the Kiangans "a tribe of notorious murderers" (Cfr. *Expedición de la segunda travesía de la gran Cordillera a Cagayan y Quiangan*... en marzo de 1832, MS in APSR, Vol. 35, doc. 6, fols. 348v-352).

²⁵ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Fr. Alarcón gave his own comment regarding their manner of dressing: "If you give them clothes, they wear them but they don't show great interest in acquiring them, the women even less than the men. They have the bad habit of never washing their clothes, for which reason the clothed seem to be worse off than naked because of not removing their clothes till they fall off; after sometime they appear so dirty and loathsome and give off so very bad an odor that it is unpleasant to get near them. Since clothes are more an article of luxury than necessity, if they have two shirts they will put them on, one on top of the other, and the men just throw on the clothes of women and women those of men." Alarcón-Scott, p. 93.

the biceps and rings of thick brass wire wound in spirals around their legs.²⁸

Earrings were made of bronze, because gold was quite rare and was used only on rare occasions. These consisted of rings almost two inches in diameter, to which was attached a piece of mother-of-pearl or any lustrous thing, even a bit of broken plate. The Kiangans did not use necklaces. They used bands of very thick wire which they placed on their legs in the manner of shackles, and the women did the same to make a kind of very heavy bracelet. When they went to war and when they attended feasts, dances, sacrifices, and even burials, they adorned themselves with roosters' tail feathers and magnificent clothes. They also had the custom of putting streamers of an inner fibrous bark that looked like paper, on their heads.²⁹ They also used a pocket book which some carried on their arms and others fastened to their belts, in which they carried tobacco, gadgets for fire making, line, buyo, etc.³⁰

The men also wore a kind of sword-belt made of rattan adorned with bits of shell and bones and sometimes bits of broken crockery, from which hanged a cutlass attached to a board serving as a scabbard.³¹

Implements and Weapons

The Kiangans used cooking utensils, weapons, shields, various materials, looms and ruck-sacks. The last were very nicely made of rattan with tops that ended in the shape of two beaks. They were carried on the back; a cord ran through two loops on the bottom and crossed back through loops on the beak-like cover to hold it closed by the natural weight of the basket and prevent rain from getting in.³²

Their weapons were the spear and bolo; they must have also used bows and arrows before, a fact reflected by the anito figures.

²⁸ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

²⁹ Fr. Alarcón describes his experience: "This is the reason why the natives keep on pestering one for anything of paper: When they come into my quarters I have to watch them closely so they do not take letters or other important papers." (Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 94.)

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

As defensive arms, they carried a shield, oblong-shaped, something like four feet in length and a foot and a half in width, having a grip in the middle. The spearhead was leafshaped, either plain or often with unmatched barbs. The shaft was made of hard, elastic wood. They also carried with them hunting knives or bolos approximately a half meter long. The handle was wrapped with a rattan wickerwork. The sheath was only a half-sheath with one or two narrow loops of wood or rattan or bejuco holding the bolo and preventing it from falling out. The closed side of the sheath was worn towards the thigh.³³

Instead of the ordinary cord by which the bolo was tied around the waist, a certain kind of belt was used. Twenty to thirty round disks of shell were fastened to a narrow strip of cloth, the disks becoming smaller towards the bottom. It was worn like an officer's sash except that the overlapping part was not worn on the side but in front. The Kiangans considered these belts very valuable for all of these antique heirlooms were already obsolete.³⁴

Fr. Alarcón described the use of the spear in the following manner:

"When they get near the enemy, they grasp the spear near the head so the weight is equally balanced. With the left hand they hold the shield, and crouch down in such a way as to cover their whole body with it, generally advancing thus till they are near the enemy and when they are within throwing distance, they dance about so that their continuous motion makes it difficult for their opponents to be sure just when to throw at them and for them easily to withdraw their bodies when they see a spear coming."³⁵

Houses

The ordinary house in Kiangang was square and stood on four posts with cylindrical disks to prevent rats from climbing up.

³³ Villaverde, *loc. cit.*, pp. 25-26; José Lorenzo, *loc. cit.*, p. 285.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ This missionary of Kiangang also comments on this practice: "Though it certainly appears ridiculous to us, their manner of fighting is undoubtedly suited to the kind of arms they use, and experience has shown that they do not fail to get good use of their acrobatics. They do not throw the iron spear until the shot is sure, that it is why they carry five or six extra ones which they throw first," Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

The door was like a flap and on the upper edge it had too strong rattan loops through which a horizontal line across the front of the house passed, along which the door could be pushed back and forth. The door had to be lifted up slightly in closing it. It was locked with two wooden belts.³⁶

The houses were built of good and durable timber and were thatched with the leaves of nipa palm. At the top of the roof a small place was left open and covered with a smaller projecting roof which served as ventilation. The main roof projected over the four sides of the house and thus protected it against heavy rain. Under this projecting part of the roof, the Kiangans hang a lot of amulet-like objects from their anito feasts. The exterior of the house was decorated with the skulls of carabao, pig, deer, dog and monkey. Even human skulls were displayed in some houses.

The interior of the house was spacious. Along the walls they hanged baskets, cooking utensils, weapons, shields, various materials, looms, and ruck-sacks.

The roof was used as a storeroom of rice, camotes and firewood. On one side near the entrance was a stone made of three smaller stones which stood in ashes to protect the floor from being burned. They stored water and base in big sections or jars. The house had a small ladder which was detachable and could easily be removed at night. Near the house was a manure pit walled by stones, the manure being used to fertilize the soil.³⁷

Social Classes

There was no clear classification of social status among the Kiangans. They wanted nobody to rule over them. The individual considered himself an absolute king of his house and person. However, there was a certain affluent class of nobility with prestige and moral authority over those who were considered plebeians. Such a position of honor was based on wealth, fame as a brave killer or head taker, and prestige among themselves. A Kiangans could rise from the plebeian state to nobility by acquiring wealth and announcing his intention to change his social

³⁶ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

status. Accompanied by a group of men, the candidate went to the forests and chose a thick tree of good wood and carved a ridiculous figure out of it. Sometimes from the thick lower trunk they made a kind of bench with huge pig heads carved on each end. They kept on working on this symbol for weeks or months. Meanwhile, the candidate would provide the workers with pigs and carabaos which he paid for with great display of generosity. When the symbol or bench was finished, they left it in the forest and took a rest. After sometime, the men and the candidate went back to the forest to bring the emblem or the *tagabi* to the village in stages.³⁸ After satiating their appetites with food and drink, they lifted the *tagabi* up on their shoulders and began to march amidst the sounds of *gansa*.³⁹ The candidate during the parade kept spilling rice along the road. They set the *tagabi* down in the forest and return to their houses three or four times before it finally reached the village. When the emblem was placed in the owner's house, a big fiesta of carabaos, chickens and pigs plus rice wine were given to the people without limit. It cost the candidate a considerable fortune to be able to change his social status. To sustain this prestige, fiestas of this sort were repeated from time to time.

Slavery was practised by the Kiangans before the Spanish take-over. When the Spaniards came and started their evangelization, slavery gradually disappeared. The rich persons, particularly their leaders, profited from the slave traffic. This was one reason why they opposed the conversion of the poor to the new religion. The adult slave when sold was blindfolded and asked to make several turns so that if he should eventually escape he would not know how to find his way back.⁴⁰

³⁸ *El Correo Sino-Anamita, o Correspondencia de las Misiones del Sagrado Orden de Predicadores en China, Tun-king, Formosa y Japón*, Manila, Imprenta de Sto. Tomás, 1912, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 368-380; also mentioned in Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-166; Scott, *Discovery of the Igorots*, pp. 322-323; also: "El P. Malumbres al P. Provincial, Quiangan, 23 de marzo de 1889", *El Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 427-428.

³⁹ "They used musical instruments called *gansas*, which are similar to timbrels and are ordinarily made of iron. These *gansas* are much used. . . They are invariably made of brass or bronze" (Dean C. Worcester, "Villa-verde, Fr. Juan. The Ifugaos of Quiangan and vicinity. Translated, edited and illustrated by Dean C. Worcester. With notes and an Addendum by L. E. Case", in *The Philippine Journal of Science*, July, 1909, Vol. XIX: No. 4, p. 240)

⁴⁰ Regarding slavery, Fr. Alarcón had this comment: "It is a great disadvantage to those who are sold because although it is true that there

Government and Legislation

The simple folk of Kiangang did not recognize any policy or kind of government. Those who were called chiefs among them were either the bravest or the richest. The authority of the chiefs was limited to a certain deference they received from the people of their own villages. The natives, however, were under no strict obligation to carry out the orders of these chiefs.⁴¹

The people were governed by custom; and with regard to justice, each took it into his own hands. They did not put anybody in prison or apply any corporal punishment except death. Crimes were considered debts which they paid with property or life. Disputes were settled and judgment given by the elders of the *rancheria* (settlement). A thief was condemned to pay eight times the value of the theft, and if he was late it was increased in accordance with what had been agreed upon. When one had a debt, he was notified to pay at the time stated, and if he did not, the creditor gathered all his relatives and friends and they went to the debtor's house armed. If he could not offer any resistance, he had to make a bitter choice: to pay his debt on the spot or lose his life.

It is interesting to note that adultery was considered a crime punishable by death among these people. In fact, they imposed the same penalty for adultery as for murder. When they knew that someone was guilty of this crime, the relatives of the aggrieved party gathered together and went fully armed to the house of the one who committed the injury, and either killed him or settled for a heavy fine.

*Religion**(a) Belief in God*

The religion of the Kiangans had striking similarities with those of their neighbors. They believed in a God who created

are some who treat them more as sons than slaves, it is also true that many are employed by their masters more as beasts than as men, and that they are not given any education and the right of liberty is for them illusory because they are ignorant of our laws and do not even know the land they walk in." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

⁴¹ Fr. Alarcón discussed the chief-villager relationship in this manner: "When there would be reason for them to receive orders from the chiefs, they could be seen screaming at them and threatening them with earth and sky, but for all this the only success they would have was that nobody would pay the least attention to what they were told." Alarcón-Scott, *op.*

everything, yet they did not worship him for they believed that he was too ineffably august and grandiose, that no mortal creature could be worthy of rendering him cult.⁴² The natives believed in anito worship. Everyone had his own anito; after death everyone became an anito. The anito was supposed to be half-spirit with human needs like eating, drinking and other drives and desires common to a human being. The anitos could be good or bad, i.e., they might be the cause of sickness, death, and other forms of calamities. The good spirits or anitos were supposed to help them in their needs and the male violent ones were supposed to be appeased to spare them from sorrows and misfortunes.⁴³ Worship consisted in keeping the anitos in good spirits by sacrifices in order to live a peaceful life.

The anitos were portrayed in wooden carvings from the trunks of young trees about a meter high. They were carved in either a sitting or a standing position. On their heads and at their feet, the Kiangans placed offerings of rice, corn, tobacco or bettlenut, and a coconut shell containing *budbud* or rice wine.⁴⁴

On difficult situations like a bad harvest, an enemy attack or epidemic, the villagers gathered under the anito tree, killed carabaos, pigs, dogs and chickens and ate to their hearts' content. They decorated the branches of the anito tree with coconut and bonga (bettlenut) leaves and sprinkled them with budbud or rice wine. Together with the leaves and wine, they also put small coconut bowls with food and drink in the branches. Then they walked, sang and danced before the food and drinks were all quickly consumed. Before going home, the people took some of

cit., pp. 90-100; also mentioned in *El Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XIX, pp. 31-35

⁴² Fr. Alarcón commented on the Kiangán religion: "The religion of these folk is composed at once of some fundamental truths and the most absurd, puerile and ridiculous superstitions. They believe in one God although they hardly explain anything about him, and in various subordinate spirits which they call *Buni*, and to these they make sacrifices and libation." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 81. Also mentioned in Schadenberg, *op. cit.*; "They say that there are two gods: the one of the Christians Who takes them to heaven, and the other of the Igorots, who, when they die, takes those who have died in war to the mountains and others to the rivers that are their favorite places" (José Lorenzo, *loc. cit.*, p. 285).

⁴³ Ruiz, José María, O.P., *Pobladores aborígenes, razas existentes, y variedades, religión, usos y costumbres de los habitantes de Filipinas*, Manila, Imprenta de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, 1887, p. 67.

⁴⁴ Villaverde, "Informe sobre la reducción de los infieles de Luzón" in *Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XIII, pp. 9 ff.; also Schadenberg; *op. cit.*, p. 165.

the palm leaves hanging from the branches and hung them under the projecting part of their houses' roofs. If the fiesta had been held because of an enemy attack, small pieces of these leaves were attached to a bolo and spear. If the anito fiesta did not produce the desired effect, it would be repeated again and again until the desired results were obtained.⁴⁵

(b) *Sickness*

It was the belief among the Kiangans that illness consisted in the souls of the sick leaving the body, attracted or coerced by the soul of a deceased relative. The role of the village healer was to appease the soul of the anito who was exerting his influence on the sick. The healer very often was a charlatan or opportunist and a swindler. He asked the relatives of the sick to kill a chicken as soon as he entered the house. He then examined the condition of the bile and then made a prognosis. He usually identified a dead relative, i.e., grandfather, mother, father or brother who should be appeased by killing a number of pigs, chickens and carabaos. The family had no alternative but to follow the prescription to the letter. If they did not have the animals, they had to buy them and borrowed money even from the usurers. The healer prayed to the accompaniment of the deafening sound of a *gansa*. The sick was then fed with the meat of the chicken, pig or carabao. This was one reason why the afflicted became more sick. The healer still asked for more chickens, pigs and carabaos to be slaughtered. When the invalid died despite everything, the relatives of the sick just got resigned to the verdict of the opportunist that "it is God's will."

The family who was indebted after spending everything they had was still obligated to pay the healer in the form of meat or other goods.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ About the beliefs of the Kiangans in the immortality of the soul, see: "El P. Malumbres al P. Provincial, Quiangan, 23 de marzo de 1889", *Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XXIII, p. 425.

⁴⁶ Father Alarcón commented on the condition of the sick during the sacrifice: "This particular remedy is sure to aggravate the sickness for it is a necessary condition that the sick one eat: to anybody with a fever they give a big piece of pork fat which he forces himself to eat, which results in indigestion, and from that, death. Nevertheless, they suppose that he has died for not having had enough pigs to appease the Bunis' harmful spirits whom they fear but from whom they expect nothing." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 85. See also; Malumbres, *loc. cit.*, pp. 423-425.

(c) *Death and Life After Death*

The Kiangans believed in two places of abode for the dead, one reserved for those who died natural deaths, and the other for those who left this earth by violent and sudden deaths.⁴⁷

For those who died a natural death, the people believed that their abode was supposed on earth and towards the north, called "Cadungayan." It was here where the dead lived together in a forest of certain trees, which, although they appeared to be such in the daytime, changed into houses like those of living Igorots when the darkness of night enshrouded them. In this northern region, there were gardens of camotes and other food commodities. For the sacrifices offered to them by their relatives, they ate the souls of these animals and the rice and camotes. Likewise, they believed that the wine which the living drank served as the beverage of the dead.

Those who were decapitated by their enemies, as well as women who died in childbirth, went to heaven or the place of the gods.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Alarcón- Scott, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁸ Fr. Alarcón gathered the following account from the natives regarding the destiny of the dead:

"There once died Bugan, the young spouse of Aliguyung who was left inconsolable in his bereavement. An infant that could not live without its mother's breast increased the anguish of the unhappy widower. The boy cried and wasted away, and his distracted father passed the nights singing him little ditties which could not placate his crying.

" 'Why do you not come, my beloved spouse? I have just finished a *pangulan* basket for you to go and get camotes with your son on your back. The souls of three pigs I sent to accompany you have not brought me back news of you. I feel your spirit (*banig*) that slips between the *taranas* of our hut. I caress it and it does not respond; I wish to embrace it, and it flees. Why do you not come? Our son cries, he does not sleep, he is wasting away; if you delay, he will waste away to his death.'

"Then Aliguyung, seeing that he addressed his wife's soul in vain, resolved to make a trip to Cadungayan, the land of the souls, in search of her.

"After many weary days along a painful path, he reached a pleasant valley where it was neither hot nor cold, where rice grows without hull and birds allow themselves to be caught by hand. It is crossed by the clearest of brooks on whose banks grow sturdy trees all filled with delicious fruit. Aliguyung didn't see anybody or any sign of habitation; but at night he heard the sound of voices-souls in conversation. Then he noticed that what by day had appeared as trees were at night changed into cabins which were all filled with people rejoicing and merrymaking. He looked into one or two of the cabins and noticed that almost all the souls were occupied in spinning. At last having recognized his wife by the sound of her voice, he called to her and she, though with some repugnance, approached him.

" 'What are you doing here?' he asked her. 'You have left a child who needs your care to live; he will die if you don't give him your breast, and I, likewise, cannot survive such sorrow.'

The practices and ceremonies which they performed over the dead varied greatly according to whether they had died a natural or a violent death. In the former case, the celebration was with pomp and pageantry while in the second, the decapitated bodies were buried in simple rites. For those who died violent deaths, only one pig was slaughtered, which was eaten by those who participated in the burial ceremonies. The Kiangans believe that the souls of the pigs and carabaos would no longer be needed in the sky. Instead the souls of the animals, which their enemies killed and ate in their victorious feasts, served the souls of those they had beheaded.⁴⁹

"I am here," she replied, "Waiting for you the same as for him." And she told him of the delights of that lazy life where they lived on the most exquisite foods without it costing any labor.

"Nevertheless, Aliguyung insisted that she must accompany her husband so that the child would not die, and she, so as not increase his pain, agreed to follow him

"They traveled the whole night, and about dawn stopped to rest near a tree. Aliguyung fell into a tired sleep and, upon waking, found no more of his wife than her head. Grieved by this turn of events, he decided to go back home, so he wrapped up his wife's head in a blanket and put it in his knapsack. He returned to the house and took out the bundle, but in place of the head he thought he had been carrying he only found a piece of wood.

"Aliguyung was not to be deterred by this trick of fate, however, and so returned to Cadungayan, met his wife again, and tried to get her to go with him. But she convinced him of the impossibility of his desires, saying, 'Do not wear yourself out trying to do something impossible. Those who once enter here can never again live with you mortals. I will give you a remedy so our child will live: take this handful of rice, which will be sufficient to feed our child till he grows up, but you will take care not to give him more than one grain each time. The day he eats more will be the day of his death.' With this, Bugan bade her husband farewell, telling him that there she would be waiting for him when death came for him, too.

"Back home, Aliguyung complied with his wife's instructions, and from then on the child grew extraordinarily robust and never again missed his mother's natural food.

"Some years passed, and when the child was grown big, there were still some grains left of the rice brought from Cadungayan by his father. Ignorant of their power, the boy one day mixed them in their food. He and his father ate it, and in the act met their deaths." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

The origin of this place in the sky is as follows: "The Lord Sun whom they call Manana-shut, ordered some natives to go and kill one another, leaving the delinquent Ifugao dead and headless. Lord Manana-shut pitied him and therefore sent his wife Bugan, to invite him to come up to the sky, enticing him with gifts and cajolery. But the soul of the Ifugao declined the flattery and refused to go to the sky. He was not used to see the woman clothed in her special garments appear so strange to him. Bugan noticed this so she removed her clothes until almost completely naked and caressed the dead Ifugao. She promised him great happiness in the sky and he was received with pleasure by Lord Manana-shut. Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*

The burial of those who died natural deaths was celebrated for many days. As soon as the sick died, his body was placed in a prenatal position. In this posture the corpse was placed under the house. The relatives and friends of the deceased were invited to attend the funeral. Rice was husked and animals were killed as preparation for the feast. The Kiangans believed that the souls of the animals and other food eaten became the food resources for those going to Cadungayan. When these were prepared, one of the relatives took his place crouching near the corpse to drive away the flies; and relatives took turns with other relatives in this duty. The ceremonies started with the chanting of a funeral chant in praise of the deceased. This was similar to our present day eulogy in necrological services. The chorus accompanied by the sound of weeping, tearing of hair and scatching of faces followed.⁵⁰

After crying and weeping they started eating what they had prepared and afterwards they returned to their weeping. The number of days of feasting depended upon the means and the resources of the deceased. There were burial ceremonies that lasted for six to ten days.⁵¹

The dead were buried in deep holes dug into the hills horizontally, provided with weapons and ornaments as well as boxes of buyo, tobacco and rice.⁵² They usually made a cave similar to our burial vaults. Some prominent people were placed on wooden baskets hallowed out of a tree trunk and there they placed the cadaver sealed and then placed it below the house.⁵³

The Kiangans, therefore, believed in paradise which was Cadungayan. This paradise was found on earth and not far away

⁵⁰ Fr. Alarcón gave a sample of this chant:

"Ah, Sinamayung, we will not see thee again in the ranks of the brave of thy people. Thy lance was the terror of our enemies who trembled at the sight of Sinamayung. How is it that the vigor of thine arm hath withered away? Alas, because the bunis refused to be placated by the chickens and hogs that every day were sacrificed to them. But be thou consoled. Sinamayung, their souls accompany thee to Dungayan where thou art waiting for us in the shade." (Alarcón-Scott, pp. 88-89.)

⁵¹ *Ibid*

⁵² Fr. Alarcón commented on the pompous burial:

"They put on the deceased all his ornaments and wrapped him in four or five blankets; thus he who lived his whole life naked goes to the tomb laden with clothes". Alarcón-Scott, 89.

⁵³ *Ibid*

from their houses. Heaven was relegated to those who died violent deaths. They did not denote places for the good and for the bad.

(d) *Priesthood and Sacrifices*

Those who offered sacrifices as priests were called *Mabbuni*. They were the ones who uttered prayers, an incomprehensible stream of words, during the sacrifice. Sacrifices were offered on important occasions like planting and harvesting seasons, marriage, death, sickness, and after coming from a victorious battle against their enemies. The most solemn sacrifice was that of the pig. A big crowd was invited to witness and partake of the sacrifice. The *Mabbuni* started his prayers and soon afterwards cut the throat of the pig. It was then divided into several pieces and given to the men gathered around. These men put each part in the boiling pots. The priest went inside the house and continued with his prayer-offering uttered in a loud voice. Each guest said his bit without minding the others. On these occasions, almost all male and female guests got drunk with an intoxicating kind of drink called the *budbud*.⁵⁴ This form of religious act turned into veritable orgies. During their drunkenness, men and women might harm and even kill one another.

After prayers and the orgies, the victim was eaten by those present, and to the Supreme being they offered the soul of the pig.⁵⁵

The *Mabbuni* also sacrificed chickens by whose entrails they augured the good or bad outcome of an enterprise.⁵⁶

The *Kiangans* considered the return of the victors with the heads of the enemies as their trophies to be a very momentous occasion which called for a big celebration. The people gathered

⁵⁴ The *budbud* was a kind of wine made of rice flour, juice of a vine, and fermented rice juice. This was how it was done. A certain amount of rice was pounded to produce rice flour. This was mixed with the juice of a particular wine of a tree. The mixture was exposed to the sun for several days. Rice was then cooked and the water was set aside. The flour and vine juice were mixed with the rice cooked with water and fermented for about ten days. This wine had a very disagreeable and acidic taste. The *budbud* caused not only drunkenness but also a certain stupor and anger that would easily cause violence even without provocation; Villaverde, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-50.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*; Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

together dancing to the best of the *gansas*. They placed the head of the enemy impaled on a spear which they stuck to the ground. Then they formed a circle with their weapons in their hands, making macabre gestures.⁵⁷

This kind of feasting was considered sacred even by their enemies. Attack by the enemies for revenge was postponed, for instance, until the celebration was over.⁵⁸

(e) *Auguries and Superstitions*

There was no noteworthy phenomenon in nature which the Kiangans did not interpret with serious fears. Their superstitions enslaved and enchained all their movements and actions.

Some occasions like going on a trip or moving to a new house called for a sacrifice where the entrails of the chicken were examined to augur a good or a bad outcome. The Buni-masters oftentimes terrified those who did not follow the customs, with threats of misfortune. In fact, the Kiangans did not dare to go places without first consulting the auguries. Before they waged war, for instance, they killed several chickens, and the augurers interpreted the outcome of this enterprise; if there was a good sign, they sallied forth provided with good food for many days and entered into the territory of their enemies.⁵⁹

Aside from the entrails of the animals, they also augured by the songs of birds. When they were on their way to another town, they observed the song of the *bansit*⁶⁰ and if it sang a bad omen, they had to come back. Even the missionaries suffered from the inconvenience of sending letters or errands through the natives because when they heard the *bansit*, they would return even if they had already travelled for several days.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Fr. Alarcón, stunned by such practices, commented: "The women and children attend this horrendous spectacle, so they grow accustomed to seeing these mortal trophies without emotion and a mortal hatred of their enemies is instilled in them. They have never a word of compassion for them." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

⁵⁸ Villaverde, *loc. cit.*, pp. 36-38.

⁵⁹ Villaverde, *loc. cit.*, pp. 51-52. Also: *Letter of Father Suárez to señor Antonio Larrúa* (?), dated at Bagabag, 11 February 1849, MS in APSR, Tomo 25, doc. 12.

⁶⁰ The *bansit* is a sacred bird. The word means "to augur".

⁶¹ Fr. Alarcón and Vilanova experienced the following: "We dispatched ten pagans to the Christian towns to get us various things we needed. The second day, we saw the group come back, after about half-way in their journey. This is because the *bansit* sang. They left again after four days." Alarcón-Scott, p. 86.

They also augured by sneezes. If somebody sneezed at the time of commencing a long journey, they considered it a bad sign and consequently the trip was delayed. The rainbow was a bad omen if it appeared as only half a rainbow.⁶²

Marriage

The Kiangans contracted matrimony when they were still young, sometimes at the age of three or four. This was one reason why they had to live with their parents first until they reached the age fit for living together.

The parents of the couple agreed on the marriage of their children. The bridegroom's family made a gift of meat, rice and *bongas*⁶³ to the bride. The bongas were afterwards divided among the relatives of the bride, and served as wedding invitations.⁶⁴

The ceremony started with the augurer's consultation of the chicken entrails to see whether the marriage would go well. The augurer took the bride and groom to a rice field and held a ceremony of pulling up some herbs and then with water from the same field, they washed each other's hand and with this the ceremony ended. The couple would go back to the house accompanied by the Mabbuni. The feast began with an orgy where *budbud* was drank by the guests to their hearts' content. The feast usually lasted for two or three days. The first day was celebrated with drinking; the second and the third days were spent for eating the pigs, chickens, carabaos and cows prepared for the feast. The number of invited guests depended on the resources of the family of bride and groom. If they were rich and prominent, the whole village was invited.

After the guests had been warmed up by the *budbud*, they formed several circles and began to dance to the tune of the *gansas*. The dance portrayed the state of violence which the natives were so used to do. The head dancer stared fixedly at a certain point, contorted his legs and hands with horrible gesticulations, and afterwards made several turns around the circle with the others, stood up and made a sign with his hand to get

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ A sort of a corn or nut which mixed with the leaf of a plant called buyo and a bit of snail-shell lime.

⁶⁴ Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-87.

their attention, at the same time giving a shout. At this point, one of the more prominent guests stood up and delivered a harangue. There were some sorts of petitions that he asked the *buni* to grant to the bride and groom, to their families, and to their possessions. Sometimes, the harangues recounted the prowess of the bridegroom and his family. It might eulogize the beauty of the bride.

When the couple started to live together after they had reached the age ripe for procreating, they did it simply without any more ceremony.⁶⁵

Fidelity and Divorce

The Kiangans believed in a monogamous marriage. The male did not take more than one wife. Divorce was however allowed without difficulty. There were certain causes for separation and remarriage. For example, adultery on the part of the wife, laziness,⁶⁶ and disagreement with the family of the husband; the husband's refusal to do work which custom had established, and adultery committed by him.⁶⁷

Adultery was considered a crime punishable by death. However, this could be settled for pigs and carabaos. When someone was found guilty of adultery, the relatives of the aggrieved party gathered together and went fully armed to the house of the guilty person. They either killed the culprit or settle for a heavy fine. They imposed greater punishment on the delinquent man than on the woman. The man was usually killed but the woman was either bereft of her properties and divorced, but she was not killed.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ The work in the fields was divided between men and women, leaving to the latter the bigger part. It was the custom of the men to prepare the land for the fields but the women sowed them and cleaned out the weeds; though it might be necessary to hurry the work, the husbands might be found squatting around, smoking, and observing how their wives worked. Scott, "The Ifugaos a Hundred Years Ago," *op. cit.*, pp. 60-65.

⁶⁷ Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88.

⁶⁸ Fr. Alarcón questioned the seeming double standard that the Ifugaos practised when several chiefs one time came to him to complain about a soldier making advances to a married woman: "They told me that were he an Ifugao, they would go ahead and do what they wished with him, without imputing any wrong to them. I told them why did they not take care of the woman, that she would be more retiring; in any case, they should threaten to punish her if she did not stop receiving that soldier. To which they responded that a girl who was very young and had little judgment was not at fault at all, and that, in short, their custom was to castigate those who tried to seduce the women". Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

Divorce was not encouraged among them. Those who made use of it sought a wife in another town very much farther than his previous residence. Usually these men who had divorced could not appear in the town where they married the first time without great loss of face. Rarely, a wife was divorced for failure to bear children. When a couple separated, they divided the children equally. If they had only one, the child was left to the wife.⁶⁹

ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE MAYAOYAOS AND BUNHIANS (1800-1898).

Topography

The Mayaoyao Valley was located in the northeastern part of the Ifugao Province. It was situated about ten leagues northwest between Carig (today Santiago) and Bagabag. To the north it was bounded by the territories of the Baligas and Aguiपाos; to the east, by Bunhian; to the south, by the Magat river; and to the west, by Silipan. Bunhian was a municipality of Mayaoyao about twenty kilometers from the village proper.⁷⁰

The Mayaoyao and the Bunhian lay to the left of the Magat River, from east to west, between the low Cordillera close to the said river on the eastern side of the big Cordillera whose principal points were denominated Matallag, Malay, Chalog, and the Ambafuy peak up to the buttress of the same Ambafuy Cordillera, called Tumanito, overlooking the Mayaoyao town of Langayan, which divided the former from the country inhabited by the Silipan tribe. From north to south, it confined with the heathen Saguipans or Gaddangs from the point of the Cordillera called Nadungatan, which ended in the said Magat river.

Between the Matallag Malay Mountains, and the Eset, Matunum and Labuan Mountains, from east to west; and between the

⁶⁹ "In matters of chastity I believe that they observe the natural law better than the Christians do the divine. However, they get married and are divorced easily, although on some conditions" (José Lorenzo, *loc. cit.*, p. 285). Also: "Letter of Father Suárez to Antonio Larrúa", *loc. cit.*

⁷⁰ Guillermo Galvey makes the following description of the town of Mayaoyao: "...Mayaoyao is situated on a big and broad hill, surrounded by rice fields on the slopes, big and small, perfectly irrigated and located near their houses" (*Expedición a Quiangan y Mayaoyao en los montes de Cagayán*, en febrero de 1837, MS in APSR, Vol. 35, doc. 6. fols. 365-373).

Magat river and the Ateb creek, from south to north, there lay a great valley, dotted by low hills which could be traversed on horseback in all directions. The rest of the Mayaoyao region was mountainous. The highest peak was between Bani and the Ambafuy, from south to north, all of which formed a deep valley, within which were located all the Mayaoyao towns. The surface layer of the earth in these towns was thin. This made the terrain naturally rugged and barren. The Bunhian part, however, was less harsh and more fertile.⁷¹

The Mayaoyao region was divided into three valleys: the valley of Mayaoyao proper; the Bunhian valley, and the Chamag. The people of Bunhian and Chamag were said to be descendants of the people of the Mayaoyao valley. They had similar customs and rituals.⁷²

The Mayaoyaos should be acclaimed for their intelligence and industry for building a productive place from such an indomitable terrain. This was done inspite of the crude implements made of wood which were used in cultivating the soil. Like the Kiangans the Mayaoyaos were lucky that all the parts of the mountains surrounding it had an abundant number of descending streams. Embankments had been built and filled with good soil and water conduits in steps, all buttressed by strong walls made of stones from the river, well filled together and finished.

The Mayaoyaos cultivated two species of rice, white and red. Aside from rice, the Mayaoyaos also produced camote, gabi, mongo beans, onions, garlic, tomatoes, pepper, pumpkin, dilao, strawberries, lemons, oranges, pineapple, sugar cane, and bananas.⁷³

⁷¹ This description of Mayaoyao and Bunhian is found in Mariano Oscáriz, "Expedición militar al Mayaoyao," 1847, MS in APSR, Section CAGAYAN, Tomo 24, fols. 1-13; Cfr. Pablo Fernández, O.P., "The Mayaoyaos in 1850", *Acta Manilana*, No. 3, April 1967, pp. 64-65.

Or in a simpler way: "Mayawyaw-one of the Ifugaw tribes residing at the Mayawyaw valley, which is located at the nor-eastern part of the Ifugaw province. It is situated about ten leagues northwest between Carig (today Santiago) and Bagabag". (Emmanuel V. Sunga, *Dominican Missionary labors among the Mayawyawes in the 19th century*—an unpublished Thesis—, University of Santo Tomás, Manila, 1978 p. 3).

⁷² Campa, Buenaventura, O.P., "Los mayaoyaos y la raza ifugao," *El Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XXVII (1893), p. 285.

⁷³ "...they have a method so destructive that in a few years they will make it uninhabitable due to lack of firewood. They set fire to a forest and they sow highland rice almost without touching the land and they get much with little work, but with irretrievable damage" (*Letter of Father Vilanova to Father Gainza*, in APSR, MSS, Vol. 25, doc. 14, p. 27). Because

Travel by foot was difficult because there were no roads or pathways other than the narrow pilapils (*pilapiles* in Spanish). It was difficult for a traveller to keep his feet dry when walking here because he had to wade through the waters.

Unlike Kiangán which had a copious supply of trees, the Mayaoyao Valley had an extremely small number, most of them found only around the houses. (They were used to provide shade and to beautify the surroundings.) Thus in the greater part of the inhabited land there was lack of timber for building houses.

The valley had a temperate climate. This was due to the elevated location and the presence of a considerable number of springs from which issued limpid waters that flowed almost everywhere.

There were no minerals found in this area. In Ambulug the natives collected pebbles which were yellow in color. Metals were sometimes used by them in making ornaments.

As for the local fauna, there were only monkeys, snakes, large lizards, ravens, and turtle doves. The natives kept no domestic animals other than pigs, chicken, and ducks.

The Mayaoyao houses were constructed near ricefields. A village was built on a site juxtaposed with numerous ricefields and beside a moderately sloping mountain side. (Obviously, they chose a site that was not very rough or rocky.) The valley of Mayaoyao was a very broad one surrounded by steep mountains on which very few houses could be constructed. It was only in the very distant declivities that appropriate sites could be selected. But the latter procedure would take the people away from their ricefields. Even then, the Mayaoyaos put their houses in the middle of their fields without grouping them; which was not done in the Ifugao villages of Kiangán and Silipan.

Racial Origin

The Mayaoyaos believed that their genesis engendered a race far superior to that of the other tribes, and more so to the Negritoes or Aetas. Some of them thought that they originated from

of this there is practically no forest in the vicinity of Mayaoyao, except those planted around their houses to provide shade. Through this "kaingin" method the Mayaoyaos were able to plant and harvest the products mentioned above (Cfr. Sunga, *op. cit.*, p. 22).

a tribe who came from Manila to Mayaoyao. In fact, they liked to relate the biblical story of the universal deluge to which they gave a local color.

They told that at one period in time immemorial there was a great and sweeping flood which lasted for several days and destroyed the city of Manila and other places. All men perished except a certain Natong and his family. After founding Manila, these survivors settled in the mountains.⁷⁴

There were also people who attributed the slit eyes, complexion and language of the Mayaoyaos and the Bunhians to a Chinese origin. Yet they could not explain how the Chinese ever reached their valleys.

It is also possible that their ancestors were part of the general race which peopled Luzon, as could be proven in their language, which abounded in Tagalog, Ilocano, Pangasinan and Gaddang.⁷⁵

Physiognomy

The Mayaoyao male displayed a robust physique, generally tall with well-proportioned features. The women were generally plain and short in contrast to the males. Except for some skin eruptions due to lack of care and cleanliness, they had fair faces and a healthy constitution. The women had strikingly beautiful eyes, somewhat brown or blue and slanted. The face was broad, the nose was flat and the teeth were black. The color of the teeth could be attributed to the effect of the use of a tint or varnish, which never peeled off. The teeth were also rubbed with the charcoal of a native wood called *Cayabat*. Their ears were also deformed because of the weight of the wire, beads and shells hanging from them. The women did not cut their hair but wore it loose. The men cut their hair in the form of a crown or

⁷⁴ Fr. Alarcón commented on this tale in the following manner: "It is only natural that they should speak of no more than the land, where they were born. These men who don't have any idea of the rest of the earth believe the world ends in Manila. It is also obvious that the founding of Manila is false and must have been added recently by tale-tellers to give importance to their ancestors. Perhaps, they are confusing this tradition of the deluge with that of their coming from China, in which case there would be nothing remarkable in their having come from what is now Manila." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91; Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 63; Cf. AUST. Section FOLLETOS, Vol. 115, p. 63; also in: Campa, *loc. cit.*, p. 279.

⁷⁵ About the language of the Mayaoyaos see; Campa, *loc. cit.*, p. 285.

helmet. They were beardless because they plucked the hair with bamboo tweezers.

The children's legs were somewhat deformed because when they were babies, they were tightly squeezed the whole day between the blanket and the body of the mother. When the mothers worked, they were exposed to the sun and dust.⁷⁶

Clothing and Personal Ornaments

The men wore nothing but a cloth or bahague, very well fitted at the waist and between the thighs.⁷⁷ The women encircled their waists with a strip of cloth and a girdle; the two strands or ends of which hang at one side. They were particularly fond of necklaces, especially the women, who sometimes wore a whole bunch of them. When they did not have glass beads they made them of coconut bark or string of seeds that were the fruit of a kind of reed-grass. Sometimes, they used a kind of mother-of-pearl. They devided the shell into pieces of similar size and the shape of a collar with a button to fasten it around the neck. The necklaces of beads, wires, and shells were worn according to the weaver's rank.

The women dexterously spun and wove white cloth, strong and soft from the filament of the bark of a small tree, called *calamy*. This cloth was dyed blue with the juice of a climbing vine which grew abundantly on their mountains. From such cloth came their blankets and bahagues.

Men and women tattooed their bodies with pins after the fashion of the ancient Visayas.⁷⁸

On special occasions, such as feasts, or when they attended dances, sacrifices and even burial ceremonies, they adorned themselves with rooster tail-feathers and the most beautiful clothes they possessed.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Fr. Vilanova commented on this custom: "This should not be strange if one keeps their ignorance and poverty in mind. I advised some mothers to wash their babies everyday, because this was good for them, and I have seen them carry out this advice exactly." AUST. Sec. Folletos, Tomo 115; also in Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 69. p. 69; also in Campa, *loc. cit.*, pp. 280-281.

⁷⁷ Campa, *op. cit.*, p. 282. Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 59.

⁷⁸ Alarcon-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

⁷⁹ Fr. Alarcón was quite amused with his experience in seeing a Bunhian woman's attire: "When I was in Bunhian, a woman presented herself to me who was the wife of the chief of a village to whom they all gave

Implements and Weapons

The Mayaoyaos had no sophisticated tools and implements except their bolos or campilans. However, the missionaries were amazed when they saw them build their convent and church and other buildings with said tools alone and did it with as much perfection as any ordinary carpenters. With no implements but a stick of the size of a fist, they were able to make pots. In Bunhian, there were a melter and a blacksmith who turned out any kind of metal work, on being shown a sample. They had no forge and no tools: two stones served as anvil and hammer, and two sticks as tongs. These two crafts were hereditary and were not transmitted outside of the family; they learned the trade from their ancestors.⁸⁰

These people were irascible and had a very belligerent disposition. The campilan and the lance were their main arms, which they never released from their hands except when eating and sleeping. In Mayaoyao and Bunhian, men carried an *aliua*, which was an ax that looked like a pruning hook. Like the Kiangans, they also carried a kind of oblong-shaped shield as defensive arms. The knives and cutlasses were also used to sever the heads of their enemies wounded in battle.⁸¹

They were quite skillful in throwing lances, in the practice of which they were instructed at a very early age, and very nimble in running and walking.⁸²

Houses

The description of Mayaoyao houses was given by Fr. Alamo in 1849,⁸³ as follows:

"It stands about four and a half feet above the ground on four posts which supported five beams; on these

importance. She would come around with the short skirt they used, a man's red shirt with the tails outside the skirt, and more than 20 glass necklaces and, over everything a soldier's jacket. She would strut about among the others and make much show of her luxurious and fantastic attire." *Ibid.*; also: Campa, *loc. cit.*, p. 283.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*; Also Campa, *loc. cit.*, p. 285.

⁸³ Fr. Remigio Rodríguez del Alamo, "Descripción de la Casa de un Principal Mayaoyao," in AUST, Sec. Folletos, Vol. 115, pp. 133-135; also cited by Fr. Pablo Fernández, "The Mayaoyaos in 1850" in *Acta Manilana*, No. 3, April 1967, pp. 75-77.

beams, they made the walls. Two of these consisted of only two narra planks placed horizontally and the other two of small boards placed vertically.

"From these wall boards protrudes a space which girds the whole house interiorly, like a cabinet or shelf made of small pieces of wood and woven bamboo, without doors. On this they placed their belongings. About one and a half feet over the stone there was a deck hanging from the roof in which they stored the firewood used in cooking.

"The roof and ceiling were formed by piles embedded on the floor beams; on top of these were the crosspieces of the ceiling. The ceiling did not enclose all the space up to the rooftop, but left an opening through which to climb up and above the ceiling itself. This serves as a place where they keep the rice, jars, and other household utensils.

"In the center of the cross formed by the ceiling beams, there is a pillar on which is inserted the round woodpiece from which issues the shafts forming the roof. On top and tied to them is a lattice-work of bamboo or reeds, roughly joined together, which hides from sight the cogon which forms the outer covering.

"There are two windows facing each other. One of them serves as a door which is provided with stairs.

"The house exterior is cleaner than the interior. They are blackened by smoke and sufficiently warm. The lot is usually paved with stones and enclosed with a stone or wood fence. Their furnishings include clay pots, porcelain plate, glazed Chinese jars, large and small baskets, carved narra basins, bowls, iron cauldrons, spears, shields, brooms of rice stalks, deer horns, etc. They also keep in their houses the breastbones of hens and chickens, as well as the jawbones of pigs and deers as ornaments.

"As for the other houses in Mayaoyao, they are small, with no other floor than the ground. These houses are generally dusty and filthy. They are usually full of ashes and flies".

All the houses are located in the fields of the same ownership, and around many of them a few trees are planted. Although provided with a primitive form of drainage, the houses are ill-kept and produce a terrible smell even from afar. The dogs, chickens and other fowls live in the house surroundings together with men.

Social Classes

Each family was considered independent. In each family the eldest exercised authority over all its other members. However, in every town, there were some families that stood out from the rest and exercised a certain amount of power and influence, gained for them by feats of arms — their own or their forbears — or by greater wealth and bravery. It was on these two factors that they based their nobility and the right to the respect and consideration of others. The chiefs or *camaranas* maintained these motives of obedience, now with celebrations during which they fed the multitude, now with their knowledge of the “buni” and now by endeavoring to keep the reputation for valour inherited from their forbears, whose feats they recited to the people, who listened respectfully to the account.⁸⁴

The Mayaoyaos recognized ties of kinship. They had their own language, religion, traditions, customs and usages, enthusiasm for the feats of their ancestors, a love of glory acquired in the field of combat, an eagerness to perpetuate in their children a robust, courageous and free race, distinctions, priests, chiefs, and a government.

Government and Legislation

The government of these people was somewhat aristocratic and monarchic.⁸⁵ Each village or settlement (in Sp. *rancho*) had a chief *camarana*, whose office and dignity was hereditary, together with other secondary ones, and who by dint of their valour and their feats had acquired a certain superiority over the rest. Among these *camaranas* there was one who was acknowledged to be above all the others, to whom even a certain voluntary homage was paid in the form of contribution from their produce. To him the whole race had recourse in their complaints and grudges against other races or tribes. These *camaranas* drew up the treaties of peace or war, and at the hour of battle led their respective ranchoes and the whole race at the fray against their enemies.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Fernández, *loc. cit.*, pp. 73-74.

⁸⁵ In a letter addressed to Father Santiago Romero, O.P., Prior Provincial, Father José Tomás Vilanova, the apostle of the Mayaoyaos, remarks: “Among these peoples there is no form of government but that of the local kind” (Cfr. Sunga, *op. cit.*, p. 19).

⁸⁶ Fr. Vilanova remarked: “However primitive and savage the Mayaoyaos are imagined to be, there is no basis for believing them to have ever lived

There was no such thing as framing laws, watching over their observance or punishing their transgression. Laws were few and these had been handed down by tradition. Laws concerning personal security, honour, or property were observed in virtue of themselves without need of any authority to keep a watchful eye.

Murder, adultery, rape and theft were punished with death. The aggrieved parties or their nearest relatives were both judge and executioner with no one objecting to this. Now and then, the death penalty was commuted to some kind of compensation at the discretion of the offended party. As a result of these, offenses were very uncommon among these people, who lived free of cares and worries, and left their houses open without the slightest concern.⁸⁷

There were other laws, which were properly religious laws, i.e., to abstain from certain kinds of meat during the whole time of mourning for a dead person, or for the period of one month when one had touched a corpse, etc. These and several other laws or customs they observed even scrupulously, notwithstanding the absence of sanctions to be meted on their transgressors.⁸⁸

Religion

(1) *Belief in God*

These natives knew God under the notion or idea of a superior cause, to whom alone they attributed all the effects that drew their attention and whose particular cause they ignored. The name *Abunian* was given to this supreme being. They prayed to

without some kind of civilization. Observed at close range and for a certain continuous length of time, one is able to discern in them all elements of society that are present in the bosom of civilized nations. These elements are as yet coarse and primitive; but merely argue that the social organization of these people is not above the level of their primitive and superstitious ideas, of their coarse manners and of their customs, and as their needs grow so well, these social elements grow better and thus enable them to belong to the family of civilized countries". Fernández. *loc. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

⁸⁷ Fr. Vilanova one time observed that there was a crime of adultery committed during this period and it was commuted to the payment of some pigs and chickens which were eaten by the people. (*Ibid.*); also: Campa, *loc. cit.*, pp. 282-283; Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 61.

⁸⁸ Fr. Vilanova noticed how religiously they observed their laws and customs: "They want to say: 'we cannot do it; it is not allowed.' But I have noticed that this obedience grows out of a fanatical and servile fear." Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 26.

him and offered sacrifices to him in their needs. They called on this being in everything that was powerful and beautiful, like the sun, the moon, the stars, the thunder and the earthquake. In their prayers they particularly singled out these things, thus: "Oh, you Lord of all things: Oh, you, star, sun, moon, earthquake — to whom we send our prayers — take pity on this sick man; or let our rice grow well, or give us victory over our enemies sparing us from death, and we shall give you a pig."⁸⁹

Like the Kiangans, they believed in the anitos who interceded for them and therefore had to be placated when angry. They also saw to it that these anitos were always happy and appeased.

(2) *Sickness*

The Mayaoyaos and Bunhians showed concern towards one another in time of sickness. There was always someone keeping watch beside the sick person to provide for his needs. It was on these occasions that sacrifices were offered to propitiate the turbulent spirits who tried to get the sick from them. The relatives of the sick killed as many as ten pigs and more chickens according to the rank and resources of the sick person. They had a great faith in what the quack doctors prescribed. They had nothing against them if the patient finally died. In this case their fatuous conformity found solace in the saying so common among the tribe members: "It's his luck."⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Fr. Vilanova said: "Concerning religion, I have observed the following: idolatry is unknown. Aside from various observations I have made on the matter, I am convinced of this for the following reasons: The term Abunian, which in their language means the subject to whom religious worship is given, is applied exclusively to the creator of all things. If they worshipped any creature, they would apply to it the same term, which is a generic one, in virtue of its meaning." Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 62.

"Father Vilanova has this to say about Abunian or Cabunian: "I have not been able to get more than the notion of an occult superior cause. I asked more headmen what Abunian might be, and they answered that they did not know; and only that when one gets sick, it is the Abunian who made him so; similarly when one is well, and so on with the rest. And if one adds that they slaughter some animals like pigs and chicken, there you have the whole of their religion" (*Letter to Father Santiago Romero, Provincial, Mayaoyao*, November 29, 1848 — published in *Dario de Manila* on December 18, 1849, pp 57-58).

Also: Remigio Rodríguez del Alamo, "Diario... en su primer viaje al país Mayaoyao", MS in AUST, FOLLETOS, Tomo 115, pp. 239-240.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

(3) *Death and Life after Death*

These natives also showed respect and consideration for the corpses of their dead relatives. As soon as a man died, the relatives wept over his body and started washing the corpse. They did not embalm their dead.

If the corpse was that of a little child, they seated it with the arms open and the hands on its knees, and they tied it at the waist and neck to two bamboos which formed the back of the seat. They mourned for him for about three days. After observing that he did not come back to life, they buried him. If the dead was an adult, they watched over his corpse for five days. During these days, the body decomposed and a noxious smell emanated from it. The body was positioned in the same way, but with all the dead ornaments of wire, beads and shells decorating him. The weapons were never buried with the dead person.

The graves consisted of big caves made in the caverns of the mountains and a good distance from the houses and the fields. The mouths of these caves were well sealed with stones and earth.⁹¹

Like the Kiangans, the Mayaoyaos and the Bunhians performed certain ceremonies for the dead. The relatives and friends of the dead were invited to partake of the pigs, chickens and carabaos slaughtered for this purpose. The eatings continued for several days until all the eatables were consumed. The richer the dead, the longer the feasting lasted. If some possessions of the deceased were still left after the interment, they disinterred him after one or two years and again waited and finished off all that was left. There were those who were transferred to other places of interment two or three times.

The widower as well as the widow observed mourning practices. The mourning emblem of the former consisted of having his hair uncut and girding his forehead with a narrow band of rattan at the neck. They neither worked nor went out of the house on the days following the burial. This was their way of showing their affection for the departed loved one.⁹²

⁹¹ "El P. Malumbres al P. Provincial", dated at Diadi, Nueva Vizcaya, January 6, 1887, in *Correo Sino-Anamita*, pp. 188-189.

⁹² Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 89; Fernández, *loc. cit.*, pp. 64, 73.

Like the Kiangans, they had a notion of two states, or destinies of the separated souls. They said that those who died beheaded went to heaven. Their dialect expressed eternity as "maida taena"; evil spirits as "anamitu," hell "adhelon"; heaven, "lagud"; and the rational soul, "linnana."⁹³

They did not have any clear notion of the immortality of the soul or of eternal rewards and punishments. They only knew that when the soul left the body, the latter decomposed. They absolutely ignored what happened to the soul after its separation from the body.⁹⁴

(4) *Priesthood and Sacrifices*

The *anitero* was the priest who offered the sacrifices; especially those offered for a sick person. He was considered a medium between the anito and the sick person.

The ceremonies and the practices performed were called "buni." Part of the pigs or chickens killed were offered to Abunian. The other parts were eaten by those present. It was so impractical to require the sick person to partake a portion of the meat of the sacrificial victim to his own detriment because his condition grew worse and oftentimes death followed. When the afflicted died, the relatives did not blame the *anitero* because for them he had done his part. They further explained that the person died because the anito refused to be placated.⁹⁵

After they had eaten the animals sacrificed, they burned the feathers or the bristles and blew the smoke towards the sick man.

⁹³ Fernández, *Ibia*.

⁹⁴ In his conversations with the natives, Fr. Vilanova learned of some beliefs regarding the soul: "They say that often souls appear to the parents or to the children, when they are asleep, and that if the dead man is the father of the family and when his soul comes to the house it carries away the campilan or the lance, then the son will die on the third day. If the dead one is a child, and on return, desirous of sucking its mother's breast up to three times, then the mother will soon die. But if the soul appears and either does not take anything away, or wants nothing, then the relatives need have no fear." *Ibid*.

⁹⁵ Fr. Vilanova gave his experience about his conversations with the *anitero*: "The *anitero* of whom I begged to be instructed in his science and occult practices, required me to send away the many people who were in my house. During our long session, there were moments in which I had to

A victory feast was also held after their successful battle against their enemies. They celebrated it with bonfires and gruesome dances. The merrymaking included the shoutings of those who came to harangue, the dissonant clamor of the branes, and the hubhub of the mob that was applauding them. The heads of the beheaded were proudly displayed, followed by the dance amid the beating of the *gansas*. The guests then formed a circle around the heads with their weapons in their hands, making frightening gestures and menacing the livid features of the victim of their cruelty with their spears. The women and children who attended this horrendous spectacle grew accustomed to witness them without emotion; a mortal hatred of their enemies was instilled in them.⁹⁶

Before the harvest, the Mayaoyaos and the Bunhians observed the harvest sacrificial ceremonies. They all closed themselves up in their houses at dusk of the preceding day, and stayed there without eating, sleeping or saying a word all night, and the next day until sunset at which hour they left their houses with much hubhub and all went out to bathe, and afterwards they celebrated with a big feast.

Sacrifices were also offered during harvest time, birth, marriage and death. The number of animals, i.e., pigs, chickens or carabaos slaughtered for these purposes, depended on the rank or resources of the persons making the sacrifices.

Auguries and superstitions

Like the Kaingans, the Mayaoyaos and Bunhians were very superstitious. They gave interpretations of good or evil on things

exert efforts to keep from laughing at the lack of knowledge of the buni. I asked him if all the sick that he attended got well without exception. To this he answered that some lived and some did not. He also added that it was the lot of some to live, and of others to die. I asked him if they really gave the part of the pig or chicken to Abunian and whether the latter really ate it. To which he answered no, since he did not allow himself to be seen. The destruction of the species and their eating of the pig or chicken is the essence of their sacrifice. I then told him that we had medicines more efficacious than those they have and that we acknowledged the true God from whose goodness we expected health after doing what we consider good for his recovery. He begged me to show them to him asking whether they consisted of large or small leaves — but only to him and not to the others". Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 87.

⁹⁶ Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 90; Fernández, *loc. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

they saw. They consulted the Buni-masters, who in turn examined the entrails of animals, as to whether their meeting with the enemies would be successful or not. They also augured by the song of the birds. Any undertaking must be postponed if the birds sang because it meant a bad omen.⁹⁷

It was believed among the Bunhians that the butterflies were the souls of the dead who came to see what was going on and reported it. During war with their enemies, the augurers would declare that they were the souls of their enemies who were coming to challenge them.⁹⁸

The Mayaoyaos believed that a small black pebble of a special kind determined by their augurers was a tooth of the lightning and the holder could not be killed by a lightning.⁹⁹

They believed in other omens which foretold good or bad events in a thousand other effects of either natural activities or changes.

Birth and Infancy

When a baby was born, he was washed three times in one day, and the mother was purified by a woman assigned for this purpose. No man, not even the husband, could approach her in the act of delivering the child. If the childbirth was successful, pigs and chickens were killed for three consecutive days where the family started a merrymaking. The guests danced to the tune of the *gansa*. If the parents were poor, one pig would be sufficient. The child was reared by its own mother, who carried it, even while pounding the rice, strapped to her back or to her chest by a strip of cloth or by a blanket. The baby was covered neither by swaddling bands nor any other clothes. He was not

⁹⁷ When Governor Oscáriz took different leaders from all the pagan tribes to Manila in 1848, he found himself hard-pressed in the Caraballo, a famous descent leaving the province, to keep them from turning back for a bird. It later happened that one of them died on the road and they attributed this to not having observed the omen." Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

⁹⁸ Alarcón-Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-87; *El Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XXI, pp. 186-187; See also: AUST, FOLLETOS, Vol. 115, p. 11.

⁹⁹ Fr. Vilanova explained to the natives: "To free him from this deception, I explained to him what the lightning was, and the thunder, and the clouds, and the means by which a man could guard himself against the first." (*Ibid.*)

given a name until he was seven when they put a bahague on him.¹⁰⁰

Marriage

When the children reached the age of seven or eight, the parents contacted for their marriage. The occasion was celebrated with the killing of a pig, but the parties remained separated until the time that they were judged fit for procreation. They then built a house and brought the wedding pair together, who remained thereafter as a separate family. Nevertheless, the parents preserved an absolute authority over them and were blindly obeyed by them.¹⁰¹

In Bunhian, the groom gave gifts to the bride in the form of animals to be slaughtered and pieces of clothes. If the groom was poor, he just gave the bride one *lechon* or roast pig, a piece of cloth, and six chickens. If he came from a well-to-do family, he gave his bride six *lechones*, six pieces of clothes and twenty chickens. Whether they came from a poor or rich family, the groom provided for a field or a piece of land to be cultivated by the future couple.¹⁰²

Fidelity in Marriage

Conjugal unfaithfulness was very rare among these people; likewise it was very seldom that a man was found to have more than one wife. Adultery was punishable by death but could be settled for a heavy fine of animals and goods given to the aggrieved party.

As to the unmarried, intimacies were not prohibited. They did not judge it unseemly that a man or a woman, who was free of matrimony, should carry on lewdly with a person who was likewise free and of equal category.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ *Ibía*

¹⁰¹ Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 69.

¹⁰² "There is great fidelity among the married; they do not know divorce or repudiation. There is no polygamy. They respect the first and the second degree of relationship, not getting married within them. Among boys and girls, young men and women one cannot notice those signs of sensuality and lasciviousness of other places, because they do not frolic or monkey around among themselves". *Letter of Father Vilanova to Father Romero, Provincial*, dated Mayaoyao, 29-IX-1849, published in *Dario de Manila*, 18-XII-1849, pp. 57-58).

¹⁰³ Fr. Vilanova observed that the attention of the males was drawn by young and pretty women, and they admitted it with the greatest frankness even in front of their wives. Fernández, *loc. cit.*, p. 70.

ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE SILIPANS
(1800-1898)*Topography*

Silipan was a valley to the east and east-northeast of Kiangnan. It was bounded on the west by Lahutan and on the north by Asin and Sapao, and on the east by Mayaoyao. In fact, the name "Silipan" came to be applied to the people living between Kiangnan and Mayaoyao along the lower Alimit River which passed through the heart of the valley. The northern part of this valley was separated from Bontoc by Mount Amuyao; to the East lived the Mayaoyao who, in turn, had the Gaddangs of Isabela province as their neighbors on the east. The Southern border was the Magat river, tributary of the Rio Grande of Cagayan.¹⁰⁴

Records show the existence of forty-four settlements (*rancherías*) in 1800. The *rancherías* were quite small — each with some hundred inhabitants on the average — but there were many of them hidden in the forests on small hills. They included the following: Alimut, Anguitan, Talatlan, Inumboc, Dumajay, Sino, Jaloajui, Nampulan, Vase, Alasinga, Lumagan, Panaban, Titigan, Betu, Oton, Puhu, Saglog, Talboc, Duligan, Mabayong, Sehpan, Mantipo, Langon, Panupingan, Anablon, Joblon, Dayagan, Tatabagg, Tibug, Lacatan, Binungan, Balug, Tuyu, Caba, Anaton, Leb-yong, Luta, Pullan Pagjepi, Pongal, Buyabugan, Danggu, Talettic and Pitol.

The Silipans had farming as their main occupation. Like the other mountain tribes of northern Luzon, they planted camote which easily grew and gave them excellent harvests. But aside from camote, they also planted rice, corn, sugar cane, tobacco, coconut and bonga trees.

They domesticated carabaos, pigs and chickens and ate them not only during their fiestas but whenever they got a chance. In their love for animal meat, they were dreaded far and wide as cattle rustlers. In fact, they went as far as the Magat and

¹⁰⁴ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 167. Silipan was not called by this name up to 1848. Until then the Silipans were identified with the Mayaoyaos. They gained the reputation of exceeding the other two ethnic groups in cruelty and were responsible for a number of murders thus far attributed to the Mayaoyaos (Cfr. Julián Malumbres, O.P., *Historia de la Isabela*, Imprenta del Colegio de Santo Tomás, 1918, p. 200).

Cagayan rivers on their raids. They feasted on cattle which they stole by the dozens.

The Silipans were also noted as tobacco smokers and buyo chewers. They were fond of *basi*, a kind of wine made from sugar cane.¹⁰⁵

Physiognomy

The Silipans were said to have been descendants of the first Malayan invaders who came to the Philippines. Unlike their neighbors the Kiangans, they were a stout and sturdy people. Another feature of the Silipans were their eagle-beak noses which made them look more intelligent than their neighbors. Their women were more attractive and had better physical features. They had well-developed and proportioned figures especially their bosoms. The men were noticeably different from the Igorots of Bontoc and the Kiangans because of their attractive physical features.¹⁰⁶

Clothing and Personal Ornaments

The Silipans' clothing consisted of narrow G-strings or baha-gues for the male. The women wore a short skirt made of thick cotton (similar to the present Ilocano cloth) which they themselves wove. The color varied according to their taste. In cold weather, they wrapped themselves with a thick blanket to protect them from contracting diseases.¹⁰⁷

The men cut their hair at finger length around the head; above the ear it was shaved along the temple. Their hair were stuck out from their heads. The women wore it long and parted in the middle, then tied around the head and fixed in a knot behind. Body hair was not removed; what little hair they had was shaven off. They did not practise circumcision.¹⁰⁸

The Silipans loved to tattoo and paint their bodies with various designs. The men painted their arms, thighs and breasts while their women painted the back of their hands and also their arms

¹⁰⁵ Cfr. "El P. Malumbres al P. Provincial" in *Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XXI, pp. 174, 187.

¹⁰⁶ Schadenberg, *op. cit.* p. 167.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

up to the shoulders. The tattooing instrument was the same as that of all the neighboring tribes — a piece of carabao horn bent in a right angle; the shorter section was placed on the skin and made to penetrate it by a stroke on the bend. Following the desired design, some twenty strokes were made and then soot was rubbed into the wounds.¹⁰⁹

It was common for both sexes to wear gold earrings made of metals. In fact, they decorated their arms and sometimes their ankles, too, with spiral rings of heavy brass wire, and their necks with square pieces of mother-of-pearl fastened to a string through two holes. The women also wore several strings of beads, seeds or buttons in their hair and around their necks, either tied to the throat or hanging down between the breasts. As earrings they wore big brass rings from which they suspended large spoonlike segments of nautilus shell almost touching their shoulders. They also wore snail-like earrings made of thin wire; sometimes they attached beads to their earlobes. The men decorated their hair with big bunches of feathers.¹¹⁰

Implements and Weapons

The Silipans had bolos and spears as their common weapons. They also used bows and arrows which they carried especially for hunting. Their long bolos were reminiscent of the campilans of the Moros in Mindanao. Their shields were long and sharp. They had very simple weapons and implements as contrasted to their bodily adornments where they made use of spiral rings, wires, beads, etc. Their bolos and spears were always sharpened to prepare them for any encounter with their enemies and with strangers.¹¹¹

Houses

The houses were built on posts which had been set slightly into the ground and which lacked the cylindrical disks of the Kiangans. A house had six or more posts as compared to the Kiangans' and Mayaoyaos' four posts. The posts reached up to the roof; boards were fastened to them to serve as walls. The door was made of plaited bamboo or wood. To get in and out they used a ladder which was removed as required, at night for

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

example. The projecting roof consisted of a bamboo framework thatched with reed leaves.¹¹²

The stove used for cooking was made of stones. The walls were decorated with men's and animal's skulls. They also displayed weapons, shields, plates, cooking utensils, baskets, clothes and looms. They also had big fans like those used by the Chinese for kindling fires and cooking off in the best. Near the entrance of the house, they hung their raincoats, rucksacks and baskets. The raincoats were triangular in shape and were made of reed leaves fastened to a network of cords like fish-scales. The rucksacks like their baskets were made of woven bejuco (rattan). Baskets serving as chicken coops were suspended under the house. There were also benches and hammocks made of rattan. The space under the house served as storage space for mortars for pounding rice and stones for milling corn into flour. A flat stone served as the base on which an oblong convex stone was moved back and forth as a grindstone. Near the house was a kind of shed for storing the crops harvested.¹¹³

Government and Legislation

The Silipans were somewhat patriarchal. They showed great respect for their elders. A council composed of elders might be formed to settle disputes among the members of the same tribe. This same council might issue the norms of conduct to be observed by outsiders and strangers. Although they did not have laws governing land ownerships and other tribal customs, they respected common consensus and opinions. The rich or the powerful persons exerted certain influences among the lower groups especially the slaves.

Robbery and murder were heavily punished usually by death unless an agreement was reached with the family of the aggrieved party. If death was caused by a member of another tribe, the members of the victim's tribe were duty bound to avenge it. Usually they prepared for war unless they were placated with peace offering made by the members of the erring tribe.

In deciding some cases, several ordeals were adopted to determine the innocence or guilt of a party. They believed that Bunian

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 168.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

always took the side of the innocent. A nail might be drawn in the head of the suspects and the one who had the most flow of blood was adjudged the culprit. At other times, they built a fire and the litigants were asked to walk on it. The one whose soles were badly burned was considered the criminal.¹¹⁴

Religion

(1) *Belief in God*

Their religion was the same as that of their neighbors the Kiangans and Mayaoyaos. They practised anito worship.¹¹⁵

They recognized the existence of a Supreme Being together with belief in the good and the bad anitos. These anitos might appear in various material shapes and figures.

(2) *Religious Ceremonies*

They celebrated various family feasts, i.e., birth, weddings, sickness, death, victory over their enemies, etc., which they prohibited outsiders or strangers to attend. These celebrations were made by organizing a "cañao" where the anitos became the central focus of the feast. The cañao commenced with the slaughter of pigs and chickens. The members of the tribe gathered under a "sacred tree." After cooking the meat in big containers, drinking of the wine or basi followed with great abundance where those in attendance were expected to get drunk. This was more common when they had come triumphantly from a battle against their enemies. They displayed the heads of their slain enemies in public for everybody to see and enjoy. While drinking the basi, some of them danced to the tune of the *gansa* and *salibao*. They also sang in almost discordant and monotonous tones.¹¹⁶

The Silipans had a peculiar way of mixing their basi which was served to the guests during their cañao. In a five-day cañao held after a victorious battle, big *tibors* (jars) were prepared and placed in the middle of the place where the cañao was being held. They began to mix basi with the brain of each head captured from their enemies. They mixed the brains taken out of the heads and put them in the basi jars and stirred well. The heads were

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

¹¹⁶ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

then decorated on the mouths of the jars. To the hair were pinned beautiful red blossoms of the gumamela..¹¹⁷

When filling the cups made of coconut bowls or carabao horns, the human head was lifted up and the contents of the *tibor* (jar) were stirred to ensure equal distribution of the blood which dripped in and of the brains which were put in. The men squatted on the ground meanwhile engaged in loud gossip accompanied by sometimes very vivid gestures. The women were busy cooking the food off to one side and only passed by to get a sip of basi. After the cañao, the human head was placed in a stake near the head taker's house towards the direction of the wind to avoid the smell of decay. When dry, it was brought into the house to be used for decoration..¹¹⁸

(3) *Auguries and Superstitions*

The Silipans believed in the veneration given to a sacred tree. In fact, they attributed natural calamities to the desecration of this tree. The presence of a rainbow was a sign of good luck.

Before one travelled, he was expected to make a bonfire and observe the direction of the smoke. They interpreted various directions as good or bad luck.

Like their neighbors the Kiangans and the Mayaoyaos, they believed that when the *bansit* sang, the traveller should go back because otherwise he would meet an accident.

Sneezing was considered a bad sign when one was supposed to undertake a certain project like moving to a new house. This was considered a bad omen and any form of activities must be postponed..¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Regarding the blood feuds of the Silipans, Schadenberg observed: "They are avid headhunters, and Christian heads are more highly esteemed than those of their pagan tribesmen; so Christian settlements a few days away suffer much from them; especially those in the Magat river flatlands through which the only road from Manila to the north passes. Forts have therefore been established in some places as way stations for the night; i.e., Fort Pilar on the way from Bagabag to Diadi and Forts San Luis and Cordon farther north. As soon as you reach this "public highway" — which, incidentally, is only a narrow horse trail and so bad you can make better time on foot than riding, so that, considering my small horse and six-foot height, I preferred to walk and let my servant ride — you are given a strong military escort, and still the Silipans attack often enough." (*Ibid.*)

¹¹⁹ *El Correo Sino-Anamita*, Vol. XIII, pp. 60-62.

Death and Burial Practices

The vigil for the dead was celebrated for at least ten days where large fires were kindled and a big meal was prepared from the deceased's possessions, to which the whole community was invited. These days were held sacred and, therefore, during this period there were no war feuds and the villagers were forbidden to use any weapon except in self-defense.¹²⁰

When a person died, the corpse was put on a chair-like frame under the house for ten days. After this period the deceased was put in a sitting position in a grave a meter and a half deep lined with stones and earth and covered over with carabao hide on top of which they placed coconut bowls which they filled with food and drink at times. Over the grave a hut was constructed about eight times the size of the grave itself. If another member of the family died, he was buried in the same grave, which was thus a kind of family vault. The door to the hut was always open for the refilling of the offering bowls. It was the custom of the deceased's immediate relatives not to eat meat or drink wine within one year. As a sign of mourning, the brothers of the dead person must abstain from haircut for a period of one year.¹²¹

Marriage

The Silipans contracted marriage by mutual agreement. This was not done in childhood, as in the case of the Mayaoyaos, but rather after the beginning of puberty. The families of the couple celebrated the wedding by a cañao where great abundance of animals were slaughtered and the whole community was invited. There were no special wedding ceremonies.

There was strict monogamy among the tribes of the Silipans. Divorce or permanent separation was allowed only on the ground of childlessness. The couple were given a period of seven rice harvests within which to determine their fertility. After the specified time the couple if childless might separate and both were free to remarry. Adultery was strictly prohibited. If it was discovered, both parties to the adultery faced a death penalty.¹²²

¹²⁰ Schadenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 169.

Conclusion

We have concluded the exposition of the ethnography of the Ifugaos in all its socio-cultural dimensions, i.e., beliefs, morals, rites, habits, housing, weapons, etc. In the preceding pages, the writings of the 19th century missionaries and observers are seen to reflect their way of life in the midst of primitive rudeness.

The historical specialists of the 20th century, with the help of better scholarly preparation and technology, have dug deeper into the being — the very soul of the Ifugao, and, as a result, present a somewhat different view than that offered by their predecessors. However, they often fail to base properly their appreciations on solid fact.

Towards the end of 1898, head-hunting had gradually diminished. Tribal wars had been minimized. Festivities and dances were still held but the objective was to honor some real community hero during specially bountiful harvests.

Quite a number of Ifugaos had responded quickly to Christianity and education. They had been cooperative in giving up detrimental customs of their ancestors and in adopting good and beneficial ones from Christianity and civilized society.

The Ifugaos were undoubtedly a people much feared in the past for their head-hunting tendencies, and perhaps too admired today for their relatively high degree of culture as regards achievements in the field of terrace-building.

From this study, we may draw an important lesson. Despite the Ifugaos' past atrocities, one cannot help but admire their strict code of law and morals in matters of chastity and marriage, their respect in safeguarding their neighbor's property, their harsh but efficient way of dealing with criminals. One's history need not obscure the greatness of a people.

The saga of these bold and brave "savages" (some 19th century writers often apply this term to the Ifugaos) has much to communicate to our modern space age. Lest we forget that man — whether hunting in the mountains or walking on the moon — cannot but be himself, frail and strong, vanquished yet eternally hopeful, we need but recall the Ifugao epic and its tales of heroes and men.

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