The Christianization of the Philippines: Myth and Reality

The Philippines is the only Christian country in Asia. That this is so is due to the Spanish missionaries who from 1565 on started arriving in large numbers in order to bring the inhabitants of the islands into the fold of the Church. When millions of European people were deserting the Roman Church and the Protestant Revolution became triumphant in Europe the Spanish missionaries were crossing the Oceans in search for new souls for Christ. They found them aplenty in the huge American Continent. Some of them went beyond the South Seas and fired by the dream of entering the Celestial Empire, the Grand Cathay of Marco Polo, found themselves in the Philippine archipelago. Providentially they stayed. Thus, in the course of time, they gave a new nation to Christ.

The Christianization of the Philippines was achieved in an incredible short span of time. Fifty years after Legazpi and Urdaneta's arrival in 1565 the main task of Christianization had already been accomplished. How was this achieved? What were the reasons for this rapid diffusion of Christianity among the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands? Who were the men responsible for this outstanding feat? What methods were used? Was the Christianization of the Philippines the effect of the Cross of the missionaries or the sword of the *conquistadores*? Did

Christianity come to the shores of the Philippines as a call to salvation or as a cultural imposition from a Western nation? Was Filipino culture elevated by Christianity or was it obliterated by the ruthless and fanatic spirit of the Spanish missionaries?

The history of the Philippines, it has been said,[1] begins and ends with the Friars. They were the men responsible for the Christianization of the Philippines. Of this no historian can have any doubt. Whether for good or bad — history tells us it was for good — the Spanish Friars fashioned the Philippines and gave the country a special indelible imprint.

Ever since the Propaganda Movement of the XIX century, prior to the defeat and expulsion of Spain from the Philippines, various authors have portrayed the Spanish Friars as exploiters, abusers, corruptors, destroyers of the Filipino people and culture. The Propaganda Movement has decorated and adorned with multiform colours the mask of anti-Friarism. People are looking at Filipino history with the spectacles of the Propaganda Movement. Hence the vision they get is blurred, deformed, exaggerated.

My article has been motivated by a book that appeared some years back.[2] In the *Forward* the writer said that "the history of the Christianization of the Philippines is a twice-told tale" (p. XV).

I am fully convinced that the history of the Christianization of the Philippines is not a twice-told tale. It has not yet been told, neither by a Filipino historian nor by a foreigner. The history of the Christianization has not yet been written and I venture to say that it will not be told in some generations to come. The history of the Christianization of the Philippines should be written by a person who understands the nature of the Spanish nation, the spirit of the Spanish Friars, the idiosincracy of the Filipino people, the customs and morals of the early Filipinos, the Christian spirit of the Filipino nation. It can only be told by a man who would be ready to spend years of his life researching in the rich archives of Spain and of the Philippines. A worthy enter-

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[1] LEON MA. GUERRERO, *The First Filipino. A Biography of Rizal*, Manila 1963, p. 13.

[2] *Christianization of the Philippines: Problems and Perspectives*, by MIGUEL BERNAD, S.J., Manila, Filipiniana Book Guild, 1972.

prise, no doubt, but beyond the possibilities of most historians of the Church in the Philippines.[3]

I do not presume myself to write the history of the Christianization of the Philippines. I will rather offer some substantial insights into the history of the Christianization for I believe that the book I am writing about is full of errors and injustices against the Spanish Friars. At times I will try to set into the right historical perspective what the author has consciously or unconsciously re-arranged to fit the mood of the people he was writing for. My emphasis, however, will be on some general principles which we should always keep clear in our minds in order to understand the complex reality that we call the Christianization of the Philippines. There is, I am fully convinced, too much myth and very little reality about this capital point of Filipino history. People are tempted to invent, to change, to misinterpret in order to belittle the outstanding event of the Christianization of the Philippines. That it was not a perfect achievement, that there are *many* black points, only shows that the Christianization was the work of men, too, and as such it may fall short of a perfect realization. History is not a fulfillment but rather and enterprise. And the Christianization of the Philippines is a first-class enterprise.

SOME GENERAL HISTORICAL GUIDELINES

The writing of history demands the acceptance of general principles which serve as foundation stones for any kind of history. Without them history may become a fancy, a myth but not a reasoned study of the human actions and events that have shaped the lives of peoples. For this reason I beg my readers to allow me to deal on this topic for a while.

In search of the Zeit Geist.

In my study of Filipino history, both civil and ecclesiastical, I have found that many historians carry into their writings their

[3] I can think of only one man capable of writing the history of the Christianization of the Philippines. This man is Horacio de la Costa, S.J., a prolific writer on Philippine History.

present ideas and prejudices. A historian, no doubt, knows how difficult it is to impartial, to forget completely modern ideas. And yet he must strive to be dispassionate, to give to everybody his due, regardless of religion, nationality, race or philosophy. It will help a historian to remember that things and events that now belong to the past once upon a time belonged to the future. In order to judge past history a writer has to transport himself mentally to the time when those events took place. History becomes intelligible only in so far as man detaches himself from the current trend of thoughts and transposes himself into the past. The quality that makes a writer a real historian is the capacity to escape the present and situate himself in the past. To say it crudely, the historian has to dress himself with the hide of those whom he intends to write about. We cannot judge past history with the eyes of the present, rather we have to judge the present under the light of the past.

It is easy to judge past events from our own view-point. Yet is necessary to bring back into life the motivations, the reasons why people of the past acted as they did. How easy it is to pass judgement on them, how difficult to judge them with equanimity. A historian focuses his attention on the genesis and development of epoch-making events, regardless of their present validity. Only the man who understands what the Germans call the *Zeit Geist* can write balanced history.

Not too rarely historians writing about pre-Hispanic or early Hispanic history of the Philippines project today's history of the Philippines into the remote and unknown past. Their present experiences, what the country has passed through in its long fight for independence from Spain and America, what they have lived after the young Republic came into life just after the nightmare of the Japanese occupation, the colonial hangover of Spain and America, all their personal experiences are flashed back into that hazy and obscure past. From the present stand-point they judge a past wrapped in nebulous history. In so doing they forget that from that time to the present many years and centuries have passed. Any historian who projects the present into the past becomes anachronistic and his history becomes void of any meaning.

Anachronism in Filipino history.

I have mentioned the word anachronistic. Many historians of Filipino history do not go beyond this stage. Let me explain. Today the country, the Republic of the Philippines, globally taken, is a single political unity. The government centralized in Manila, holds sway over all the islands that comprise the physical reality that is the Philippine Islands. The people owe fidelity to this central government. Once upon a time this was not. To judge past Filipino history, whether pre-Hispanic or Hispanic, through modern eyes betrays the true sense of history. The present-day Filipino, with the immense and rich historical wealth behind him, a tradition of three hundred years of Spanish history and sixty years of American education and adaptation, plus the new experiences of the young Filipino Republic, cannot be compared to the inhabitant who lived in the Islands before the arrival of the Spaniards. The modern Filipino is new, distinct, different. He belongs to another epoch and time. He is of a totally different nationality. During pre-Hispanic or early Hispanic times there were no defined boundaries, save those marked by the seas and the forest and the mountains, no central government, no idea of nationalism, no common religion. National solidarity did not exist. The inhabitants were not one people but rather a congeries of different tribes. Physically they lived in the same land as today's Filipinos. Historically they were entirely different.

Arnold Toynbee, in his monumental *A Study of History* deals extensively and deeply on this point we are discussing.[4] By way of illustration Toynbee tells[5] the case of a famous French Historian[6] who in reconstructing the history of France projects into the past the 'France' of his own time, with clear-cut boundaries and her own 'spiritual' personality. Even Gaul's incorporation into the Roman *orbis terrarum* of the Meditarranean is presented as something of insignificant historical value. The local and parochial life of the primitive peoples of Gaul is pictured as being

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[4] ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE, *A Study of History,* (10 vols.), London, 1954, vol. I, pp. 9-16.

[5] *Ibidem,* pp. 11-12.

[6] CAMILLE JULLIAN, *De la Gaule a la France: Nos Origines Historiques,* Paris, 1922, Hachette.

more important than their sharing in a world-wide culture like that of the Roman world.[7]

It seems a little painful to draw any comparison between what Toynbee writes of France and what we want to point out about the Philippines for, as the saying goes, all comparisons are hateful. We cannot but notice a historical parallel. The shame felt by many Filipino historians about their Hispanic past is not based on history. Was it not more important for the Philipines to have become part in the XVI century of a world-wide power which permeated the very life of the world and changed Filipino society so rapidly as to allow it to be inserted into the mainstream of world history, than to remain living, historically speaking, under the disunity and oblivion in which it had been living before? Hard though it may sound nationalism is the bastard son of parochialism.[8] Both oppose progress and culture at a universal level. The history of any country, even of the most powerful, progressive, creative and self-centered, cannot be understood in isolation. To comprehend the history of a country we have to draw it close to other nations' histories. In our case, Filipino history cannot be

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[7] Toynbee writes: "All the time Monsieur Jullian is projecting back into the past his own burning consciousness of France as she exists for him today — a spiritual France which furnishes him with the experience of human life so exhaustively that, if the rest of the World were to be annihilated and France left solitary but intact, Monsieur Jullian would perhaps hardly be sensible of any spiritual impoverishment; and a material France with clear-out frontiers which have been constantly overrun by invaders and constantly re-established by the patriotism of the French nation. The self-sufficiency of France and her separateness from the rest of the World are ideas which dominate Monsieur Jullian's imagination even when he is dealing with the history of this piece of territory at dates hundreds or thousands of years before such a concertation as 'France' existed. Into however distant a past he travels back he carries France with him — contented if he can do so with ease, embarrassed when he has to deal with the incorporation of the several dozen independent states of Gaul into the Roman Empire, and he does his best to make cedible the thesis that, even during the five centuries that intervened between the generation of Julius Caesar and the generation of Sidonius Apollinaris, the local individuality of Gaul was a more important fact in the life of its inhabitants than their membership in an Empire which embraced the whole *orbis terrarum* of the Mediterranean Basin" (Ibidem, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 11).

[8] Cfr. JOHN TRACY ELLIS, *General Introduction* to *The Christian Centuries. The first six hundred years*, by JEAN DANIELOU & HENRI MARROW, New York, 1964, p. VII; cfr. CARLTON J. H. HAYES, *The Church and Nationalism — A Plea for Further Study of a Major Issue*, in: *Catholic Historical Review*, XXVIII, April, 1942, p. 2.

understood outside the more universal mainstream of Spanish-American-Filipino history.

To explain the history of a nation from the exclusive nationalistic point of view, revolving, as it were, round that nation, which may have developed that historical sense of nationhood only a few decades ago, is tantamount to national disaster. Filipino history ceases to be intelligible and meaningful the moment we isolate it and take it as a self-standing universe. Outside the Spanish and American context Filipino history looses its intelligibility.[9] If even the greatest historical nations of the world, be they China, Greece, Rome, the Arab nation, Western Europe or the new world powers like Russia and the United States are not universes in themselves, then less so are other new emerging nations of the world among which we include the Filipino nation.

This long excursus points to a clear and essential objective: a historian, to understand past Filipino history, must cease to be parochial and start his historical approach from a wider angle.

We admit this is difficult, perhaps impossible. We may be demanding from other historians what we cannot bring about ourselves. We further acknowledge that social, cultural and nationalistic interests so influence the historian that the wider field of historical understanding may be overlooked, if not entirely distorted. History, no doubt, must be related to the social environment. But in order to understand Filipino history we have to study it not only in its 'Filipinity' but rather in its 'universality', or, at least, as part of a wider universe.[10]

Let us now descend to the task of passing Bernad's book in review. A total and complete review cannot be given for it would make our criticism too long and tedious. We hope to emphasize some points which he has not explained well or even has misinterpreted.

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[9] The history of Western Europe becomes intelligible only in the context of Greco-Roman culture and Roman political domination. Spain's history has no meaning outside Rome's conquest and domination for over 500 years and Arab subyugation since 711 to 1492.

[10] Toynbee asks himself this relevant question: "Is there some intelligible field of historical study which is absolute and not merely relative to the particular social environment of particular historians?", *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 15-16. The answer might be that, after all, no history is possible outside the cultural, political and social milieu of a concrete nation.

WHO BROUGHT CHRISTIANITY TO THE PHILIPPINES?

In the first chapter of his book Bernad writes:

> "It is merely for convenience that we speak of Magellan's men as "the Spaniards". The term is legally correct, for they were sailing under the flag of Castile and in the service of the Spanish Crown. But they were not all Spaniards. Magellan himself was Portuguese; Pigafetta, Italian. Among the 235 who had sailed out of Spain with Magellan were men from Portugal, from Flanders, Italy, England, and from various parts of France. The men who brought the Christian faith to these Islands were, more accurately, Europeans: but legally and for convenience, we must refer to them as Spaniards" (p. 8).

Probably Bernad is the first man ever to suggest that the Christianization of the Philippines was started by Europeans. He bases his proposition on the fact that some of the people sailing with Magellan were not Spaniards but came from other parts of Europe. Historically speaking it is true that some people were not from Spain but from other European nations. Yet, are we going to call an expedition of discovery a 'European' enterprise because 'some' of the participants were Europeans? Should we assign that task to the few or to the many? If the inmense majority were Spaniards, if the expedition was sailing under the Spanish flag and the Spanish Crown, if the financing was Spanish, why assert that it was a European enterprise rather than a Spanish one?

What really strikes us is this sentence: "The men who brought the Christian faith to these Islands were, more accurately, Europeans but legally, and for convenience, we must refer to them as Spaniards" (p. 8).

Now, with the stroke of his pen he has shattered the truth of a historical fact that is as clear as the sun: Christianity was brought here by Spain. He wants to make us believe that the Christianization of the Philippines is the result of the work of Europeans from France, England, Italy, Portugal and Flanders.

Even if we were to acept that Magellan's expedition involved many Europeans, to say that "the men who brought the Christian

faith to these Islands were Europeans" is indeed misleading to persons not conversant with history. The idea is conveyed that the Christianization of the Philippines sprang forth from Magellan's time, while his efforts in fact proved to be useless. Magellan's work was short and without any lasting efect. His coming was a passing event, leaving behind no Christian imprint upon the Filipino people, save the beautiful picture of the Child Jesus that was found four decades later by Legazpi's men.

We have to say that it was quite accidental that the leader of the expedition was a Portuguese[11] or that the official chronicler was Italian or that some of the men came from different European countries. *Historically* speaking the expedition was Spanish and because it was Spanish, Spain felt compelled to follow Magellan's expedition with other expeditions to the Philippines. Legazpi's expedition in 1565 was preceded by those of García Jofre de Loaysa,[12] Alvaro de Saavedra[13] and Ruy Lopez de Villalobos.[14] In the end Spain conquered the Philipines and decided to stay. This fact meant the change of the life of the inhabitants, the acceptance by the majority of the Filipinos of the conqueror's religion and culture, the birth of nationalism, the establishment of an organized central government, the beginning of education and health services, the creation of universities, the introduction of the printing press, etc... The historical im-

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[11] We do not want to minimize Magellan's achievement. He is one of the greatest explorers history has known. His feat of trying to circumnavigate the world is one of the epic events of mankind; Cfr. CHARLES MCKEW PARR, *So Noble a Captain, The Life and Times of Ferdinand Magellan,* New York, 1953.

[12] MARTIN FERNANDEZ DE NAVARRETE, *Colección de los viajes y descubrimientos que hicieron por mar los españoles desde fines del siglo XV* (5 vols.), Madrid, vol. I, pp. 193 & ff.; EMMA BLAIR & JAMES A. ROBERTSON. *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898,* (55 vols.), Cleveland, 1903-1909, vol. II, pp. 25-35.

[13] Cfr. MARTIN FERNANDEZ DE NAVARRETE, *op. cit.,* vol. V, pp. 193 & ff.; BLAIR & ROBERTSON, *op. cit.* vol. II, pp. 36-43.

[14] *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de ultramar,* II serie, (25 vols. Núm. 2, I de las Islas Filipinas, Madrid, 1886, pp. 1-94). There is an Offset Reprint of the two volumes dealing with the Philippines done by the Department of Education, National Historical Commission, Manila. 1969: Cfr. *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento. conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones de América y Oceanía,* I serie (42 vols.), Madrid, 1864-1884, Vol. V, pp. 117-209; vol. XIV, pp. 151-165; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, pp. 47-73.

portance of Magellan's coming to the Philippines lies in the fact that the Islands were brought into the mainstream of world history, that they were made part of a world power. It was no accident that that power was Spain. It was historical and providential. If Filipino life is now what it is, this is mainly due to Spain's coming here four hundred years ago and staying for almost 350 years, not to the European Magellan or the European Pigafetta. The men who brought Christianity to the Philippines were the vilified and despised Spanish Friars and *Conquistadores*.

It is not too difficult to guess Bernad's reason for stating that Christianity was brought here by Europeans. Given the hate against Spain and the rejection by some Filipino historians of her religious, cultural and social contribution to the making of the Filipino nation, Bernad tried to picture Magellan's expedition as a European enterprise rather than a Spanish one. In so doing he hoped to assuage the pain felt by those who would like to blot out the Spanish imprint from the Filipino soul. By presenting it as a European venture he expected to make Spain's work look more acceptable to her enemies. He thought of rendering a service to Spain.

On this particular point I want to make another consideration which I consider of capital importance. It was indeed no accident of history that Spain came here and no other European nation. The Filipinos should feel happy in the thought that it was because of Spain's coming here that they were born as a Christian and free nation. More important still, they survived as a people. Let historians consider what happened to the people who came into contact with the Saxon nations. Most of them perished at their hands. Whole tribes and nations were obliterated from the face of the earth. What happened to the aborigenes of Australia after Captain Cook's expedition touched its shores almost two hundred years after the Spaniards' arrival to the Philippines? Where are the Maories, those proud and highly advanced natives of New Zealand? As a people they are no more.[15] Australia and New Zealand are 'European' nations. The

[15] "In the U.S., in part the colonies of North America, in parts of South America, Australia, and New Zealand, to say nothing of the Pacific Ocean, all the *aboriginal races* under the Anglo-Saxon colonial policy, *have become practically extinct*. Their lands have gone from them and are now the pro-

Philippines had no more inhabitants at the time of the Spanish arrival in 1565 than Australia and New Zealand had when they were discovered. But today there are 41 million Filipinos to tell the story of how their country has passed through difficult historical periods into the promising future that awaits them as a people. Furthermore, the Philippines is an 'Asiatic' country.

This is not wishful thinking. History is our judge. Arnold Toynbee, one of the best historians of our time, has this long passage bearing on the point under discussion. He writes:

> "An apologist for the English Protestant colonists in North America might perhaps be inclined to suggest that the difference between their way and the Spanish Catholics' way of treating the 'Native' peoples of the New World was due not so much to a difference between the respective moral standards of these two sets of European intruders as to a difference between the respective social conditions of the two sets of American 'natives' upon whom they happened respectively to stumble. The 'Red Indians' whom the English Protestants exterminated were a handful of incorrigibly militant savages, whereas the subjects of the Aztecs and the Indians, whom the Spanish Catholics spared, were a numerous and peaceful peasantry whose level of culture was relatively high. This apologia would be plausible if the English Protestants' colonization of North America and the Spanish Catholics' colonization of Central and South America had been the only two European colonizing enterprises in the New World. When, however, we see the French Catholics colonizing North America side by side with the English Protestants and there fraternizing with those 'incorrigibly militant savages' whom the English Protestants were exterminating we are confirmed in our view that the difference in the respective outcomes of these Protestant and Catholic colonizing activities in the New World is accounted for by some moral difference between the two

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perty of immigrants from other countries. Where any of their descendants still exist, they in some cases enjoy very much abridged political rights, but in others they are reduced to the mere state of 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' " (J. V. MASON BLUNT, in *An Army Officer's Philippine Studies*, Manila: University Press, 1912; as quoted by JESUS M. CAVANNA Y MANSO, C. M., *Rizal and the Philippines of his Days*, Manila, 1957, p. 41.

> sets of colonizers rather than by any social diferences between the several sets of 'Natives' whom they respectively encountered. On the other hand, in the matter of the Negro slave-trade, it should have been mentioned that the Genoese and Portuguese Catholics (as well as the Dutch Protestants) had a share in it before the monopoly of it was acquired by English Protestants in A.D. 1713."[16]

The British in the XVII and XVIII centuries and later the Americans in the XVIII and XIX centuries came into contact with numerous and powerful tribes of the North American continent. Their encounter, alas, was bloody. The result has been the obliteration and annihilation of the North American Indians. Few of them have remained to tell us the brave and tragic story of their fight for survival. Most of them have been exterminated.[17] The few Indians in existence today live in reservations, objects of study for Western anthropologists.

THE FIRST CONVERSATIONS TO CHRISTIANITY: WERE THEY REAL?

The first Mass on Filipino soil was celebrated on March 31, 1521, Easter Sunday on the small Island of Limasawa, by the

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[16] Ibidem, *op. cit.*, vol. I., ERRATA AND ADDENDA to p. 212. Toynbee gives us the Protestant background of the Race-feeling in the world. He writes: "The race-feeling... springs naturally from the religious background of those Western people who are of the Protestant persuasion... The race-feeling engendered by the English Protestant version of our Western culture became the determining factor in the development of race-feeling in our Western society as a whole.

"This has been a misfortune for Mankind, for the Protestant temper and attitude and conduct in regard to Race... is inspired largely by the Old Testament".

"Between this Protestant method of conversion by extermination and the methods of the Jesuit missionaries in Canada and Paraguay there is indeed a great gulf fixed", Ibidem, *op. cit.*, pp. 211; 214.

[17] "The British system in America favored the extinction of the native red Indians. 'The only good Indian is a dead Indian' they said, and acted accordingly. They gave nothing to the native but took all he had. British policy has been the same in Australia which has been built up for the white, to the disadvantage of the natives. British policy in India has led to wars and wars in which native blood flowed in torrents because of superior mili-

secular priest Pedro de Valderrama.[18] A week later the Spaniards were in the city of Cebu starting in earnest the conversion of its inhabitants to Christianity. Within a week practically the whole population of Cebu had become Christian. Thus began one of the most outstanding and transcendental episodes in the history of Christianity in the Far East.

Was it a real conversion? This is a question posed by Bernad in his book. It is the question that any man interested in the history of Christianity in the Far East in general and in the Philippines in particular has to pose for himself.

It would be ridiculous to bring to memory here Paul's conversion, or Augustine's or even Clovis' conversion. Humabon's contact with Christianity was established a week before his conversion. How could we expect him to be fully conscious of the implications of his conversion? What did the Cebuanos know of the external and internal demands of baptism? Were they conscious that baptism implied a breaking away from a heathen past, a *metanoia,* a real and total conversion to the Christian God? Obviously they did not and could not realize this.

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tary equipment of Britain. The British attitude always was: 'The colonies exist for the benefit of the Mother Country'. The French suppressed the natives; the Dutch even today in the Dutch East Indies, forbid the natives to learn the Dutch language or to rise above a condition of virtual slavery. The Spanish, on the other hand, had as one of their chief objectives the conversion of the natives; the imparting to the natives of the Christian civilization which has been the boast of all the countries of Europe. The mildness and beneficence of Spanish colonization is best proved by the fact that in all of Spain's old colonies — Mexico, South America, the West Indies, and the Philippines — the descendants of the aborigenes still live and are still for the most part Catholic. The British, the Dutch, and the French cannot say as much". Thus wrote B. JOHN, F.S.C., as quoted by JESUS M. CAVANNA Y MANSO, C.M., *op. cit.*, p. 52. Cfr. E. G. BOURNE, *Spain in America,* New York, 1904, p. 214, GEORGE PENDLE, *A History of Latin America,* A Pelican Original, 1963, pp. 51-52.

[18] "Early on the morning of Sunday, the last of March and Easter-day, the captain-general sent the priest with some men to prepare the place where Mass was to be said; together with the interpreter to tell the king that we were not going to land in order to dine with him, but to say Mass. Therefore the king sent us two swine that he had killed. When the hour for Mass arrived we landed with about fifty men, without our body armor, but carrying our other ams, and dressed in our best clothes. Before we reached the shore with our boat, six pieces were discharged as a sign of peace. We landed; the two kings embraced the captain-general, and placed him between them. We went in marching order to the place consecrated,

In the case of Humabon, rajah of Cebu, of his 'queen', his nobles and people, a longer catechumenate was necessary. A week was too short a time to enable them to discover the demands of the new religion. And yet there was a very intensive catechumenate. Reading Pigafetta's description we come to realize Magellan's missionary zeal.[19] The great discoverer, face to face with the pagan inhabitants of the Philippines, feels in his soul the burning love of Christ and the immediate need of baptizing them. There is a certain sense of immediacy and urgency in him. The discoverer gives way to the missionary.[20] It is a very striking fact that the man who had offered himself to Charles of Spain to open a new route to the coveted Spice Islands, once on Filipino soil, forgets entirely his main purpose, and embarks himself upon the spiritual conquest of the Philippines.[21] Indeed, Magellan is the symbol of many Spanish *conquistadores* for whom to conquer implied a 'spiritual' conquest, not precisely as a prerequisite to political conquest but rather as a deeply felt missionary zeal. In the XVI century one never knew where the *conquistador* ended

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which was not far from the shore. Before the commencement of Mass, the captain sprinkled the entire bodies of the two kings with musk water. During the Mass we made our offerings. The kings went forward to kiss the cross as we did, but made no offerings. When the body of our Lord was elevated, they remained on their knees and worshipped Him with clasped hands. The ships fired their artillery at once when the Body of Christ was elevated, the signal having been given from the shore with muskets. After the conclusion of Mass, some of our men took communion", *First Voyage Around the World*, by ANTONIO PIGAFETTA, Filipiniana Book Guild, Manila, 1969, p. 29.

[19] "The captain seeing that they listened and answered willingly, began to advance arguments to induce them to accept the faith..."

"The captain told them that God made the sky, the earth, the sea and everything else, and that He had commanded us to honor our fathers and mothers, and that whoever did otherwise was condemned to eternal fire; that we are all descended from Adam and Eve, our first parents; that we have an immortal spirit; and many other things pertaining to the faith", Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[20] "The captain-general told them that they should not become Christians for fear or to please us, but of their own free wills; and that he would not cause any displeasure to those who wished to live according to their own law, but that the Christians would be better regarded and treated than others", Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[21] Cfr. JOHN LEDDY PHELAN, *Pre-Baptismal Instruction and the Administration of Baptism in the Philippines during the Sixteenth Century*, Reprint from *The Americas*, vol. XII, July 1955, Number 1, p. 4.

and the missionary began.[22] Pigafetta[23] finds joy in telling us how Magellan went about the task of explaining to Humabon and his people the beliefs of the Christian religion. Father Valderrama, the priest of the expedition, is brought into the picture only at the moment of baptism. The rest is taken care of by Magellan himself. After the solemn baptism of Humabon, Magellan went daily to holy Mass and slowly continued introducing the people to the meaning of the Christian religion.[24]

We agree that this is not enough to secure the success of Christianity. In fact it did not succeed after Magellan's tragic

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[22] Hernán Cortés, the conqueror of the Aztec confederation of Mexico in 1521, was a zealous man, deeply concerned about the conversion and Christianization of the newly conquered peoples. A fellow soldier of Cortés, who took part in the siege and conquest of Mexico, writes these words: "Another thing that Cortés asked of them was that they should abandon their idols and sacrifices, which they promised to do. He expounded to them as best he could the principles of our holy faith, telling them that we were Christians and worshipped one true God". BERNAL DIAZ DEL CASTILLO, *The Conquest of New Spain*, Penguin Classics, London, 1963, p. 81. On page 96 of the same book Bernal writes: "It was the hour of Ave Maria, and at the sound of the camp bell we all fell on our knees, in front of the cross which we had erected on a sandhill to say our prayers. Tendile and Pitalpitoque, being intelligent men and seeing us thus on our knees, asked us why we humbled ourselves before a log cut in that particular fashion. On hearing this question Cortés said to the Mercederian friar who was present: 'Now, father, we have a good opportunity of explaining to them through our interpreters something about our holy faith'. He then delivered an address to the *Caciques* so apt to the occasion that *no good theologian could have bettered it*". (underscoring mine).

"On this matter and others he made them an excellent discourse, so deftly reasoned, considering the time at his disposal, that there was nothing left to say. Indeed, when he spoke of our holy faith, *his explanations were as good as any priest can make today*, (underscoring mine), and were listened to with good will", Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 124. BERNAL's *The Conquest of New Spain* leaves no doubt as to the Christian zeal of Hernán Cortés and his fellow soldiers. Cfr. pp. 120; 122-123- 176-177; 222; 235.

[23] "The captain told them that if they wished to become Christians as they had declared on the previous days, they must burn all their idols and set up a cross in their place. They were to adore that cross daily with clasped hands, and every morning after their custom, they were to make the sign of the cross (which the captain showed them how to make); and they ought to come hourly, at least in the morning, to that cross, and adore it kneeling. The intention that they had already declared, they were to confirm it with good works", ANTONIO PIGAFETTA, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[24] "The captain-general went ashore daily during those days to hear Mass and told the king many things regarding the faith... The captain, knowing that the queen was very much pleased with the child Jesus, gave it to her, telling her to keep it in place of her idols, for it was in memory of the son of God". Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

death on the shores of Mactan. A long catechumenate would have been necessary, but it was much more than what St. Francis Xavier, considered the greatest missionary of modern times, demanded from his pagan catechumens. He baptized them by the hundreds without even the slightest preparation.[25]

We cannot leave chapter I of Bernad's book without correcting some points of less historical importance.

On page 12, while describing Magellan's decision to baptize the Cebuanos, Bernad speaks of *priests*, in the plural. Again on page 14 he speaks three times of *priests* administering baptism to Humabon's wife and to the ladies of her entourage. The original news of the first baptism in Cebu were handed down to us by Pigafetta. And he leaves no doubt as to the number of priests: there was only one and he was called Pedro de Valderrama. Pigafetta refers to him as 'the priest',[26] 'our priest'.[27] Pigafetta mentions the fact of another priest who sailed with the expedition from Spain but was abandoned deliberately by Magellan in Patagonia for having sided with some plotters against him.[28]

Bernad seems to be very confused as to the dates of the first baptisms in Cebu. He writes:

> "The great event took place on Sunday, April 14, only one week after the Spaniards had landed in Cebu" (p. 13).

He is right. It was in fact the second Sunday after Easter. And yet on page 15 he writes:

> "This was the unfortunate element — burning of a hamlet of a non-conformist kinglet of Mactan — in the great event on Easter Sunday, when the people of Cebu were baptized in such large numbers" (p. 15).

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[25] Cfr. A. BROU, *St. Francois Xavier, conditions et methods de son apostolat*, Bruges, 1925, pp. 36-39; JOHN LEDDY PHELAN, *op. cit.*, p. 3-4.

[26] "After dinner the priest and some of the others went ashore to baptize the queen, who came with forty women", PIGAFETTA, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[27] "The captain replied to them that he could not leave them any men then, but that if they wished to become Christians, our priest would baptize them, and that he would next time bring priests and friars who would instruct them in our faith", Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[28] Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

On Easter Sunday, March 31, 1521, the Spaniards were at the small island of Limasawa, where the secular priest Pedro de Valderrama celebrated the first Mass on Filipino soil.[29] And this is also affirmed by Bernad on page 7. Why then, the confusion?

THEOLOGICO-JURIDICAL IDEAS OF THE FIRST SPANISH CONQUISTADORES AND MISSIONARIES

I admit with pleasure that chapters II to VI are well planned and better written. Bernad's narration is clear; his interpretation, exact. It is a pity, however, that dealing extensively as he does with the Spanish conquest of Cebu and the first steps towards Spain's establishments in the Philippines he does not make a study *in depth* of the theologico-juridical ideas prevalent at the time of the conquest.[30] He often wonders at the close union between baptism and political submission, acceptance of the Gospel and of the Spanish political authority (cfr. p. 53), the close collaboration between the first *conquistadores* and the missionaries accompanying Legazpi. Had he studied the theologico-juridical ideas brought to the Philippines by the Spanish missionaries and conquistadores, his perplexity would have disappeared. At the same time he would have rendered us a first-class historical service.

If the conquest of the Philippines carried out by Legazpi and the rest of the Spanish *conquistadores* was so humane, so very different from the one carried out in the American continent at the beginning of the XVI century it was not due only to Legazpi's Christian humanism, or to the heroic temper of Friar Urdaneta and his Augustinian confréres. Their goodness, their Christian virtues alone cannot explain the peaceful conquest of the Philippines. They might have been bad people while the conquest might have been just, or they might have been excellent Christians but the conquest might have been totally unjust. In this particular case goodness or badness do not explain entirely the whole problem of the conquest and Christianization of the Philippines.

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[29] Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[30] JESUS GAYO ARAGON, O.P., *Ideas Jurídico-Teológicas de los religiosos de Filipinas en el siglo XVI sobre la conquista de las Islas*, Imprenta de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, Manila, 1950. This is a first-class contribution to the theologico-juridical background of the Christianization of the Philippines. As far as we know, nothing else has been written ever since.

The people who came to the Philippines: Legazpi, Urdaneta, Rada, Herrera, Goiti, Salcedo, more so the Augustianians, belonged to a school of thought that can be traced back to the great Spanish theologians of the XVI century, especially Francisco de Vitoria and Domingo de Soto. Since the beginning of the Spanish conquest of America, the fight for justice, that is, the search for principles, both theological and juridical, that could justify the conquest, was at the basis of the Crown and the Church's activities. How could the conquest and annexation of so vast an empire be justified?

Juridico-theological principles

Indeed, here lies the crux of the problem. It is not historical to speak any more of expansionism or imperialism as the only reasons behind the conquest and colonization of America and the Philippines. There were *principles* borrowed from philosophy, theology and law that were applied to the Spanish conquest. The Spanish people were not simply adventurers, privateers and buccaneers, although some may have been, but explorers, conquerors, colonizers, missionaries and evangelizers, guided by fixed and well defined principles.

Let us listen to the learned Americanist Lewis Hanke:

> "The great attention given by the Spaniards to the legal basis of their domination may sound strange and bizarre to us educated in the English tradition. This is due to the fact that in our colonial history the preocupation of the English for this problem is practically nonexistent... For the Spaniards, however, the search for the just titles of possession of America became a burning question throughout the XVI century".[31]

In the concrete case of the conquest of the Philippines, the Spaniards were backed by almost a century of historical and missionary experience in America. They had learnt a great deal. This enormous knowledge and experience was applied to the Philippines by men like Legazpi, Urdaneta, Herrera, Rada and many others.[32] When Legazpi and the Augustinian missionaries arrived

[31] LEWIS HANKE, *Bartolomé de Las Casas Pensador Político, Historiador, Antropólogo*, La Habana, 1949, p. 54.

[32] Cfr. JOHN LEDDY PHELAN, *op. cit.*, p. 6; *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain*, Filipiniana Book Guild, Manila, 1965, p. IX.

in the Philippines in 1565, the ideological world of Europe, Spain and America had witnessed a profound change. The American experience had forced the Spanish and European thinkers, philosophers, theologians and lawyers to find human and Christian principles that could regulate the socio-religious-political relations of the newly conquered peoples with the most advanced peoples of Europe. From the discovery of America to the arrival of the Spaniards with Urdaneta and Legazpi, a new science had been founded: *International Law.* And the man responsible for this radical change was the great Spanish theologian Francisco de Vitoria. Philip II had handed Legazpi clear and definite written instructions to be observed in his journeys of discovery and conquest. These had a binding force on him.[33]

Bernad seems to be full of admiration for Legazpi. He admires his prudence as well as his restraint in the face of provocation and concludes that Legazpi was a true Christian man (pp. 22-55). This is surely true, but one of the main reasons behind his conduct is the theologico-juridical ideas moving him to action.

It cannot be denied that the Cebuanos, or for that matter the other inhabitants of the Philippines, could not quite make out the reason why these white strangers, sailing on their powerful ships, wanted to bring them into submission. But it is of the greatest importance to understand Legazpi's steps before he decided to conquer Cebu. In a way, the final confrontation between Tupas and Legazpi, between the Cebuanos and Spaniards, was inevitable. It had to happen. It was a law of history. But when it came the Spaniards tried to justify it based on some basic principles of *International Law.* Had Bernad understood this, he would not have written this passage:

> "There is an element both of humor and of pathos in the scrupulous efforts that Legazpi made to comply with the legal formalities of European law. To make sure that it would be legally valid the ultimatum was read formally in Spanish by the official notary (Riquel) and then translated into Malay by Pacheco. It was read three times, the boat making three separate trips towards the

[33] Cfr. *Instructions of Philip II to Miguel Lopez de Legazpi,* in BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.*, vol. XXXIV, p. 252 & ff.

shore for the purpose. And it was read in the presence of witnesses, including the Maestre de Campo (Mateo del Saz) and the chief chaplain (Fray Andres de Urdaneta). Father Urdaneta had been sent along in the hope that he could talk to the people, for his years in the Moluccas had taught him a little of the Malay tongue. But the people on the shore were in no mood to listen, nor could they understand Malay. Moreover, the Spaniards could not really get close enough to the shore — for, like the Parable of the Sower in ancient Galilee, the Spanish ultimatum had to be delivered from the boat, for it was not safe to land with two thousand tattoed warriors guarding the shore.

"... To the Spaniards, one thing was clear: the ultimatum had been thrice delivered, and it had been thrice rejected. The Spaniards now felt free to wage war on the natives.

"But this scrupulous attention to legal formalities had really been wasted. What did the Visayan warriors know of European law? How were they expected to understand a proclamation couched in legal Spanish phraseology and translated into the equally foreign Malay? Furthermore, had they understood it, the Cebuanos would have rejected the ultimatum, for it was based on assumptions that were unacceptable" (pp. 58-59).

The quotation is long, no doubt, but is serves as the main cause for contention. We will try to explain the question furthermore, so as to set the Spanish conquest of Cebu and the Philippines in its right perspective.

The Influence of the 'Requerimiento'

The ultimatum of Legazpi to Tupas and the Cebuanos mentioned by Bernad in the text above reminds us of the Spanish practice of the *Requerimiento*. The *Requerimiento* was a legal creation — together with the famous *Leyes de Burgos of 1512-1513* —,[34] of the Spanish Crown to defend the Amerindians against the depradations and injustices of some pitiless *conquistadores* searching for wealth and adventure. The *Requerimiento* is a

[34] The *Requerimiento* had been used in the Peninsula in the fight against the Moros and in the fight for the incorporation of the Canary Islands into the Spanish Crown. Cfr. RAMON MENENDEZ PIDAL, *El P. Las Casas y su doble personalidad*, Madrid, 1963, p. 258.

symbol of the Spanish mentality holding sway at the beginning of the XVI century. We cannot delve deeply into this question, but no doubt in the case at hand, that is, the breaking of hostilities between Legazpi and Tupas (the beginning of the conquest of the Philippines), the *Requerimiento* still exercised a real influence. Let us see how.

After the discovery of America in 1492, the fever of exploration and conquest reached peak point. Rumours of immense wealth started to circulate throughout Spain and Europe. There was a danger that adventurers might gain the upper hand. To forestall abuses, in 1514, then, the Spanish Crown sent to America, under Pedrarias Davila, the most formidable expedition ever to leave the shores of Europe. Many of the future *conquistadores* of America were members of the expedition. King Ferdinand of Spain gave Pedrarias concrete *Instructions* as to how to proceed in his journey of discovery and conquest. An integral part of these Instructions was the *Requerimiento*. One of its main aims was to justify the Spanish conquest of America, giving as basis for it, the explicit and absolute donation of those lands to the Spanish King by the pope, universal lord of the world. Obviously nobody would defend this theory nowadays. At the time we are discussing — beginning of the XVI century — it had many supporters. In fact here are the pope's own words:

> "... We, moved thereunto by our own accord, nor at your instance nor the request of anyone else in your regard, but of our own sole largess and certain knowledge as well as in the fullness of our apostolic power, by the authority of almighty God conferred upon us in blessed Peter and of the vicarship of Jesus Christ which we hold on earth, do by tenor of these presents give, grant and assign forever to you and your heirs and successors, Kings of Castile and Leon, all and singular the aforesaid countries and islands thus unknown and hitherto discovered by your envoys and to be discovered hereafter..."[35]

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[35] Bull *Inter Caetera*, May 3, 1493, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. I, p. 100. "Motu proprio... de nostra mera liberalitate et ex certa scientia ac de Apostolica potestatis plenitudine, omnes insulas et terras firmas inventas et inveniendas, detectas et detegendas... vobis... deputamus". F. X. HERNAEZ, S.J., *Colección de bulas, breves y otros documentos relativos a la Iglesia de América y Filipinas* (2 vols.), Bruselas, 1879, vol. I, p. 13, Reprinted by KRAUS REPRINT LTD., Vaduz, 1964. For the validity of this theory of the papal concession see FRANCISCO JAVIER MONTALBAN, S.J., *El Patronato espa-*

Confusing and mixing political and religious motivations the *Requerimiento* tried to secure the acceptance of Spain's supreme political and religious power over the newly discovered peoples. It 'required' the Amerindians to recognize Spain's political and religious dominion over them. The Amerindians, however, were to be given time to consider the *Requerimiento*, to think about its implications, but in the long run, they had no alternative but to accept it, and this because the Spaniards had received all those lands from the universal lord and master: the supreme pontiff. If the inhabitants of America did not comply with the demands of the *Requerimiento* the Spaniards would move in force, declaring war on them. All the evils to be followed like death, destructions and slavery for prisoners, would fall squarely on the Amerindians. The *Requerimiento* had to be read aloud three times. This done, the official notary had to testify that all the 'requirements' had been fulfilled.

It cannot be denied that in practice this *Requerimiento* became for many *conquistadores* in the field an excuse to take possession and dominion of new territories.[36] Some of them made a mockery of it, as they were only too conscious of the incapacity of the Amerindians to understand its legal cogency or even its very language. Las Casas himself, the fiery defender of the Amerindians, seems to ridicule it with light arguments. Yet, we should try to discern in the *Requerimiento* the honest and sincere attempt of the Spanish Crown to ground the Spanish conquest and evan-

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ñol y la conquista de Filipinas con documentos del archivo de Indias, Burgos, (Bibliotheca Hispana Missionum, t. 4); PEDRO LETURIA, S.J., *Maior y Vitoria ante la conquista de América, Estudios Eclesiásticos*, January 1932; L. SERRANO, *Correspondencia diplomática entre España y la Santa Sede durante el Pontificado de San Pío V*, t. I., p. 438; CONSTANTINO BAYLE, S.J., *España en Indias*, Madrid, 1944, pp. 65-68; PEDRO LETURIA, S.J., *Las Grandes Bulas Misionales de Alejandro VI: 1493*, Bibliotheca Hispana Missionum, t. I., pp. 2251 & ff.; J. M. CHACON, *Cedulario Cubano. Los Orígenes de la colonización*, t. I., p. 429

[36] Cfr. LEON LOPETEGUI, S.J., & FELIX ZUBILLAGA, S.J., *Historia de la Iglesia en la América española desde el descubrimiento hasta comienzos del siglo XIX*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos (2 vols.), Madrid, 1965, vol. I. pp. 77-78; ELOY BULLON, *Un Colaborador de los Reyes Católicos, el doctor Palacios Rubio y sus obras*, Madrid, 1927, pp. 138, 140; D. CLEMENCIN, *Elogio de la reina doña Isabel la Católica*, Madrid, 1821, p. 391; 605; FRAY BARTOLOME DE LAS CASAS, *Historia de las Indias*, (3 vols.), ed. Agustin Millares Carlo y Lewis Hanke, Mexico-Buenos Aires, 1951, vol. III, pp. 26-27 where part of the text of the *Requerimiento* is given; Cfr. CONSTANTINO BAYLE, S.J., *España en Indias*, Madrid, 1944, pp. 70-77.

gelization on sound legal principles. In its 'material' application the *Requerimiento* soon fell into disrepute, more so after the heated polemics and liberating disputes of the Spaniards as to the justification of the conquest, which lasted throughout the XVI century. Nevertheless, the 'spirit' behind it served as a basis for future conquests in America and beyond. A real concrete case is that of the Philippines. Legazpi, before the ultimatum to Tupas, observed the *Requerimiento*. He did so in all sincerity. If the natives did not want to listen to him he would hold them responsible for the effects that might follow.

We agree with Bernad that there was both humor and pathos in the final ultimatum of Legazpi to Tupas at Cebu in 1565. But there was also the spirit of the *Requerimiento*. Legazpi was scrupulous on this point. For him the declaration of war was entirely justified.

Vitoria's 'Relectio De Indis'

Apart from the point we have been discussing about, Legazpi mentioned various motives why the Spaniards had come to the Philippines:

1. They wanted to trade with the natives.
2. They desired to preach the Christian doctrine.
3. They sought for friendship, which was denied them. They had not come to wage war, but to establish peaceful relations with the natives.

Legazpi presented these motivations to the natives. They were rejected by Tupas and the Cebuanos. The clash, then, became inevitable.

In order to understand this problem we have to remember the ideas prevalent at the time of the conquest of the Philippines. Legazpi had behind him the sound teaching of Francisco de Vitoria. In fact the three reasons mentioned above can almost literally be taken from Vitoria's *Relectio de Indis*.

The Dominican theologian, in this pioneering work of 1539, studied the juridical basis for Spain's conquest of America. He boldly rejected seven titles being brought forward then by some

jurists and theologians as valid for the conquest. Instead he himself put forward seven titles that could serve as bases for the just conquest of America. The first two he mentioned were those invoked by Legazpi in his ultimatum to Tupas.

Man's universal 'sociability'

The first one, according to Vitoria, is

> "the title of society and natural communication. All men have the right to move freely across the oceans and the different lands of the world. Nobody can curtail this movement nor impede men from becoming immigrants and colonisers. This right, however, hinges on the guarantee that men do not attempt to subvert the common good of the new territories where they desire to establish themselves."[37]

Vitoria's principle is based on man's universal *sociability*. From the beginning of the world

> "it was lawful for any man to enter and traverse whatever countries he wanted. This natural right has not been abolished by the division into countries, as it was never man's idea through this division of the world, to sever all communication and contact among men... The Spaniards have the right to cross those territories and remain there as long as they cause no harm to the Bar-

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[37] FRAY FRANCISCO DE VITORIA, O.P., *Relectio de Indis o Libertad de los Indios*. Ed. L. PEREÑA & J. M. PEREZ PRENDES, Madrid, C.S.I.C., 1969; *Obras de Francisco de Vitoria. Relecciones Teológicas*. Ed. TEOFILO URDANOZ, O.P., B.A.C., Madrid, 1960. *Relecciones teológicas del Maestro Fray Francisco de Vitoria*, Ed. L. G. GETINO, O.P., (3 vols.) Madrid, 1933-1936 Our quotations will be taken from the bilingual edition of L. PEREÑA & J. M. PEREZ PRENDES. *De Indis et de Iure Belli Relectiones*, ed. & tr. E. NYS et al., vol. 7 of *Classics of International Law*, ed. J. B. SCOTT, Washington, 1917, text & tr. J. T. DELOS, *La Societé International et les principes du droit public*, Paris, 1929; J. B. SCOTT, *The Spanish Origin of International Law*, Washington, 1928; Ib. *The Spanish Origin of International Law: Francisco de Vitoria and his Law of Nations*, Oxford, 1934.

Cfr. C. BARCIA TRELLES, *Francisco de Vitoria fundador del derecho internacional moderno*, Valladolid, 1928, p. 2a, pp. & ff.; M. LASALA LLAMAS, *Concepto y principios fundamentales del Derecho de Gentes según la doctrina del P. Vitoria*, in *Anuario de la Asociación de Francisco de Vitoria* I 1927-1928, pp. 269-305; S. DE FREYTAS, *De iusto imperio Lusitanorum*, c. 1-7, Spanish version, Valladolid, 1925; A. MIAJA DE LA MUELA, *Las ideas fundamentales del derecho de gentes en la obra de Serafín de Freytas*, in *Anuario de la Asociación Francisco de Vitoria V*, 1932-1933, pp. 171-203.

barians. These people, for their part, cannot forbid them from staying".[38]

> "The establishment of friendly relations with other men is a natural right and... it is against nature to hinder commerce and communication among men who cause no harm".[39]

There are many things which by natural law are common to all men. To advocate an exclusive right over them, to the exclusion and discrimination of others, would be a clear hindering of the natural law.[40]

Vitoria reminds the Spaniards, however, that in this search for free trade and commerce they must make manifest to the natives the sincerity of their purpose, lest it should come about that being better armed and better equipped, the Spaniards might be tempted to use any pretext for waging war against the natives. If the Spaniards should have exhausted all the possible means at their disposal to convince the natives of their peaceful intentions and still these would oppose the establishment of traffic and commerce, or even worse, these natives would attack them, then the Spaniards could defend themselves, build fortresses for their security and finally declare war on their attackers.[41]

Legazpi followed all these steps to the letter. It was no mere coincidence. It was not due to Legazpi's prudence or to the goodness of the Spanish Friars that the Spanish army did not wage

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[38] Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 78. Vitoria's theory is that of a Renaissance man. It is worth noting these words: "It is lawful for any man to enter and traverse whatever countries he desires".

This was written in the middle of the XVI century in priest-ridden Spain. In today's world this right is denied by many nations like China, Russia and her satellites. Even the laws of immigration of countries like US and Australia are less liberal than Vitoria's theory.

[39] DE INDIS, Ibidem, p. 79. ALBERICUS GENTILIS, *De Iure belli*, 1. I, c. 19; H. NEZARD, *Albericus Gentilis*, in: A. PILLET, *Les fondateurs du Droit International*, Paris, 1904, p. 55; J. CATRY, *La liberté du commerce international d'après Vitoria, Suárez et les scolastiques*, in: *Rev. générale de droit intern. public*, 1932, pp. 193 & ff.; C. BARCIA TRELLES, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-101.

[40] DE INDIS, I, 3, 1, p. 79.

[41] DE INDIS, I, 3, 5, p. 84. China was forced to open her frontiers in the XIX century to the Western nations. Guns were also used in 1854 when the Americans threatened to attack Japan if she did not allow the Western nations free commerce. This brought Japan out of the 'Middle Ages' into the Modern Age.

a war of total destruction and annihilation. War was waged as an ultimate recourse. To understand Legazpi's steps in Cebu and the Friars' approval of his conduct we have to take Vitoria's principles in his *Relectio de Indis* into serious account. The conqueror of the Philipines was guided by certain theologico-juridical principles that were accepted by him and by his contemporaries.

The right understanding of all the theologico-juridical principles involved in the conquest of Cebu is the key to a clear and exact understanding of the final conquest of the Philippines. More, it explains the legal and historical reason for Spain's coming and staying in the Philippines.

I deal with some length on this topic for the reason that the book I am reviewing was written by a theologian and a historian. He, as nobody else, has the capacity to understand what I am trying to convey.

The Cebuanos were not in a position to understand the Spanish point of view. Bernad wonders how the legal complexity of European law could be understood by Tupas and his men. Certainly, nobody can deny that it was beyond the pale of their ken. But even in this case, Vitoria offers a helping-hand. The possibility of the Cebuanos' waging a just war against the Spaniards finds its theologico-juridical basis in Vitoria too. The Spanish theologian foresaw the possibility of a just war for both sides due to invincible ignorance on the part of the natives and perfect right of defense on the Spaniards' side.[42] War, as the answer of the natives, is no sign of perversity and evil, but rather a just fight for freedom. The passage of Vitoria is clear. I want to write it down for my readers, especially those who have never even suspected that at that time theologians could have such liberating ideas.

> "There is no inherent contradiction in the possibility of a war being waged justly by both sides as one part possesses the right while the other labors under invincible ignorance. This must always be kept in mind for the reason that the rights of war against the guilty and the perverse are different from the rights of war against the innocent and the ignorant".[43]

[42] DE INDIS, I, 3, 5, p. 84.
[43] DE INDIS, I, 3, 5, p. 85.

Before resorting to the final confrontation, all means have to be exhausted. Through deeds and actions the Spaniards must prove their peaceful intentions. And it is in this regard where the important question can be asked: Did the Spaniards exhaust all the means available to them before they finally clashed with Tupas and the Cebuanos? The answer is an emphatic yes.

Legazpi, as Bernad tells us, and as we well know from documented history, avoided to the utmost doing any harm to the Filipino people. His self-restraint finds no parallel in any other explorer and *conquistador*. Wherever he went he was met with hostility. A Spaniard was killed in Samar without any previous provocation. Legazpi did not take any revenge. In Leyte Gulf another Spaniard was transfixed with a spear and again no revenge was inflicted. At Cabalian Legazpi's men seized from the natives a *banca* laden with food at a time when the Spaniards found themselves in a desperate situation. But Legazpi made an inventory of everything and dutifully paid for every single item. Again in Bohol the Spaniards appropriated a *banca* loaded with rice, camotes and bananas, which the natives, terrified of the Spaniards, had abandoned. Once more Legazpi made an inventory of everything and made his men pay the natives at the stipulated prices. In a bloody encounter with Bornean traders off the coast of Bohol, the Spaniards seized a large boat carrying a cargo of expensive Chinese merchandise. The soldiers and sailors wanted to plunder it, but Legazpi returned everything back to the Borneans. These people were extremely amazed at this action. While the Spaniards were in Butuan they were provoked by some Moro traders. Most of the sailors and soldiers wanted to confiscate the rich cargo on the boats anchored off the river. But Guido de Lavezaris, who was to succeed Legazpi as governor general of the Philippines, managed to convince them of the injustice of their intentions. The Spanish soldiers and sailors abided by Lavezaris' decision. Always short of food and suffering daily from the pangs of hunger, the Spanish soldiers did not plunder a village of Negros Island when their most trusted friend, the Bornean interpreter Tuasan, who had rendered such a wonderful service to the Spaniards, was pierced through by a native's arrow. Indeed the Spaniards exhausted all the means available to them. From their point of view the breaking of hostilities was inevita-

ble. Legazpi and the Augustinian Friars had in front of them a typical *casus belli.*[44]

Opposition to the preaching of the Gospel

We have seen Legazpi using another principle from Vitoria. This second principle is related to Christianity's dynamic spirit.

According to Vitoria a just title for conquering a nation can be the *opposition of that country to the preaching of the Gospel.* To avoid any misunderstanding let us remark that Vitoria is not defending a conquest of the world in order to make it Christian. He was no Medieval Crusader on his way to Jerusalem or a Spanish knight on the eve of the final assault of Granada. He was a humanist, a man of the Renaissance. The world of Medieval ideas, though not yet over, did not exist for him. Vitoria was a modern man. For many of his contemporaries he was a radical innovator. He writes:

> "Christians have a right to preach and to announce the Gospel in the regions of the Barbarians".[45]
>
> The Christian is duty bound
>
> "To teach the truth to all those who are ready to listen to him, especially as the truth he teaches is that which leads man to salvation and to eternal happiness."[46]

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[44] For a description of the conduct of Legazpi before reaching Cebu and the final clash read *Legazpi's Voyage of Discovery of the Philippines (1564-1565), by Esteban de Figueroa,* in: *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain,* Filipiniana Book Guild, Manila, 1965, pp. 54-63; *Letter of Andrés de Mirandaola to Philip II,* Cebu, 1565, in: *Ibidem,* pp. 87-88; *Relation of the Voyage to the Philippines, by Miguel López de Legazpi,* Cebu, 1565, in: *Ibidem,* pp. 93-94; 96; 97; 99; 100. In this letter we read: "I sent a boat with father Fray Andrés de Hurdaneta and the master of camp, in order that, in their presence, the government notary, with Hieronimo Pacheco, the interpreter of the Malay tongue (which is spoken by many of the natives of this land) might request the natives, as vassals of the king of Castilla, to receive us peacebly. They were to assure the people that I did not come to do them any harm, but on the contrary to show them every favor, and to cultivate their friendship. Three times this announcement was made to them, with all the signs and kind words possible to win their friendship. But at length... seeing that there was no hope for peace, and that they did not wish it, although we had offered it — the master-of-camp said to the natives through an interpreter: 'Since you do not desire our friendship and are anxious for war, wait until we have landed' " (p. 101).

[45] DE INDIS, I, 3, 8, p. 87.

[46] DE INDIS, I, 3, 8, p. 87.

Christians must show the way that leads to truth and salvation. All men are his brothers. The Christian, therefore, is not only entitled to correct his brother. He is, by the same token, under serious obligation to show the way to him.[47]

It must be emphasized once again that Vitoria does not defend the position that the natives must first be militarily subdued in order that the Gospel can be preached to them, as the Spanish scholar Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda contends.[48] He is simply pointing the freedom to preach to whoever may wish to listen to the missionary. To deny this right or its lawful exercise would be tantamount to courting the possibility of a just war being waged in its defense against those who would oppose it.[49]

Vitoria is extremely careful to emphasize the fact that if the natives do not oppose the preaching of the Gospel, but on the contrary grant freedom to the ministers to proclaim their message, though they may not embrace Christianity, the Spaniards cannot declare war on them, much less usurp their territories.[50] Only the declared *opposition to the preaching of the Gospel* justifies such intervention. There must already have been a preceeding injury from the natives in order that a nation can intervene militarily. According to Vitoria the intervention undertaken to protect the missionaries from all possible dangers proceeding from the opponents of the Gospel and intended to open the way for them is not justified.[51] If the rulers give assurance that the Gospel will be freely preached and that the missionaries will run no risk, even if the natives will not want to embrace the faith or simply will not listen to the preaching, then the use of force

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[47] Ibidem

[48] JUAN GINES DE SEPULVEDA, *Democrates segundo o de las justas causas de la guerra contra los indios*, ed. Angel Losada, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 1951, pp. 84-85.

[49] In today's world, nobody would attempt to put into practice this right so boldly preached by Vitoria. Yet, who can deny that countries like China and Russia, by not allowing the free preaching of the Gospel, are actually depriving man of a basic right and thus are breaking the charter of the UNO?

[50] DE INDIS, I, 3, 10, p. 89.

[51] Many missionaries were of the opinion that in the preaching of the Gospel they should be accompanied by armed soldiers. Experience had taught them that far too many missionaries had been sacrificed. Cfr. JOSE DE ACOSTA, S.J., *De Procuranda salute Indorum*, Salmanticae, 1588, 1. 2, cc. 8-15; F. ZUBILLAGA, S.J., *La Florida. La misión jesuítica (1566-1572) y la colonización española*, Roma, 1941, pp. 102 & ff.; 350 & ff.

has to be discounted. If on the contrary, after the initial injury committed against the missionaries there is no guarantee of security from the local rulers, or the social and political circumstances are so unfavourable that the Gospel cannot take root among the natives, then the Spaniards can wrest the power of government from them.[52]

In such a case, this has to be done with moderation and prudence, not so much for personal satisfaction and prestige as for the total good of the natives. As Vitoria says:

> "Everything must be geared more towards promoting the welfare of the Barbarians than our own interests."[53]

Vitoria was a theologian and a theoretician, not a missionary in the field. It was in the isolation of his conventual cell at Salamanca that he laid down the basic principles which could guide missionaries and *conquistadores* beyond the seas. He therefore lacked the existential knowledge proper to the man in the field. For this reason he confessed that what he laid down as true in theory might be difficult to apply in practice. The right to protect the preachers of the Gospel might become the source of many practical difficulties, inasmuch as it could spawn in the natives a hatred for the Gospel and its ministers, a rejection of religion and a bitterness difficult to dispel. All this could hinder in reality the establishment and growth of Christianity among the peoples of the new world. Hence the title could be invalidated.[54]

Vitoria thus set down the guiding principles to be followed by Spanish missionaries and *conquistadores*. Were they applied by Legazpi in the Philipines?

Full reconstruction of the whole train of events that led to the breaking of hostilities between the Spaniards and the Cebuanos, between Legazpi and Tupas, is an impossible task. And yet we have managed to trace Legazpi's steps and his conduct of extraordinary self-restraint. We have also examined certain principles that served as the basis for his conduct and way of acting in the Philippines. The conqueror of the Philippines was

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[52] DE INDIS, I, 3, 9, p. 89.
[53] Ibidem
[54] DE INDIS, I, 3, 11, p. 91.

fully supported by all his men, whether soldiers or Friars.[55] The Augustinians, under their leader Urdaneta, had no doubt that, following Vitoria's principles, the war to be started was just in all its aspect.[56] It was with good conscience that the Spanish *conquistadores* could launch the invasion of Cebu. Obviously it was not going to be a war of extermination but of submission in order to evangelize and colonize the natives. And this because the natives, both through their leaders and by themselves, did not allow the free preaching of the Gospel.[57]

I have tried to present a study on the theologico-juridical ideas prevalent at the time of the Spaniards's arrival in the Philippines. Only in this way can we understand the subsequent development of the conquest of the Philippines and its evangelization. The Spaniards attributed a tremendous importance to them. This only goes to show the high quality and moral temper of the first *conquistadores* and missionaries. In the words of Hanke:

> "Other European nations sent brave explorers who established and even sacked empires. But no other European nation before or since the conquest of America embarked itself upon the fight for justice as the Spanish nation did soon after the discovery of America and throughout the XVI century. What were the roots of and how could justice be obtained were questions that cropped up at every step taken by the Spaniards in their discovery, colonization and administration of their new territories".[58]

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[55] Legazpi had actually been accused of cowardice by his own soldiers who plotted to kill him and sail to the Moluccas Islands. The reason behind this was precisely Legazpi's refusal to let them start hostilities against the Cebuanos. Cfr. *Letter of Miguel López de Legazpi to Philip II*, Cebu, July 23, 1567, in *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain*, FBG, Manila, 1965, where we read: "... the men of this camp are in extremities and distressed. Because it has not been permitted them to rob, or make war upon, or in any way harm the natives, and as they see so great delay in the sending of aid, some have not been lacking in treacherous and damnable purposes and desires..." (p. 123). Cfr. *Letter of Guido de Lavezaris and other officials to Philip II*, Cebu, July 16, 1567, in: *Ibidem*, p. 115;

[56] Cfr. *Testimonio de los Acuerdos que el Governador tuvo con los Capitanes del campo sobre lo tocante a la Jornada*, March 6, 1665, in: *Colección de documentos Inéditos de Ultramar*, National Historical Commission, 1969, pp. 271-276.

[57] DE INDIS, I, 3, 9, p. 89.

[58] LEWIS HANKE, *Bartolomé de Las Casas Pensador político, Historiador, Antropólogo*, La Habana, 1949, pp. 3-4.

Spain's work in America and in the Philippines does not rest on the good word of a writer, however good he may be, but on its own merits or demerits. In the concrete case of the Philippines the colonial hangover so strong and powerful even at this present moment, does not allow us to see things clearly. History can only be judged more dispassionately after two or three generation have passed.

Dealing at length on this basic topic should have allowed us to understand by now history as it came to happen. We can write pages and pages on Legazpi's natural goodness, his patience with both the Spaniards and the Filipinos, the troublesome attitude of some of Legazpi's men, the unequal exchange between the arrows and spears of the Cebuanos and the cannons and muskets of the *conquistadores*. The Spanish Augustinians Friars can be pictured as men of unparalleled Christian formation: dispassionate, generous, real missionaries of the Gospel. Or all of them, Friars and *conquistadores* alike, can be accused of duplicity and hypocrisy. Of being consummate actors playing to the hilt the task assigned them in the farcical show presented on the shores of Cebu. They can be lumped together as men searching for the coveted market of the spices, in pursuit of which they challenged unchartered seas, or men inspired by the bright hope of getting a foothold in the mysterious Cathay of Marco Polo, or men driven by the sense of adventure, typical of men of the Renaissance. Yet none of these characterizations will satisfactorily explain their conduct in the Philippines. All their actions can only find their natural explanations in the theologico-juridical ideas prevalent in Spain and Mexico during the XVI century. Particular events are shaped by men's attitudes and principles. Nothing happens because of chance, but everything fits within the framework of theology and law.

Bernad, being himself a historian and a priest, will have no great difficulty in understanding what I have tried to convey. He is better prepared than most Filipino historians to understand the ideas that spurred the Spaniards to action and conquest, to search for distant exotic lands, to engage in conquering them and remain where profit was not so immediate as many of them had hoped.

THE QUESTION OF THE TRIBUTES

According to Bernad (pp. 69-70) the Spaniards were responsible for grave injustices against the natives of Cebu. Let us quote him:

> "It was this question of tribute that disrupted the peace negotiations between Tupas and the Spaniards. The Cebuanos were already prepared to accept Spanish occupation as an accomplished fact, and Tupas had come and had undergone a blood-compact with Legazpi. Then the question of tribute was raised..." (p. 70).

If we are to believe Bernad, the negotiations between Legazpi and Tupas took longer than expected and finally broke down because of the question of tribute. It is here where chronology and geography justify their being called the two eyes of history. In the case at hand, the problem is one of chronology.

Legazpi did not raise the question of tribute after the conquest of Cebu. From his arrival at Cebu on April 28, 1565, to his abandonment of the settlement for security reasons and for lack of food to feed his soldiers in 1569, he managed to survive principally by trading and bartering some of the products and European articles he had with him for the things he needed. On occasions he sent his captains, like Juan de la Isla, Martin de Goiti and Salcedo to Panay and even as far north as Mindoro and Manila to search for food. After the immediate conquest of Cebu tribute was not exacted from the natives.

The quotations given by Bernad to prove his point are taken from a *Memorial* of the Augustinians written to the Spanish King, Philipp II, in *1573*.[59] Historically speaking this is anachronistic. To adduce a document of *1573*, seven years after the point under discussion, to prove that one of the two main irritants for the war between Legazpi and Tupas in 1565 was the problem of the tribute, is historically speaking unjustified and wrong. By *1573* Legazpi had been buried in Manila for more than a year, as he had died on August 20, 1572. Manila was already the Most Noble and Ever Loyal City. Bernad is projecting back to a con-

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[59] *Memorial de los Religiosos de las Islas del Poniente de cosas que el P. Diego de Herrera ha de tratar con Su Magestad y su Real Consejo de Indias*, Manila, 1573, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. XXXIV, pp. 273-285.

crete historical event and place — conquest of Cebu in *1565* — another event — the tribute — that indeed was a burning issue in *1573*. The problem of tribute arose much later than Legazpi's overtures for peace to Tupas. It surfaced around the year 1567 or after and not during the conquest and occupation of Cebu by the Spaniards in 1565. We base this on a letter of Martin de Rada written in 1569. He says:

> "The fear with which God has inspired them is great, for no matter how large may be the village, when a dozen Spaniards go to it the natives come out immediately with their hands tied and beg for peace, promising to give what tribute may be asked from them. Consequently, when any village was carried by peace, we had great abundance whence to draw the necessary supplies. *For more than two years* (underscoring mine) at this point a loose rein has been given in robbing friend and foe, and we are now suffering extreme need."[60]

The question of tribute, then, was not an irritant that led to the breaking off of negotiation between Tupas and Legazpi in 1565. In the long run, we agree with Bernad, the problem of tribute became the focal point of contention between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the Philippines.[61] During bishop's Salazar stay in the Philippines, 1581-1591, the question of the tribute became even more bitter than before. So grave did Salazar consider the problem that old and sick as he was, he left the Philippines for Spain in 1591 to speak to the king about it face to face.[62]

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[60] *Letter of Fr. Martín de Rada, O.S.A., to the Viceroy of Mexico,* Cebu, July 8, 1569, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* vol. XXXIV, p. 226; Cfr. the same letter in: *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain,* FBG, Manila, 1965, p. 151; JESUS GAYO, O.P., *op. cit.,* p. 16.

[61] Cfr. *Memorial de los Religiosos de las Islas del Poniente....,* in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* vol. XXXIX, pp. 273-285. *Opinion of Fr. Martin de Rada about the tributes to the Indians,* San Pablo de Manila, June 21, 1574, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* vol. III, pp. 253-259. *Reply to Fray Rada's Opinion,* ibidem, pp. 260-271.

[62] *Resolución de Domingo de Salazar, obispo de Filipinas, sobre la cobranza de tributos,* Manila, 18 de enero, 1591, in ARCHIVO GENERAL DE INDIAS, Audiencia de Filipinas, Legajo 74; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, Vol. VII, pp. 267-318; vol. VIII, pp. 25-69.

A CHRISTIAN VICTORY

Bernad writes:

> "... The Spaniards not only did not enslave their captives, but treated them well and eventually freed them, loaded with gifts" (p. 72).

This, in the opinion of Bernad, was a psychological victory over the Cebuanos. I prefer to call it a Christian victory. Let me explain.

In whom did the Cebuanos see so much patience and restraint, even after they had beheaded another Spaniard? Was freedom granted to those caught in war? When were prisoners lavished with precious gifts? When and where were the prisoners of war not required to pay a high ranson for their freedom? When had they experienced before freedom to visit their relatives who were kept hostages? Had they ever heard of refreshments being given to enemies? When had a victor forgiven the deception of his vanquished enemy, or dressed his defeated enemies in the best clothes at his disposal?

Legazpi did all these things in Cebu for the Cebuanos. He did so for a very simple reason. He wanted to win the Cebuanos to his side and to his own religion. Legazpi's conduct, so humane and Christian, was based on Vitoria's humanistic principles, on St. Thomas Aquinas, on St. Augustine, on the Gospel of Christ. Legazpi granted a general pardon to the Cebuanos for their conduct against him and for their past complicity and responsibility in the death of Magellan and the massacre of Fr. Pedro de Valderrama, Juan Serrano and twenty more Spaniards in 1521. Phelan, the great American specialist in Filipino-Spanish history, writes:

> "The Spaniards were being legalistic. They were not being vindictive however. No punishment was inflicted. No atonement was demanded except that the natives voluntarily "renew" the oath of allegiance to the Spanish crown which their parents had taken in 1521".[63]

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[63] JOHN LEDDY PHELAN, *Pre-Baptismal Instruction in the Philippines*, Reprint from *The Americas*, vol. XII, July, 1955, N. 1, pp. 5-6.

THE CONQUEST OF MANILA: SOME CORRECTIONS

There are two points I would like to comment on in Bernad's VII chapter, entitled "The Conquest of Manila". A number of things need correction, for a reader gets the impression that when the Spaniards entered Manila in 1570 it was only a city in ruins. Everything was razed to the ground; buildings, houses were all consumed due to the Spanish assault. Manila, however, did not exist as a city in 1570. When Goiti conquered Manila in 1570 and Legazpi entered in 1571 it was just a settlement on the left bank of the Pasig river. And it was a settlement in the hands of a foreign trader: Suleiman from Borneo.

The first point I want to clarify relates to the Chinese in the Philippines at the time of the Spanish arrival; the second to the conquest of the town of Manila.

The Chinese in the Philippines

It is a common topic of history that Chinese traders called regularly at different ports of the Philippines before the arrival of the Spaniards. A brisk trade was carried out between the two regions. Expensive Chinese articles were brought to different places in the Philippines to be bartered for local products, such as gold, wax, cotton, wood and other typical products of the Philippines.

That there was commerce between China and the Philippines cannot be denied. For how long it had been going on and how extensive and brisk that trade was are matters quite difficult to ascertain. Judging from the social and political state of the Philippines at the time of Legazpi's arrival we have to admit that whatever trade there was must have been small and insecure. The risks run by the Chinese were too great and too many. The traders from Canton and Foukien came in their private capacity and lacked the most elementary security for their business enterprises. The imperial government was always a little suspicious of them. A trader, more so a settler, was looked upon as a disgrace for the Chinese nation. There was nothing to encourage a Chinese to emigrate to foreign countries. On one hand he was considered a renegade from his own nation and a deserter of his

own culture. On the other, his sense of superiority made a Chinese relegate all other nations to the level of 'Barbarians', which could teach him nothing. Who then would opt to live among 'Barbarians' when at home he could live among the most civilized people on earth? This made the task of acculturation impossible. The Chinese traders who left Canton or Foukien for the Philippines risked being left at the mercy of pirates so numerous in the South China Sea or even to the danger of being killed while bartering in the Philippines. For this very reason I hold that trade between the Philippines and China was negligeable. In support of this view I will retell for my readers some meaningful events told us by the *Relación Anónima de la Conquista de Luzon.*[64] The security granted by the Spanish government and the silver of Mexico were the main reasons for the incredible increase in volume of commerce between the Philippines and China. Three instances of what happened to Chinese merchants in the Philippines will greatly illustrate my point.

In 1570 some Chinese traders were in Mindoro, at Baco, at the time when Spanish sailors and soldiers, under the command of Goiti, and accompanied by several thousands of Visayan soldiers, embarked on an exploratory mission to Mindoro and the town of Manila. As the Spanish expedition approached the harbour of Baco even without any provocation from them, the Chinese adopted a belligerant attitude by "beating on drums, playing on fifes, firing rockets and culverins, brandishing their arquebuses and cutlasses". According to Bernad "no true-blooded Spaniard (or true-blooded Visayan) could resist the challenge" (p. 92). A battle ensued where the Chinese were totally defeated, losing twenty dead. The rest, numbering sixty, surrendered to the Spaniards.

This event casts light on the nature of their trade and its precarious stability as regards the fact that it could not be carried

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[64] *Relación anónima de la conquista de la Isla de Luzón,* Manila, 20 de abril, 1572, In: WENCESLAO RETANA, *Archivo del bibliófilo filipino,* (5 vols.), Madrid 1895-1905 vol. IV, pp. 1-37; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* vol. III, pp. 141-172; *Relation of the Conquest of the Island of Luzon,* in: *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain,* FBG, Manila, 1965, pp. 190-210; *Relation of the Voyage to Luzon,* No date, in: *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain,* FBG, Manila, 1965, pp. 161-162; Cfr. BLAIR-ROBERTSON, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 73-104.

out in peace and security. As the document tells us, the Chinese started the fight, firing rockets and culverins at the combined Spanish-Visayan force. It was not surely the first time that they had done this. Piracy was rampant at that time. In this particular case they thought themselves faced with a situation similar to what they had found themselves already confronted before. How could they distinguish that these strangers were not pirates? How could they know that the white bearded men came offering peace and trade and not with the thought of plunder so that they could take away as booty the rich Chinese cargo of porcelain, gilded jars, musk, silks and other products? The Chinese preemptive strike reveals immediately their fear of being destroyed by what they thought were enemy boats.

It is also strange why, if commerce was brisk and secure, they would still come armed with culverins, muskets and other weapons of war. The culverins and muskets, the swords and spears were evidently for their own protection, as they knew they could not always expect security in the ports they had to visit. The very number of Chinese, almost a hundred in a small trading harbour, reveals the fact that some of them were armed men at the service of the merchants.

For the Chinese, badly beaten in the encounter, it was a revelation when those strangers and the valiant tattoed people who had fought along with them, granted them freedom and returned everything that had been taken from them in the course of the battle. It was no standard procedure in those seas. It was quite outside anything they had seen and experienced in their lives. How could they comprehend the fact that their victors did not enslave them or even killed them? And the startling fact that their valuable cargo was returned to them, or even the still more striking fact that the Spaniards were ready to repair their destroyed junks so that they could safely return to China? These Chinese, coming in contact with the Spaniards for the first time, were wholly baffled. One can easily understand how the Chinese shouted with joy, knelt down in front of the Spanish commander and promised to return to the Philippines.

In order to clarify this question of the trade relations between China and the Philippines in pre-Hispanic times, I would like to

tell another tragic event that occurred to some Chinese merchants in Batangas. This indicated that whatever trade there was could not have been anything more than an occasional and very risky enterprise.

We are told by a Spanish chronicler, who personally witneseed it, that as the Spaniards entered a town in Batangas (most probably the modern Taal), the Chinese had just been defeated in an open battle with the people of the town. A number of Chinese were already dead, their skins peeled off, their corpses exposed to the sun. Blood was still fresh on their flayed faces. Two Chinamen, hands and feet bound, were waiting to be meted out with the same kind of treatment when opportunely the Spanish and Visayan forces arrived and rescued them from certain death.

It seems there had been a disagreement between the Chinese and the people of the town. As tempers rose high, the people ran for their guns and the Chinese, with a culverin, killed a *principal* man of the own. As fast as they could, they rushed to their junks in the hope of fleeing from the impending doom. But their junks being too large ran aground in the shallow Bongbon River. Defeated in battle, they were cruelly and barbarously executed. Only the two were lucky enough. Rescue came at the ultimate hour.[65]

Still a third case: as the Spaniards moved towards Manila, the most important trade center of Luzon, they were accosted by some Chinese merchants. They came to the Spanish commander to complain against the people of Suleiman who had taken the sail and rudder of their boats. Still worse, their merchandise had been stolen.[66]

We can draw a lesson from these tragic events that happened to the Chinese as the Spaniards and Visayans cruised along the waters of the Philippine Islands in search of a permanent hold. And the lesson is this — that trade and commerce could not have been bustling or even brisk. It is not accidental that the three events hereto recounted befell the Chinese *at that particular time* and *in those specific places*. We would not be distorting history were we to say that such events happened very often. These

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[65] *Relation of the Voyage to Luzon,* Ibidem, pp. 167-168.
[66] Ibidem, p. 176.

three cases, that took place within a very short span of time in quite distant places of the Philippine archipelago were not isolated events. If the Chinese kept coming they did so in the hope of profit and for protection relied on their culverins, muskets and other weapons. Obviously while in the high seas they were always under threat of attack from Japanese, Chinese, Joloan or Bornean pirates. It was the law of the seas during those times. All this inclines us to conclude that commerce there was, but it was little, fragile, fragmented and never amounted to the scale of a grand business undertaking.

SULEIMAN: A BORNEAN TRADER OF SLAVES?

We find this passage in Bernad:

> "Goiti did not have to wait long for Soliman's reply: the rajah said that he would meet the Spaniards on the shore. Goiti landed with most of his men and waited. Presently, there came towards them an elderly man escorted by such a large following that the Spaniards thought he was Soliman. It turned out to be Soliman's uncle, known to history chiefly as the "Old King" (Rajah Matanda), but whose real name was Laya. He seemed a kindly person, and he embraced the Spanish commander as a sign of welcome.
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> "Eventually Soliman himself appeared, but he was a very different kind of person from his uncle. He bore himself haughtily, and his words, spoken through the interpreter, were a warning: he was willing to make friends with the Spaniards, he said, but they must remember that the Tagalogs were not like the painted men" (i.e., Visayans); these he said, were "subservient", while the Tagalogs would repay with death" (p. 95).

Here is another common topic of history. But this time it brims with pathos and blood. Bernad, like some historians before him, paints the picture of a brave, courageous *Tagalog king* by the name of Soliman who is compelled to face strange *foreigners* bent on divesting him of his *kingdom* and enslave his own peace and freedom loving people. War seems inevitable. Here unfolds a tragic drama!. All the characters are going to fulfill their assigned roles to perfection. The die is cast. The brave king is going to succumb in glory to the more powerful invader. From

the very beginning the battle is fought on unequal terms. The two protagonists are equally courageous. The invaders, men of many wars and much experience, protected by their superior guns and technical skill, will have to enter the capital of his kingdom to the heat of burnings and ruinations. The defenders, though superior in numbers, will have no chance on the impending battle.

It conveys to us the impression that here we are confronted with the indomitable spirit of a hero, shedding his blood in defense of his kingdom, of his fatherland, of his people.[67]

What Bernad writes does not satisfy us. The whole story needs to be studied, understood and placed in its right historical perspective. This I am going to do now.

There was no fatherland to defend for the attackers were both Spanish and Visayans, "painted men", in the words of Suleiman. The people of Tondo were under a different ruler, Lakandula, not subject to the kingship of Suleiman or to that of his uncle, Rajah Matanda or simply Laya.

Let us try to reconstruct the whole story. Suleiman was a Moslem or Moro chieftain, ruler of Manila together with his uncle, Rajah Matanda. It is difficult to ascertain where he was born but judging from documents, his parents were Borneans. He or perhaps his father already had come to Manila with his powerful household. He had been the *laxamana* or 'commander in chief' of the King of Borneo. In the course of patrolling the seas to protect the Bornean traders plying the trading centers of Luzon he happened to see Manila and its fragmented society. Why not carve a little kingdom for himself? So he established himself as a trader at the mouth of the Pasig river. He became a river chief.[68] As an intelligent and powerful trader holding sway over the left bank of the river Pasig (the right was in the hands of Lakandula), he controlled the Chinese, Bornean and other traders

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[67] But no fatherland existed yet for Suleiman to defend and lay his life for. And this in more than one sense. A fatherland exists only when a people have a sense of solidarity, of unity, of purpose. Second, the father of Suleiman came from a 'farther' land, the land of Borneo. He had been a laxamana, 'commander in chief' of the fleet of the Sultan of Borneo. (Cfr. E. P. PATANNE, *Manila: A Cultural Geography*, in: *Intramuros and Beyond*, Letran College, 1975, p. 13.

[68] Cfr. Ibidem, *op. cit.*, p. 11-13.

coming to Manila as well as the towns scattered along the land-locked Laguna de Bay. From them he demanded tribute. This explains first why he demanded tribute from the Spanish and Visayan explorers and why he became so annoyed, upon hearing the rumour that the Spaniards in turn wanted him to pay tribute.

Governor Francisco de Sande, in a personal letter to the king of Borneo, dated April 1978, writes thus:

> "You must give to the heirs of Raxa Soliman and Lacandora, natives of Luzon — vassals of the King, my sovereign, and his subjects, in his royal name — the slaves and property that you have retained, these belonging to them; and whatever belongs to any other vassals of the king, my sovereign".[69]

Suleiman, then, had his most valuable possessions in Borneo. He was a stranger, to the people of Manila.

Bernad writes that "the Tagalog" Suleiman was not like the painted men (Visayans) accompanying the Spaniards. Indeed he was not. The Spaniards called him Moro not only because he was a Moslem but a conqueror. When Suleiman threatened the Spaniards that he was not a "painted Indian" he did not think of himself as being a Tagalog. In his mentality he belonged to a race superior to both Visayans and Tagalogs. What he was defending was not the Tagalog people, but himself and his trading post. Incidentally the most profitable trade he was involved in was the trafficking of slaves. From his trading post at the mouth of the Pasig river he exported Filipino slaves to the teeming markets of Borneo, Moluccas, Malacca and even beyond.

This also explains why, at the approach of the Spanish fleet to Manila, a large number of native *paraos* from villages near Manila came to greet the Spanish commander, hoping to get redress for their grievances against Suleiman. The people of Manila, of Suleiman, had pillaged their settlements. Evidently Suleiman was a tyrant. Bernad concludes from this the fragmented nature of Filipino society at the arrival of the Spaniards. This is true but besides the point. Suleiman was a tyrant to those people, a foreigner in the full sense of the word.

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[69] *Letter of Governor Francisco de Sande to the King of Borneo*, April, 1578, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 154.

The ruler of Tondo, Lakandula, was a native ruler, a man of the place, a product of the same race and adhering to the same religion as his subjects. His relations with Suleiman were never cordial, mainly because he saw his trade slipping into Suleiman's control. Lakandula obviously was no great friend of Suleiman. In fact, when the Spaniards approached Manila in 1570 he heartily welcomed them. The real battle for Manila took place therefore between two strange people in a foreign land. Manila fell from the hands of a foreign ruler from Borneo, who trafficked mainly in slaves, into the hand of white bearded hungry people whose place of origin nobody had an inkling of. The Filipinos themselves did not resist the combined attack of Spaniards and Visayans. When a year later Legazpi, the great Spanish commander, arrived, he entered Manila without shooting a single cannon. The people welcomed him.

THE MOSLEMS IN THE PHILIPPINES AT THE ARRIVAL OF THE SPANIARDS. AN ISLAMIC CONSCIOUSNESS?

One of the gravest problems the present Filipino government is faced with is the threat of Moslem rebellion and secession in southern Philippines. This is a problem that beset the American and Spanish governments already in eras past. The Moslem problem, in fact, is prior to the coming of the Spaniards. So much has been written on the "Islamic consciousness" of the Moslems of Mindanao that we must deal with this problem.

We read in Bernad:

> "In short, as in the case of many of the Indonesians today, the Moslems of Luzon and Mindoro were probably animists at heart, with only a slight veneer of Islamic belief and practice. This may help to explain the relative ease with which the Moslems of Manila, Pampanga, Southern Luzon and the coastal towns of Mindoro were converted to Christianity.
>
> "Those of southern and central Mindanao and those in the Sulu islands are a different case: they remained Muslim to the present day" (p. 125).

I believe these two passages need a short commentary, in order to preclude any historical misunderstanding.

At the coming of the Spaniards to the Philippines in 1565 there was no "Islamic consciousness" in Mindanao or even in Sulu. The Moslem religion was beginning to spread to Mindoro, Lubang, Batangas, Manila, Pampanga and some other places in Luzon. Suleiman's father, as we have already noticed, was a newcomer to Manila. It was not too difficult for the Spanish missionaries and *conquistadores* to uproot the external islamization of the people of Manila and neighbouring areas. This was precisely due to the nature and character of their islamization. There was not even a slight veneer. They were Moslem in name only.

But even if the people had been more islamized it still would not have been impossible for the Spanish missionaries to convert them to Christianity.

The reason why the peoples from Luzon and the Visayas were so rapidly Christianized is due to the transcendental decision of the Spaniards to choose Manila as the center of their activities, a point too far away from Mindanao and even Cebu.[70] They were waiting instructions from the Spanish king as to the future of the newly discovered islands. Legazpi had reported to the king that if the intentions of the Spanish Crown were to take possession of the Moluccas islands and control the spice trade, Cebu would be the best place in which to establish the capital of the new Spanish settlement. If, on the other hand, the Spanish Crown sought to expand itself towards China, Japan, Siam, Cambodia and other countries, then Manila would be the best place. The Spanish king decided in favour of the second alternative. Manila

[70] During the first years of their stay the missionaries did not start in earnest the work evangelization. This was due to the fact that they could not be certain whether they would settle down permanently or not. Magellan's mass baptism and its failure weighed heavily on the missionaries of Legazpi's expedition. *Letter of Fray Diego de Herrera, O.S.A. to Philip II,* in: *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain,* Manila, 1965, pp. 157-159; Cfr. *Letter of Fray Martin de Rada, O.S.A., to the Marquis de Falces,* Cebu, July 8, 1569, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* vol. XXXIV, p. 225; The same letter in *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain,* pp. 149-152; *Letter of Miguel L. de Legazpi to Philip II,* Panay, 25 July, 1570, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, *op. cit.,* vol. III, pp. 108-112; *Letter of M. L. de Legazpi to Philip II,* Cebu, May 7, 1565, in: *Colonization and Conquest,* pp. 76-77; *Letter of Guido de Lavezaris to Philip II,* Cebu, May 30, 1565, in: *Ibidem,* pp. 82-84; FRANCISCO COLIN, S.J., PABLO PASTELLS, S.J., *Labor Evangélica de los obreros de la Compañia de Jesus en las Islas Filipinas* (3 vols.), Barcelona 1904, vol. II, pp. 662 & ff.

was going to be the center of government for the Philippine Islands. This decision had far-reaching consequences for the future of the Philippines and South East Asia.

As soon as the Spanish Friars, the Augustinians, came to know of the decision of the Spanish king, they started in earnest their work towards the Christianization of the Philippines.[71] But the whole Spanish missionary effort was to be concentrated in Luzon and the Visayas with occasional missionary attempts to get a foothold in China and Japan. What about Mindanao?

In the case of Mindanao it is a fact that at the arrival of the Spaniards in 1565, some of its coastal areas were more islamized than Mindoro and Manila. Yet the process of islamization was relatively recent in Mindanao and even Jolo. In fact, it dates back to no earlier than a hundred years before the coming of Spain. Islam was introduced by traders from Borneo and by some Arab preachers. The datus of Jolo were not yet firmly entrenched in their sultanates in 1565. The process of consolidating their authority, especially in Mindanao, was still in its initial stage. The people of Mindanao were basically animists and only the rulers and some of the leading figures of the native population had accepted the Moslem religion.

We should always remember that the *process of islamization*, like that of *Christianization*, is not accomplished all of a sudden. It is realized in the hearts and minds of the people. This process needs a long time and many generations have to pass before the people become conscious of the implications of their religion.

Mindanao, at the beginning of the Spanish conquest, was left outside the sphere of Spanish influence. The missionary effort in Mindanao was practically non-existent in comparison to what was realized in the Visayas and in Luzon. The Spanish Friars devoted themselves entirely to the conversion of Luzon and the Visayas, and quite often, in a ridiculous and futile effort, they passed to China and Japan. Had the Friars exerted a similar effort in the case of Mindanao it would not have been too difficult to convert the natives to Christianity. The hinterlands of Mindanao, where many of the cultural minorities still hold their

[71] Cfr. *Letter of Diego de Herrera to Philip II*, Mexico, January 16, 1570, *in*: COLIN-PATELLS, II, pp. 661-662; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, III, pp. 69-72.

ground today, were untouched by the Moslems of Maguindanao and Jolo.

Mindanao was left to itself. Manila was too far away to the north. The inhabitants of Mindanao continued their own process of islamization untroubled by the Spanish missionaries. The sense of islamic solidarity that we find and admire today in Mindanao was born, strengthened and consolidated during the years of their resistance to Spain in the XVII, XVIII and XIX centuries. When Legazpi came in 1565 there was no islamic consciousness. During the XVI, XVII and XVIII centuries Spain was too occupied with strengthening her position in the Moluccas (union with Portugal — 1582-1646), in Luzon and Visayas with the threats of Chinese pirates (Li-ma-hong and Coxinga, XVI-XVII centuries,) with the Dutch (wars of the XVII century) and with England (British occupation of Manila — 1762-1764), as well as with consolidating her hold over her scattered dominions. Spain did not give herself body and soul to the conquest and Christianization of Mindanao. When she finally did it was too late and she herself was too weak. Her conquering impetus was exhausted. Mindanao had acquired its "Islamic Consciousness".

To further strengthen our point we can mention the fact that in the division of the missionary field among the religious orders in the Philippines in 1594 Mindanao was not given the importance it had. In fact no missionaries were sent there. Mindanao was cast outside the field of Spanish missionary activity.[72] The Spaniards contented themselves with the small fort of Zamboanga. For the rest they found enough work in counteracting the devastating piratical raids of the Borneans, Camucones, Joloans and others which caused untold misery, havoc, destruction and tears to thousands upon thousands of Filipinos.[73] Only with the invention of the steam boat was Spain able to arrest those devast-

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[72] *Royal Cedula from Philip II to Governor Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas*, Aranjuez, April 27, 1594, in: FRANCISCO DE SANTA INES, O.F.M., *Crónica de la Apostólica provincia de San Gregorio*, (3 vols.), Manila, 1892, vol. III, p. 607; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. IX, pp. 120-121; ISACIO RODRIGUEZ, O.S.A., *Historia de la Provincia Agustiniana del Smo. Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas* (en publicación), Vol. I, Bibliografia, Manila, 1965, p. 329.

[73] Cfr. CESAR A. MAJUL, *The Role of Islam in the History of the Filipino people*, in: *Asian Studies*, IV, August 1966, p. 315; *Relation of the*

ing piratical raids.[74] The real effort of Christianization and conquest did not exist, or at least it never existed in the scope that it was done in the Visayas and Luzon.

Whether the Moslems of Mindanao were greater patriots than the Visayans and Tagalogs of Luzon as some historians of latter days are trying to aver, is not a matter for discussion. From the military point of view, Mindanao would not have been too difficult to conquer. Portugal, a less powerful country and with less resources in money and men than Spain, conquered Malacca in 1511, the most important center of Islamic power in the East. Initially Spain lacked the will with regards to Mindanao or perhaps the foresight. Lacking the will to conquer and to convert she correspondingly did not channel the requisite resources for that particular task. Mindanao left to itself, rolled along in the process of its own islamization.

RELIGION OF THE EARLY FILIPINOS

Bernad divides the pre-Hispanic Filipinos into two main groups: 1. Moslems and 2. Animists (pp. 124-127). No mention is made of at least two different races existing at that time: 1. the *Aetas* or aborigenes, commonly called *Negritos* by the Spaniards on account of their small height and their kinky hair, and 2. *Mountain* people. By this last name we understand the modern

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Western Islands, by Captain Diego de Artieda, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. III, p. 197; *Relation of Governor Francisco Sande,* in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. IV, p. 177: "... You shall tell them [the Joloans] ... that they should cease to be pirates, who rob and harry the weak, and enslave wherever they can selling their captives outside their own island, and separating them from their wives and children; and that they must cease to commit other like cruelties..."

[74] Piracy had been a way of life for Joloans and Maguindanaos and for many other people since time immemorial. These people simply relied on slave-hunting to live. The plains and valleys of Mindanao and Jolo did not offer much opportunity for trade and quick gain. Human cargo was quicker to obtain. Hence their piratical raids. Cfr. HORACIO DE LA COSTA, S.J., *Readings in Philippine History,* Bookmark, Manila, 1965, pp. 46-47. Defenders of Filipino Moslems tend to picture them as freedom fighters against the imperialistic designs of Spain. But if it will help those historians, we tell them that piracy has been a way of life for many people before. Perhaps the most devastating piratical raids in history were carried out by the Vikings and Norsemen, fom whom the sophisticated Scandinavians come today.

Kalingas, Apayaos, Mayaoyaos, Ifugaos, Igorots, Subanons, and the less prominent Indonesian tribes of Mindanao. Chao-Ju-Kua, in his *Description of the Philippines*,[75] gives us an interesting study of the Negritos of the Philippines around the XIII century.

Surely Bernad did not intend to write a study on anthropology and religion, but a deeper study was definitely called for in order to have a clearer picture of the religious state of the Philippines at the coming of the Spaniards.

Plasencia, Chirino, and Alzina, among others, wrote extensively about the social and religious customs of the early Filipinos (p. 126). Yet, no mention is made of a man who, though a layman and a Spanish *conquistador*, wrote positively on the religious customs of the Visayans and of people in or around Manila. His *Relation of the Philipine Islands*[76] is as interesting as those of Plasencia, his contemporary, and Chirino, if not more.[77] The BLAIR & ROBERTSON Collection (55 vols.) thought it so important that they published the original Spanish text together with its English translation.

Loarca's study was done *apropos*, that is, it was commanded by the Spanish king.[78] He made a special effort to study the religion and customs of the early Filipinos. He was a pioneer, a real scholar. He is a 'contact' man, a witness of the first encounter between Christianity and the primitive social and religious life

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[75] *Description of the Philippines*, in: BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. XXXVI, pp. 188-189.

[76] *Relation of the Philippine Islands by Miguel de Loarca*, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V, pp. 34-187.

[77] J. J. Delgado, S.J., wrote about Loarca's *Relation*: "It is a very precious relation. It is difficult to find a more complete one. It merits credit when dealing with religion, opinions, rites, usages and customs of the natives...", *Historia General Sacro-Profana, Política y Natural de las Islas del Poniente llamadas Filipinas* Manila, 1892, p. 392; Cfr. COLIN-PASTELLS, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 66, note 2; pp. 77, note 1.

[78] "It cannot be denied that the men who have come to this country have lacked the desire for investigation, since neither ecclesiastics nor laymen have undertaken to relate what occurred in this land at the time of the conquest... I shall fulfill what his Majesty has ordered from your Lordship by his royal decree; and I shall also add a description of some customs of the natives, in order that, since they are his Majesty's vassals, he may know of the barbarous life from which he has delivered these natives, and of the civilized manner in which they now live under his gracious sway", BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V, pp. 36-37.

of the Filipinos. Why, then, this silence of Bernad about Loarca's *Relation?*

Bernad has a high regard for Alzina. And in this he is totally right. Alzina is one of the greatest missionaries ever to come to the Philippines. On one point, however, Bernad seems to contradict him, especially when dealing with the belief of pre-Hispanic Filipinos *in an after-life.* Thus Bernad writes:

> "From long acquaintance with the natives, Alzina became convinced that the Visayans "neither knew nor believed in nor thought about the after-life." Death to them was the end. Alzina of course knew what he was talking about: but it may be questioned whether his conclusion in this particular instance was entirely accurate; for, no matter how vague their ideas of the after-life might have been, a belief in the here-after seems to have been implied in the burial practices of the natives everywhere. They certainly seemed to venerate the spirits of the dead, particularly those of their male ancestors who had shown prowess in battle or other outstanding qualities in life. Aware of this posthumous fame some old men left instructions where they should be buried: some on a hill as a patron for farmers: others by the sea, to be venerated by fishermen" (p. 131).

I would agree with Bernad that pre-Hispanic Filipinos believed in an after-life. Obviously as the religious fragmentation was so widespread it is very difficult to know the beliefs of all the different races and tribes at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards. But we have precisely relations about the Visayans and the people of Luzon, the best representatives of pre-Hispanic Philippines. These people believed in an after-life. But a more important question remains to be asked. What was the nature of this after-life? Where do the souls of the departed go? What kind of life are they going to experience in the beyond? What do they mean by *kaluwalhatian*?

The cult of the *Anitos* and lesser spirits shows, no doubt, their conviction of an after-life. Morga,[79] Loarca[80] and other sources tell us that the souls of the valiant people and of all those

[79] ANTONIO DE MORGA, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, ed. WENCESLAO E. RETANA, Madrid, 1909, p. 197.

[80] *Relation*, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V., pp. 128-131.

who died a glorious death[81] are taken to the *kaluwalhatian.* Yet, what is the nature of the life in the *kaluwalhatian*?

Reading the early relations, especially Loarca's *Relation,* we are led to believe that the life to come was going to be basically the same as that in this present world. Now, the real disgrace and scourge in this life was poverty and slavery. To be good or to be bad morally was irrelevant and immaterial. People did not loose their peace of mind over the morality of their actions. Avoiding poverty was the all-important question. It is therefore not strange that they strove to become rich at all costs. It was their best passport and their most potent guarantee for acceptance in the other world.[82] In the here-after the rich would remain rich; the freeman would retain his freedom but the poor would be burdened with his own poverty.[83] There would be the same socio-religious set up that existed in this world.

This explains the fact of the natives' being interred with gold, ornaments, food, weapons and other things. These were meant to accompany them in their journey to the beyond so that they would have something to facilitate and secure their reception by the gods in the here-after.

The killing of slaves is associated with the belief in the after-life as we are describing it. When a chieftain or a *datu* of a *barangay* died some slaves had to be sacrificed to accompany him and serve him in the here-after.[84] Chirino, the Jesuit, in his *Relación,* tells us of the large number of slaves sacrificed at the death of a *principal* of a barangay.

> "Others, in addition to these things, poured gold into their mouth and adorned them with jewelry, and interred

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[81] "The souls of those who are stabbed to death, eaten by crocodiles or killed by arrows (which is considered a very honourable death) go to heaven, by way of the arch which is formed when it rains and become gods", Loarca's *Relation,* BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V., pp. 128-129.

[82] Ibidem, pp. 134-135.

[83] Ibidem, pp. 130-131.

[84] Diego de Artieda's *Relation of the Western Islands to Philip II,* 1573, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. III, p. 199: "When chiefs die, slaves are killed and buried with them so that they may serve their masters in the other world. If the dead man is renowned as a seaman, they bury with him the vessel in which he sailed, with many slaves to row him, so that he may go in it to the other world." Cfr. Loarca's *Relation,* BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V., pp. 134-135.

> them under their own house thus richly arrayed, burying by side of them another box full of clothes. In addition, care was usually taken to bring various items of foods to the tomb and leave them there for the deceased. Others were not buried alone, but were given slaves both male and female killed so that they might go with the dead master. It happened once that a chief was buried together with a boat and a full complement of oarsmen, to serve him on his voyages in the other world."[85]

An echo of this is found in another Jesuit, Francisco Colin, who wrote a long and well-documented history of the Philippines based on Chirino's manuscript. He is more explicit, telling us how a principal of a *barangay* in Bohol was buried in his *barangay* (in its original meaning: boat) with seventy men, decked in their complete military finery to go on stealing, fighting and killing after their death, as they had done in this life.[86]

All this goes to show that pre-Hispanic Filipinos believed in a life to come, but in one whose whole nature would be an exact replica of their earthly existence before.

DESTRUCTION OF NATIVE CULTURE

Chapter XI, XII, XIII, XIV and XVI seem to be pervaded by the spirit of colonialism. Bernad tries to prove the high level of culture in the Philippines at the arrival of the Spaniards. He tries to prove the high quality of Filipino culture by disparaging the Spaniards who, according to him, were responsible for its destruction. Surely, it is typical of young nations to defend their greatness with such passion that a perfect historical vision cannot be obtained.

It is not my wish to deny the Filipino heritage. I know it and I love it. It is not lawful, however, to extol our own positive values at the expense of somebody else's values.

Bernad writes:

> "The most notable feature of native society at the time of the Spanish conquest was the fact that it was fragmented" (p. 135).

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[85] PEDRO CHIRINO, *Relación. The Philippines in 1600,* p. 327; p. 88.
[86] COLIN-PASTELLS, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 69.

In fact Legazpi, the conqueror of the Philippines, had written before:

> "The inhabitants of these islands are not subjected to any law, king, or lord. Although there are large towns in some regions the people do not act in concert or obey any ruling body; but each man does whatever he pleases and takes care only of himself and of his slaves. He who owns the most slaves ,and the strongest, can obtain anything he pleases" (p. 135).

We know well that a basic fragmentation in both the social and religious spheres pervaded the whole archipelago. We do not want to hang on this topic to prove the inferiority of the Filipino people compared to the Spaniards. No race is ever above another. It is precisely in this point that the Spanish nation, perhaps due to Catholic theology, has not been accused of racial discrimination, so prevalent in the Saxon nations and in those which are influenced by the Protestant theological approach.

What we want to emphasize now is the fact that Filipino society was broken into thousands of small social units called *barangays*. It was the *barangay* system that facilitated the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. It was not the lack of bravery on the part of the Filipino people nor their sense of colonialism which did not yet exist. It was the nature of their society. The *barangay* system was not conducive for real progress and development. The lack of unity fundamentally worked against culture and literary advancement. Hence, the lack of monumental production in the Philippines. The people were not less intelligent, valiant or generous. The simply had not achieved a historical and cultural development as the Spanish people had at the time they came to the Philippines in 1565. This is not a negation of pre-Hispanic culture. It is the normal process of history. Spain was a savage country when Rome first set foot on its shores. Rome was but a phantasy when the civilization of the Nile was three thousand years old.

This emphasis on proving that the Philippines enjoyed a high level of civilization before the Spanish arrival stems from the elementary error of not understanding the basic truth of what we call cultural development. Some countries have reached his-

torical maturity ahead of others. When Spain came here the Philippines had its own culture, but it was still fragile and on its initial stages. Confronted with a higher culture, like that of Spain, it was at a disadvantage. Spain was at the height of her power and glory. She had reached historical maturity. Yet Spain's glory was short.

I do not defend the dangerous doctrine of qualifying the nations as historical and non-historical. All nations are historical. The difference lies in the time when each country reaches its full historical maturity. Spain reached its own before the Philippines did. Rome before Spain. Egypt before Rome. China as early as Rome. To accept this is not to debase our historical achievements. It is but a recognition of a fundamental law of history and culture. Were we to keep these basic truths of philosophy of history in mind we could avoid the bitterness that still pervades the study of history in the Philippines at the present moment.

I hope that what I have written up to this point is enough to set things in their right perpective. But I find some conclusions drawn by Bernad which do not respond to historical truth. In concluding chapter twelve, where he attempts to establish the high level of culture in the Philippines during the so-called 'contact period', he discharges a powerful cannonade against the Spanish *conquistadores* and Friars.

> "If at the beginning of the Spanish conquest native society was as well organized and native culture as well developed as we have depicted, why did the native Filipinos seem so backward in later centuries? If the people were so highly literate, and if their only drawback was the lack of writing materials, why is it that, despite the introduction of pen and paper and even the printing, no great body of native literature had developed? What happened to the old literary forms?
>
> "Even more relevant is the question of a native clergy. A people with as mature a culture as the Filipinos seemed to have when they became Christians in the sixteenth century should have developed sooner into a mature Christian community, with its own clergy and epicopacy. Yet at the end of three hundred years a native clergy was just beginning. And a native episcopacy did

not really develop until almost at the close of its fourth century of Christianity.

"Why the extremely slow development?[87] Was this not a case of arrested development, or even of retrogression" (p. 160).

I expect many people will be left speechless by this tirade. They will ask Bernad where he discerned the much-vaunted culture in early Philippines. How does he prove the almost perfect development of society at the time of the Spanish arrival? He calls as witnesses Pigafetta, Morga, Chirino, Alzina, Colin, Delgado. But as no passage or particular quotation from any of the five is textually given, people remain at a loss. I remain speechless too, but for a very different reason. Having spent years in reading Filipino history I have come to know and love the Filipino cultural heritage. I admit its existence. I do not share the opinion of the anonymous Chinese author who writing in the sixteenth century, affirmed that Luzon was a country where only serpents and devils lived.[88]

"If the people were so highly literate" at the time of the Spanish conquest, asks Bernad, "what happened to that native culture"? The popular answer is that the missionaries destroyed it.[89] But Bernad knows this is not true, for he recognizes that

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[87] At the end of the Spanish regime in 1898 the Philippines enjoyed as high a degree of literacy, well-being and happiness as any other country of Europe. Cfr. EDWARD GAYLORD BOURNE, *Historical Introduction* to 'The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898' (55 vols.), ed. BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. I, pp. 70-87; Cfr. J. MALLAT, *Les Philippines, histoire, geographie, moeurs, agriculture, industrie et commerce des Colonies espagnoles dans l'Oceanie* (2 vols.), Paris, 1946, vol. I, p. 388 where he quotes the assertion of the Archbishop of Manila: "There are many villages such as Argas, Dalaguete, Bolohon, Cebu, and several in the province of Iloilo where not a single boy or girl can be found who cannot read and write, an advantage of which few places in Europe can boast". Vide, E. G. BOURNE, *op. cit.*, p. 80, note 133

[88] HORACIO DE LA COSTA, S.J., *Precolonial Southeast Asia*, in: *Asia and the Philippines. Collected Historical Papers*, Manila, 1967, p. 6; RAFAEL BERNAL, *The Chinese Colony in Manila, 1570-1770*, in: *The Chinese in the Philippines, 1570-1770*, ed. ALFONSO FELIX, Historical Conservation Society, IX, p. 41, where the words of the Chinese author are given: "We hold that the Island of Luzon is a miserable land which was formerly inhabited only by devils and serpents..."

[89] Cfr. JOSE GARCIA ESPALLARGAS, C. M., *The Philippine Script at the Arrival of the Spaniards*, in: *Philippiniana Sacra*, Vol. X, N. 28, Jan.-April. 1974, pp. 84-86; H. OTLEY BEYER, *The Philippines before Magellan: I. The Hindus in Malaysia*, in: *Asia*, XXI, October 1921, p. 861; FLETCHER GARDNER, *Philippine Indic Studies*, San Antonio, Texas, Witte Memorial Museum, 1943,

the missionaries saved the native languages, thus rendering the greatest help possible to Filipino culture and history (pp. 255-260).

When Sánchez and Chirino mention the fact of high literacy they referred, above all, to the *maharlikas* of Manila and its environs. De La Costa, always a balanced and well documented historian, supports this same opinion.[90] On the other hand, how could we speak of a highly literate people at the time of the Spanish arrival when not even today can people be considered highly literate? Are people literate because they have traditions, oral poems, songs, ballads, epics, popular stories or even a very rich folklore? These in general are the products of an illiterate population. A learned and literate people puts everything into writing and confers little to memory.

At the time of the Spanish arrival Europe was not a literate continent. The masses, that is, the immense majority of the people, were highly illiterate. And this, even down to the present century. The highly civilized Chinese were, on the whole and as a nation, illiterate. The fact that in the Philippines many people knew how to write does not entitle a historian to jump into conclusions, such as accepting the existence of a native literature.[91]

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p. 1; PAUL RODRIGUEZ VERZOSA, *The Resurrection of Our National Writing, Hiligaynon,* Extra Number, September 1939, and *Bisaya,* August, 1938. Ib., *Philippine National Writing, Pambansang Titik nang Pilipinas,* Manila, 1939, p. 18; T. H. DE TAVERA, *Contribución para el Estudio de los Antiguos Alfabetos Filipinos,* Losana, 1884, pp. 5-6; PEDRO ALEJANDRO MOLO AGUSTIN PATERNO Y DE VERA IGNACIO, *La Antigua Civilización Tagálog,* Madrid, 1887, p. 41

[90] Cfr. HORACIO DE LA COSTA, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768,* Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1961, p. 18; PEDRO CHIRINO S.J., *Relación de las Islas Filipinas...The Philippines in 1600,* Historical Conservation Society, XV, Manila, 1969, p. 45; 280; Ibidem, *Primera Parte de la Historia de la Provincia de Philippinas de la Compañía de Jesús,* in: FRANCISCO COLIN, *Labor Evangélica,* ed. PABLO PASTELLS, S.J., Barcelona 1900-1902, vol. I, p. 223; MARCELO DE RIBADENEIRA, *Historia de las Islas del Archipiélago Filipino y Reinos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Cochinchina, Malaca, Siam, Cambodia y Japón,* ed. JUAN R. DE LEGISIMA, Madrid, 1947, p. 61; ALONSO SANCHEZ, S.J., *Relación de la calidad y estado de estas islas en general,* in: COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor Evangélica,* vol. I, pp. 368-369.

[91] "They have certain characters that serve them as letters with which they write whatever they wish. They are of a making very different from any other that we know up to now. It is women who usually know how to write with them.

When they write they do it on the coat of certain slats of canes found in those islands. In using such slat, which is of a width of four fingers,

There was no arrested development, much less a retrogression. The early Filipinos had their own culture, traditions, folklore and it was precisely the missionaries who kept alive those traditions.

One of the proofs of the intellectual retrogression during the Spanish period, in the opinion of Bernad, is the famous letter *Quadraginta* of Gaspar de San Agustin. In fact, a whole chapter is dedicated to the refutation of the *Quadraginta*, an attention that he does not pay to any of the religious orders. And this letter provides Bernad with a basis for a quasi-total indictment against the Spanish Friars. Has Bernad read Gaspar de San Agustin's 'monumental' work *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas* and the *Tagalog Grammar* he published?

Bernad writes:

> "Even if the picture drawn by Fray Gaspar were only half true, it meant that *a radical change had taken place for the worse* (italics supplied by me). Obviously

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they do not write with ink, but with picks with which they cut the face and coat of the cane to draw the letters.

They have neither books nor histories, nor do they write any thing of consequence; only letters and notes to one another. Only for this purpose they make use of the characters", CARLOS QUIRINO & MAURO GARCIA, *The Manners, Customs and Beliefs of the Philippine Inhabitants of Long Ago*, in: *The Philippine Journal of Science*, LXXXVI, December, 1958, p. 371.

Relation des Isles Philippines, Faite par un Religieux qui y a demeure 18 ans, in: THEVENOT'S *Voyages Curieux*, Paris, 1663, II, p. 5 of the *Relation*. JUAN FRANCISCO DE SAN ANTONIO, *Chrónicas de la Apostólica Provincia de San Gregorio*, (3 vols.), Sampaloc, near Manila, 1735, where he writes: "... Up to the present time there has not been found a scrap of writing relating to religion, ceremonial, or the ancient political institutions..."; Cfr. E. G. BOURNE, *op. cit.*, p. 44, note 46; J. MARTINEZ DE ZUÑIGA, O.S.A., *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* (2 vols.), Ed. W. E. RETANA, Madrid, 1893, vol. II, p. 294; *Relation of the Philippine Islands by Miguel de Loarca*, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V, p. 120; 170; ANTONIO PIGAFETTA, *First Voyage Around the World*, FBG, Manila, 1969, p. 28; GASPAR DE SAN AGUSTIN, *Conquistas de las Islas Philippinas*, Madrid, 1698, Lib. I, ch. 42; PEDRO CHIRINO, *Relación*, p. 60; 296; CONSTANTINO LENDOYRO, *The Tagalog Language*, Manila, 1909, p. 5-6 Ib. Introduction, pp. LXXXII & LXXXVII; J. M. ESPALLARGAS, C. M., *op. cit.*, p. 86.

> a cultural stagnation — perhaps even a retrogression — had taken place. How did it come about?" (p. 170).

To prove his point, Bernad does not go back to history, to the documents existing by the thousands in the Spanish archives and in the Philipine National Library, but goes forward to Rizal's *The Indolence of the Filipino People* and *The Philippines a Century Hence.*

Rizal was a hero, an intelligent person, a great lover of the Filipino people, a learned writer, but not a historian in the real sense of the word.[92]

Rizal's works *The Indolence of the Filipinos* and *The Philippines a century Hence* are *essays* but not historical studies. From them no historian can deduce the existence of a high level of Filipino culture at the time of the Spanish arrival. Rizal was not writing history. He was not prepared for such a task, much less for writing the history of the Filipino people at the time of the Spanish arrival. Three hundred years had passed. Rizal had no access to the sources of history and lacked the knowledge of modern anthropology. He could not write the history of the Philippines during the contact period. His main purpose was to prove that the Filipinos were not indolent by nature. Rather, their indolence was the end result of historical, ecological and social reasons. Yet Bernad, based on Rizal, concludes that:

> "The Malayan Filipinos, before the coming of the Europeans, carried on an active trade, not only among themselves but with all neighboring countries." "There was considerable agriculture and industry: mines, gold placers, looms, cultivated farms, barter, shipbuilding, poultry and stock-raising, silk and cotton weaving, distilleries, manufacture of arms, pearl-fisheries, the civet industry, horn and leather industry etc." (p. 171).

All this was obliterated by the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. Hence the retrogression, in the opinion of Bernad.

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[92] Cfr. JESUS MA. CAVANNA Y MANSO, C.M., *Rizal and the Philippines of his Days*, Manila, 1957, p. IX.

Obviously we cannot take to task the above quotation in all its many implications. Such would take us too long and too far beyond the aim of our study. But this much we can say. Some of the points mentioned here are true; others are mere conjectures; the rest are contrary to historical reality.[93]

Having dealt at length with the intellectual and cultural retrogression of the Philippines during the Spanish period, Bernad concludes chapter XIV with these striking words:

> "Magellan had given a false start to Christianity in these islands by indiscriminate admission to baptism without a previous catechumenate. But now — in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century — a second false start was made for Christianity in these islands. The people indeed became Christians, but they paid a terrible price: no less than their personal dignity, their liberties and their social fabric. If the old fabric had not been destroyed; if the social organization and the native culture had been, instead, preserved and reformed and Christianized: would the Church not have made greater progress than it actually made?
>
> "The measure of a Church's slow progress is this: that at the end of the nineteenth century, when the islands had been Christian for three centuries and a half, the native population was indeed Christian, but the native clergy was still in its infancy. Even in the twentieth century after four hundred years of Christianity, the Philippines is still to a certain extent a missionary country" (p. 190).

What would Urdaneta, Martin de Rada, Diego de Herrera, Aguirre, Francisco Ortega, Plasencia, Sánchez, Sedeño, Chirino, Salazar, Benavides and many other famous missionaries think of this sweeping indictment of Bernad?

If Christianity meant the destruction of the social fabric, the obliteration of Filipino culture and civilization, the annihilation

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[93] About the existence of gold in the Philippines at the arrival of the Spaniards, Cfr. Loarca's *Relation*, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. V., pp. 50-51; Cfr. *Letter of Andrés de Mirandaola to Philip II*, Cebu, 1565, in: *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain*, p. 85; *Relation of the Voyage to the Philippines by Miguel L. de Legazpi*, in: *Ibidem*, p. 94; HORACIO DE LA COSTA, S.J., *Readings in Philippine History*, pp. 44-45; BERTHOLD LAUFER, *The Relations of the Chinese to the Philippine Islands*, Washington, Smithsonian Institute, 1908, pp. 270-271.

of cities and towns, the enslavement of the people, the loss of personal dignity, then I hold that Christianity is a curse. And as a curse it should be spat upon and rejected. Strange that so much effort, so much work would be expended by men who spent their lives for Christ, exiled in a foreign land, *peregrini pro Christo*, only for a priest to come and now tell them: what you did meant the destruction of my people![94]

I cannot offer a refutation of the passage transcribed from Bernad. Obviously he does not offer any single proof to sustain his contention that Christianity destroyed the Filipino culture, civilization and social fabric, nor does he give any indication how.

I will offer my readers, however, a revealing passage where we see the Augustinians' (those brave men!) contribution to the *religious, political* and *social* development of one region; the Ilocos. And this just 25 years after Legazpi's arrival in the Philippines. By that time they had founded the towns of Baratao, Tagudin, Dumaquaque, Bantay, Bacarra, Baoan, Batac, Vigan and some others.[95] Don Diego Manumba, a Filipino *principal*, governor of the town of Vigan, testified thus:

> "Since the arrival of the administration of justice, of the Friars and the clergymen to these provinces, they

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[94] The Friars, since the birth of the Propaganda Movement of the XIX century have been accused of all imaginable crimes and corruptions. The sufferings and sacrifices of the missionaries in the Philippines during the lengthy time that they were responsible for leading the Filipino people to Christ have been deliberately shrouded with silence. I want to offer a testimony for the moral sufferings and psychological stresses that they were subjected to in their isolated mission outposts. We read in Zúñiga's *Estadismo*:

"The cases of lunacy among the religious are rarer today than they used to be in times past... when the awesome solitude filled the souls of so many with an undying melancholy", *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas*, (2 vols.), ed. W. E. RETANA, Madrid, 1893, vol. II, pp. 27 & ff.; Cfr. ISACIO RODRIGUEZ, O.S.A., *Gregorio Aglipay y los Orígenes de la Iglesia Filipina Independiente (1898-1971)* (2 vols.), Madrid, 1960, Vol. I, p. 18, note 51. Many of the missionaries, like the Israelites exiled in Babylon, mourning under the weeping willows, could also cry 'Super flumina Babylonis, illic sedimus et flevimus dum recordaremur Sion: Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena" (Psalm. 136 (137), 1;4).

[95] Cfr. ISACIO R. RODRIGUEZ, O.S.A., *Historia Agustiniana*, Vol. I, p. 315.

have prospered as never before, as people do not receive the vexations and and abuses that the *timaguas* used to receive from the *principales* and the weak from the powerful. It has progressed continuously from good to better. At present there are religious in all the provinces. As the administration of justice reaches even the *visitas*, nobody is abused, rather the great majority is happy and contended and a large number of people has embraced Christianity. The children are all Christians. Such peace was lacking before the advent of the administration of justice and of Christianity. And this because everybody, whether *timagua* or *principal*, with no fear of God and of justice, used to come out on the trails or to the rice fields of the other natives, to kill and rob them. All this has ceased in the provinces due to the large number of missionaries and magistrates. People can go from one place to the other, whether by land or by sea, without fear. This is the truth of what happens."[96]

RELIGION AND THE RISE OF NATIONALISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

As this article of mine is becoming exceedingly long I will not delve too deeply into this problem. No doubt, there is a need for a real study on Religion's contribution to the birth of nationalism in the Philippines. At the present I will simply offer to my patient readers some insights.

I hold that *because of religion, in our case the Christian religion, the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands became Filipinos.* They acquired a sense of mission, a sense of unity and solidarity, a sense of belonging. In one word, because of religion, they became a nation.

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[96] *Archivo Histórico Hispano Agustino,* XV, El Escorial, 1921, pp. 210-211; Cfr. I. R. RODRIGUEZ, *op. cit.,* p. 316. For the Augustinians' contribution to the social and political development of Batangas and Mindoro see PEDRO TORRES LANZAS-PABLO PASTELLS, S.J., *Catálogo de los documentos existentes en el Archivo de Indias relativos a Filipinas. Historia General de Filipinas,* (8 vols.), vol. III, Barcelona, 1927, n. 3.823. For Pampanga Cfr. *Arch. Hist. Hisp. Agust.,* XVI, El Escorial, 1921, pp. 257-259; Cfr. COLIN-PASTELLS, *op. cit.,* I, p. 586.

When the Spaniards came to the Philippines society was not only fragmented,[97] and divided,[98] it was at war.[99] Even in small villages they were at war.[100] Due to this fact, there was no real sense of security.[101]

The term and the concept 'Filipino' did not exist at the time of the Spanish arrival. The tendency was towards a greater fragmentation, essentially political. As soon as a village seemed to be large enough it was divided. What would have happened had the Spaniards decided to abandon the Philippines? Would they have been islamized like modern Indonesia? Would they have become colonies of China or Japan? We do not know. But we know what the inhabitants of the Philippines were like and what they are now. The jump from pre-Hispanic times to the American period is so important and fantastic that a historian is forced to look for some reasons to explain the changes that were set in motion. The changes that came about on the religious, cultural,

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[97] "The people of these islands have no king or sovereign and are without any law", *Letter of Fray Martin de Rada to the Viceroy of New Spain*, Cebu, July 7, 1569, in: *The Colonization and Conquest*, p. 151; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. XXXIV, pp. 223-228.

[98] "The Inhabitants of these islands are not subjected to any law, king or lord,. Although there are large towns in some regions, the people do not act in concert or obey any ruling body; but each man does whatever he pleases and takes care only of himself and of his slaves. He who owns the most slaves, and the strongest, can obtain anything he pleases", *The Philippines and the Character and Conditions of their Inhabitants, Miguel López de Legazpi to Philip II*, Cebu, July 1569, in: *The Colonization and Conquest*, p. 144. BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. III, pp. 54-61.

[99] "These people rob and enslave one another, although of the same island and even kindred. They are cruel among themselves. They do not often dare to kill one another, except by treachery or at great odds; and him who is slain his opponents continue to strike even after he is dead", *Relation of the Western Islands by Captain Diego de Artieda*, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, III, p. 197; Cfr. *Letter of M. L. de Legazpi to Philip II*, Cebu, 25 June, 1568, in: *The Colonization and Conquest*, p. 127; BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. II, pp. 239-243.

[100] "Many times it happens that half of a community and the other halves are at war, and they assault and seize one another... All their skill is employed in setting ambuscades and laying snares to seize and capture another...", *Relation of the Character and Conditions of the Inhabitants of the Philippines, by Miguel L. de Legazpi*, in: *Colonization and Conquest*, p. 145.

[101] "Although they be relatives or brothers, if they meet one another in the open, he who is strongest lays hands upon the other and sells him [as slave]. Consequently, no one dares to go ever so little a distance from his village", *Letter of Fray Martin de Rada*, in: Ibidem, p. 150; *Relation of the Character and Conditions...*, in: *Colonization and Conquest*, pp. 144-145; Cfr. *Letter of Andrés de Mirandaola to Philip II*, Cebu, 1565, in: *Colonization and Conquest*, p. 86.

educational, social, economic and political levels were of vast proportions. Why all these changes?

The fundamental truth of universal brotherhood and equality preached by Christianity left the Filipinos amazed and wondering.[102] Christianity instilled in them the sense of solidarity and brotherhood. They came to realize that they did not belong to one clan or tribe, but belonged to one nation, even to a universal family. I truly believe that is not an irony, as Bernad seems to suggest (p. 148), that one of the greatest results of the Spanish colonization was the birth of a sense of fatherland. It was precisely due to the arrival of Spain, a Christian nation grounded on the theologico-juridical principles of the Spanish theologians of the XVI century, — principles which were derived from St. Thomas and the Gospel — that the Filipinos acquired the sense of being one people. Spain, it is true, resisted any movement for independence in the Philippines. This was one of her grave flaws. But she knew that the political, social, and religious education she was imparting carried with it a real sense of nationhood. The war or independence started in 1896, but throughout the XIX century the movement for independence was already there. When did we have the first serious attempt at independence in any of the other colonial nations of Asia?

The change that Filipino society underwent during the Spanish period is fantastic in its proportions. To picture the Spanish period from 1565 to 1898 as a continous struggle against colonial rule is a serious historical misconception. We have but to cast our glance on the Filipino *historical* map. When Spain came, she saw more than seven thousand islands lost in the immensity of the Pacific Ocean. When she was defeated there existed the *First Filipino Republic*. When Urdaneta landed in Samar in 1565 the inhabitants of the Philipines were, in their immense majority, animists. When archbishop Nozaleda left, after the American takeover, there was a Christian nation. When Magellan landed at Limasawa in 1521, Father Pedro de Valderrama celebrated the first Mass on Filipino soil. At Cebu he was butchered and sacri-

[102] I do not hold that the Spaniards treated the Filipinos always as brothers. Many times they did not. But those who abused or ill-treated them knew well enough that they were breaking a basic teaching of the Christian religion.

ficed. After the first spark of independence in 1872, Fathers Gómez, Burgos and Zamora offered their own sacrifice, their lives, for the fatherland on the green field of Bagumbayan.

A retrospective look reveals the birth of an intelligentsia that has no parallel in any other colonial nation in Asia. Spain came in 1565. Fifty years later there were two universities in Manila. The university of Santo Tomas, founded in 1611, has been the gateway to Filipino history. Thousands of Filipinos passed through San José, San Juan de Letran and other colleges founded soon after the establishment of the Spanish regime. When Magellan and Legazpi came to the Philippines there were but two sizeable cities: Manila and Cebu. When the last Spanish official left Manila Bay, thousands of cities and towns dotted the Filipino landscape. When the missionaries came in 1565, irrigation was hardly known, when they left in 1898 hundreds of dikes had been constructed, thus opening to agriculture thousands of hectares of virgin land. When Magellan cruised the Filipino seas pirates were the terror of the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands, when Spain left that scourge had been blotted out.

The activity of the Church on behalf of the animistic peoples of the Philippines counts few parallels in the whole history of the world. No other nation became so rapidly Christian. The disorganized and primitive people of the time of Legazpi were replaced by a progressive nation in Asia in pursuit of high ideals. The Filipinos underwent a moral, intellectual and political development that is unequalled in colonial Asia or even in the whole world.

The Spanish conquest and evangelization brought about by Spain and the Spanish Friars is not a perfect realization. It could not be. Many black points still remain to be explained. Not the least is the failure of training a local clergy, together with the execution of *Gomburza* (Fathers Gómez, Burgos and Zamora) and the lack of political representation in the Spanish Parliament. But on the whole, Spanish history in the Philippines is positive. Spanish contributions in the fields of government, education, social welfare, trade and commerce, agriculture, political unity and nationalism are undoubtedly outstanding. Of Spain's contribution to religion nothing more need be said.

They key to understand Filipino-Spanish history is religion. In fact, religion holds the key to the understanding of progress and development in history. Great philosophers of history, like Toynbee[103] and Christopher Dawson[104] have deeply studied the the direct relation between Religion and Progress, and, in the case of Dawson especially, the vital role that Christianity played in the making of the West.[105] Religion holds the key to history not precisely because it draws man closer to his supernatural destiny but because progress is rooted in religion. This is true in a special way of Christianity.

The work of Spain and her missionaries in the Philippines does not stand or fall on the many concrete injustices that a modern Filipino can pinpoint throughout the three-hundred years of Hispanic history in the Philippines. Rather it stands or falls on those basic historical factors that we have studied before.

Historians call Rizal the 'First Filipino'.[106] Before him they were called inhabitants, natives, 'indios'. But many people before Rizal were true Filipinos. Already in 1574, when Manila's future was decided on the shores of Intramuros, when Li-ma-hong, the ferocious Chinese pirate sent his mercenary Japanese soldiers[107] against the defenders of Manila, some of the Filipinos cried out: 'the enemy is on us', and retreated with the band of Spanish soldiers, thus saving themselves and the Spaniards too.

The Dutch also came to experience the strength of the Filipino sense of solidarity. Simon de Anda y Salazar, with a Filipino-Spanish army resisted the British from his base in Pampanga in 1762-1764. Were not these people Filipinos? Father Peláez, Gómez, Burgos and Zamora were Filipinos to their very marrow. And it is not an irony or a paradox that those *four priests* were the forerunners in fighting and dying for Filipino nationhood.

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[103] ARNOLD TOYNBEE, *An Historian's Approach to Religion,* London, Oxford University Press, 1956.

[104] CHRISTOPHER DAWSON, *Progress and Religion,* Image Books, Doubleday & Company, New York, 1960.

[105] IBIDEM, *Medieval Essays,* Image Books, New York, 1959; *Understanding Europe,* Image Books, New York, 1960.

[106] Cfr. LEON MARIA GUERRERO, *op. cit.,* General title.

[107] Li-ma-hong had with him a chosen company of Japanese soldiers. These he sent against Manila on November 29, 1574, as a *force de frappe* or advanced detachment to surprise the Spaniards.

Religion had planted the seed of independence and freedom. Christianity is not only theologically but also socially speaking a liberating force. We only need to remember the monk Luther, the father of German nationalism. We can recall the first man who raised his voice for independence in Mexico, the mother colony of the Philippines, in 1810. He also was a priest: Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla.[108] His cry — *grito de Dolores* — was continued after his execution in 1811 by another priest: José María Morelos, captured and executed in 1815.[109]

Religion is at the basis of all nationalistic movements. In the concrete case of the Philippines the sense of nationhood, the conviction that the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands were not Spaniards but different people grew first among the Filipino clerics. It would be a service to Filipino history to study Father Peláez' influence upon nineteenth century Filipino nationalism. The flame of independence, once lit by him and fanned to a more intense blaze by Fathers Gómez, Burgos and Zamora, had to burn into a conflagration sooner or later. That Rizal's heart broke to pieces and bled profusely at seeing the lifeless bodies of the three Filipino priests garroted at the field of Bagumbayan on that gray morning of February 1872 is but a practical proof of the existence of a deep-running sense of nationhood. The fatherland was now crying. Part of Rizal was also dying on that tragic day. How did this sense of belonging come to be? Did the hearts of the Visayans also bleed at seeing Suleiman's fort rapidly desintegrating in flames in 1570?

RELIGION AND CULTURE IN EARLY FILIPINO SOCIETY

The problem I will now touch is a very complicated one. It will deal with the relation between religion and culture in *early Filipino society*. There is no religion, no matter how primitive, that can not offer some positive values to be assimilated by Chris-

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[108] Father Miguel Hidalgo was the parish priest of the rural village of Dolores, Mexico. He appealed to the Indian peasants thus: "My children, will you be free? Will you make the effort to recover from the hated Spaniards the lands stolen from your forefathers three hundred years ago?", *A History of Latin America*, GEORGE PENDLE, Pelikan Original, 1963, p. 93.

[109] Fathers Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos are not only the first fighters for Mexican independence, but also the first heroes of the subsequent Hispanic-American struggle for freedom.

tianity. Many things can be given a Christian meaning without conflict or contradiction.

Relation between religion and culture

I would like, however, to ask Christian anthropologists this capital question: where do they set the dividing line between religion and culture? Where does religion end and culture begin? In the Filipino historico-existential situation in which the early Spanish missionaries found themselves, what was culture and what was religion? Was not the natives' culture an *idolatrous* and *animistic* one? Before the Friars came to the Philippines, was not the culture of its inhabitants steeped in idolatry and superstition? Were not their customs, their practices, their values permeated by a fundamental pagan *anitistic* religion? Were not their *'idols'* the vehicles and manifestation of their culture? Is not religion the highest and most perfect manifestation of culture? Is there a basic distinction between religion and culture? How can a Christian missionary reject animistic religions and its implications and, at the same time, retain native idolatrous cultures? In rejecting animistic religions is he not destroying the native's culture, or at least the highest manifestation of it? Is not religion the key to history and culture? In the Philippines, what cultural values did the missionaries destroy? What type of Christianity did they preach?

Are the Filipinos really Christian? Is not their Christianity only a slight veneer spread over a basic pagan animism? Did not the missionaries paganize Christianity rather than christianize pagan Filipino animism? How much of actual Filipino religion is Christian and how much is mere superstition? What does an American anthropologist think of the huge masses of Filipino faithful accompanying the Black Nazarene venerated in the Church of Quiapo? Is he witnessing a pagan pageantry or a Christian procession? Is that Nazarene a 'Christian' Christ?

I believe I have asked a lot of questions. I have written them down due to the fact that I read these suggestive and thought provoking lines in Bernad's *Christianization of the Philippines*:

> "This basic affinity between Christianity and certain aspects of animism made it all the more necessary to subject the new convert to a careful process of Christian instruction, to make sure that their Christian faith would be without admixture of pagan beliefs. Superstition is hard to kill. This must have been one of the hardest tasks of the missionaries, and their success in a large number of cases was all the more remarkable.... They did not always succeed. It is easy to see how a people professedly Christian, could continue to harbor pagan superstitions". (p. 133).

I have been struck by a paradoxical historical situation in the Philippines. The missionaries have been attacked by two different schools of thought. One holds that the missionaries did not achieve their purpose, that is, the conversion of the Filipino people to Christianity. The Filipinos even in modern times are not Christian.[110] Many Protestant missionaries claim that the Philippines may be a 'Catholic' country but not a Christian one. By this they mean that the *substratum* that provides meaning to Christian faith is absent in Filipino Catholicism. They find rather folklore and pageantry, the external appearances, the rituals, the saints of Catholicism, but not true Christianity. According to these Protestant missionaries the Friars contented themselves with an external christianization of the people. The conversion of heart never took place in this 'Catholic' nation.

On the other hand, we find Catholic writers hurling against the Spanish missionaries and against the very Church almost the impudent accusation that they annihilated native cultures in mission lands. In their eagerness to convert the people to Christianity they divested them of their values and customs — culture — and imposed on them their own Christianity (cfr. Bernad, p. 196).

This is a most serious accusation which the many thousands of missionaries who came here to labour for Christ cannot answer. We will try to do so for them.

It is not difficult to see that in some instances the missionaries were overly zealous and as a consequence destroyed some aspects of the native cultures which could have become part of the

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[110] Cfr. HUGH ZURAT, O.F.M., *Renewal of the Church and Seminary-Revisited*, in: *Boletin Eclesiástico de Filipinas*, vol. XXXVIII, N. 429, July 1964, pp. 407-408

cultural wealth of the new nations. But could they distinguish then what was religion and what was culture? Is not culture, indissolubly fused with religion in early societies? We cannot speak of religion and culture as two unrelated manifestations of man's inner search for meaning. A clash between natives cultures and the demands of the new Christianity *seemed in part* inevitable. It is purely conjectural to assume that religion and culture can grow independently. In *early native societies* they never do. Religion is never isolated from culture nor culture from religion.[111] Yet writers continuously attack the past Spanish missionaries of the Philippines for having destroyed *on purpose*, i.e., *deliberately*, the native Filipino culture.[112]

At the time of the arrival of the Spaniards to the Philippines, we have to repeat once more, the whole culture of the people was permeated by an idolatrous, superstitious, animistic religion. Religion and culture were inextricably interwoven.

If we were to ask Herbert Spencer or Charles Darwin why some primitive cultures disappear when confronted with more developed ones, they would explain to us the theory of Natural Selection, applying it to culture and progress. The law of evolu-

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[111] Islam in modern Philippines, and in the world at large, is not merely a religion but a social phenomenon, a culture keeping the people separate from the rest of the Philippine Republic. Still more, is not modern Filipino culture entirely permeated by religion? What about the 'Santa Helenas', 'Santacruzans', 'Flores de Mayo', procession in honour of the Black Nazarene, the 'Siete Palabras', Holy Week processions, town 'fiestas', etc.? Are not the 'santos' the most appreciated treasures of Filipino culture?

[112] Bernad lashes at the Spanish Friars for their 'misguided' approach to the problem of Christianization in the Philippines and in Asia in general. He feels proud that the Jesuit approach has been different from that of the Friars. He writes: "The Jesuit approach had been based on the notion — popular today but unpopular then — that it was not necessary for people to give up their native culture in order to become Christian..." (pp. 196-197).

This quotation needs a clarification. No Friar preached the need to abandon one's own culture in order to become Christian. Even those who advocated the policy of the so-called *Tabula Rasa* applied it only to the *specifically* religious issues, never to the cultural issues which had no implications on religion. In the famous *Disputes on the Chinese Rites* of the XVII and XVIII centuries the issue that was contested by the Friars and the Jesuits was not the need for adaptation, which everybody agreed upon, but whether those 'Rites' were pagan, i.e., manifestations of an animistic religion or not. The missionaries had no quarrel over the manner of dressing or the need for liturgical adaptation, but over the possible pagan connotations of *ancestor worship, offering of incense to ancestors, worship to Confucius, food offering to the dead, idea of God*, etc....

tion applied to culture and religion favours the survival of the fittest. Darwin would tell us that the resultant of the constant war in nature and the perpetual fight for survival is the obliteration of the weak and the birth of higher beings.[113] If we were to apply this theory to social and religious life the consequences would indeed be catastrophic. These two luminaries of the rationalistic XIX century would have answered that Filipino culture fell victim to the more fit Spanish culture. The law of Natural Selection, applied to culture, accorded inevitable triumph to Spanish culture. Nietzsche would still be more violent and definite. If people are to conquer (like the Spaniards in the Philippines) they have to destroy and destroy with zest. Let us read this passage:

> "Refraining mutually from injury, violence, and exploitation and placing one's will on a par with that of someone else — this may become, in a certain rough sense, good manners among individuals if the appropriate conditions are present (namely, if these men are actually similar in strength and value standards and belong together in *one* body). But as soon as this principle is extended, and possibly even accepted as the *fundamental principle of society* it immediately proves to be what it really is — a will to the *denial* of life, a principle of desintegration and decay.
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> "Here we must beware of superficiality and act to the bottom of the matter, resisting all sentimental weakness: life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, *overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression hardness, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and at last, at its mildest, exploitation* (underscoring here is mine) — but why should one always use those words in which a slanderous intent has been imprinted for ages!
>
> "Even the body within which individuals treat each other as equals, as suggested before — and this happens in every healthy aristocracy — if it is a living and not a dying body, has to do to other bodies what the individuals within it refrain from doing to each other: it will have to be an incarnate will to power, it will strive to grow, spread, seize, become predominant — not from any morality or immorality but because it is *living*. And because life simply is will to power. But there is no

[113] Cfr. CHRISTOPHER DAWSON, *Progress and Religion*, Image Books, New York, 1960, p. 25.

point on which the ordinary consciousness of the European resists instruction as on this: everywhere people are now raving even under scientific disguises, about coming conditions of society in which "the exploitative aspect" will be removed — which sounds to me as if they promised to invent a way of life that would dispense with all organic functions. *"Exploitation" does not belong to a corrupt or imperfect and primitive society:* (underscoring mine) It belongs to the *essence* of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will of life.

"If this should be an innovation as a theory — as a reality it is the *primordial fact* of all history: people ought to be honest with themselves at least that far."[114]

Of these strange theories of Spencer and Darwin, or of the more satanic one of the Pontifex Maximus of the 'Super-Man', Nieztsche, the Spanish missionaries fortunately knew absolutely nothing. In their hearts burned the gentle flame of the salvific Gospel of the Lord Jesus. They knew nothing of a master *morality* or *a slave morality.* Still we are burning incense at the altar of Spencer, Darwin and Nieztsche and are hurling stones to efface the work brought about by the Spanish missionaries.

I find that many missionaries of the present moment, late comers to the mission fields of the Philippines[115] — thus unable to understand the past achievements and failures in the Christianization of the Philippines — are shooting too many arrows at the missionaries of past centuries. Are we going to judge them by our present standards?

It is paradoxical that while the Spanish missionaries are vilified for perhaps going a few times beyond the proper limits, no remonstrances are heard against the obliteration of the North American Indian. And this was done in the XVIII and XIX centuries.[116] What were the "Pilgrim Fathers" doing?[117]

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[114] F. W. NIETZSCHE, *Beyond Good and Evil. Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future,* tr. by WALTER KAUFMANN, Vintage Books, New York, 1966, Section 259, pp. 203-204.

[115] "I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour; others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour", JOHN, 4:38.

[116] Cfr. ARNOLD TOYNBEE, *A Study of History,* vol. I., pp. 211-215.

[117] GEORGE PENDLE, *A History of Latin America,* p. 52, Cfr. A. TOYNBEE, *op. cit.,* p. 211-215.

Why did they not protest? The Spanish missionaries not only did not destroy the culture of the people in general, but were always the best defenders of the people themselves.

At the threshold of American Christianization we find the prophetic denunciation of Montesinos, a humble Dominican Friar.[118] His denunciation resounded throughout the unknown vastness of the new continent. The flame of Christian freedom to denounce injustice and abuses, once lit by Montesinos, was passed to the fiery Bartolome de las Casas, to the humanistic theologian Francisco de Vitoria, to the learned navigator and cosmographer Andres de Urdaneta, to the mathematician Friar Martin de Rada, to the passionate defender of the Filipino people, Friar Domingo de Salazar, the first bishop of the Philippines. But of this, we have written enough.

A lesson from history.

History lends us a helping hand in clarifying the point under review, that is, the relationship between religion and culture.

The Acts of the Apostles offer us the first example of clash between the demands of the new religion and the culture of the people. From the very beginning of her history, the Church, still too young and fragile, hardly out of her swaddling clothes, a prisoner of a small geographical area, was beset by the problem of acculturation.[119] Some of the Jews who had accepted the Faith were bent on imposing upon others their customs and religious

[118] "Tell me, by what right and justice have you reduced these Indians into so cruel an horrible a servitude? Who gave you authority to wage hateful war on these peaceful and humble people? Why did you kill many of them with torments never heard of before? Why did you exhaust and oppress them, withholding food from them in their hunger and medicine in their sickness, so that, due to this and to the excessive work you imposed on them, they die, or rather, you push them to their death so that you can get your daily ration of gold? What interest did you show to teach them the Christian doctrine, to help them know God their creator, to baptize them, to invite them to attend mass and keep Sundays and feasts of obligation? Have they not rational souls? Are you not obliged to love them as yourselves? Do you not understand this? Do you not feel this? Are you so engulfed in so deep a sleep? Be sure that in the state in which you find yourselves now you will not be saved better than the Moros and Turks who have no faith in Jesus Christ", FRAY BARTOLOME DE LAS CASAS, *Historia de las Indias* (3 vols.) ed. AGUSTIN MILLARES CARLO, Preliminary Study by LEWIS HANKE, México-Buenos Aires, 1951, vol. II, pp. 441-442.

[119] 'Acculturation' and 'Acculturization' are commonly used in the Spanish language, but perhaps a better word would be 'Transculturation'.

practices.[120] Barnabas and Paul opposed them bitterly. It took a council of the Church, the Council of Jerusalem, to settle and calm things down. Yet even then not for long. Some of the apostles wavered in their attitude. They found it too difficult to accept new and different ways to evangelize the pagan world. Peter himself got into trouble. His conduct as to the way Christianity should be preached to the Gentiles, in spite of the teaching of Christ, of the vision of the food from heaven,[121] of the visit to the centurion Cornelius,[122] of the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem[123] was bogged down by ambiguity and lack of decisiveness. Peter's *Jewish background* restrained the impetus of his *Christian vision.* Culture and religion were or seemed to be at war inside him. This war, however, soon erupted into the open. Paul was instrumental in forcing Peter to a final confrontation:

> "But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemened. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the Gentiles, but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And with him the rest of the Jews acted insincerely so that even Barnabas was carried away by their insincerity. But when I saw that they were not straight-forward about the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas before them all: 'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews' ".[124]

The clash between the two pillars of Christianity, Peter and Paul, was undoubtedly a very serious one. A clash that, to my mind, will always be present so long as the Church is composed of men. Paul emerged victorious and his victory meant that Christianity was to spread to the whole of mankind. A sweet victory for us, but a painful triumph for him. An unfair win in the eyes of some historians for, by this, Paul betrayed the simple doctrine of a Jew, Jesus Christ. By transplanting it into the Ro-

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[120] "But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved...!", Acts, 15:1-11.

[121] Acts 10:9-16

[122] Acts 10:19-43

[123] Acts 15:12-21

[124] Galatians 2:11-14

man world he ultimately made it a 'Roman' religion. In the long run Paul assumes the character of a villain.

There is no need now to resurrect the bitter accusations hurled against the Church for having accepted Greek and Roman values. Historians speak of a 'Hellenized' Christianity rather than of a 'Christianized' Hellenism. The purity of the Christian message was lost as Christianity came into contact with Greco-Roman philosophy and culture. Writers like Justin the Apologist, Minutius Felix, Clement of Alexandria and Origin, by accepting Greek philosophy 'paganized' Christianity. With Constantine, the Church accepted *en bloc* the culture and values of the Romans. Thus she became a 'Constantinian' Church.

Bringing down our discussion to the present era, another footnote from modern history can be added. I bring this out if only to prove that not only in times gone by but also in our own days is the problem of acculturation a burning issue. Christ must become incarnate in all native cultures. How? No man can draw the line that divides religion from culture. What is religious for a Christian anthropologist may be taken by a non-Christian anthropologist to be a mere cultural manifestation. Hence the possibility of conflict. If the apostles themselves failed, how can we succeed?

Some years ago there was a bitter controversy in Zaire concerning the need for *Zairization*. President Joseph Mobutu in search for Zairian identity, decreed that all names bearing the taint of foreign influence, be changed. He further asked that Christians discard the names given them at baptism in exchange for pure Zairian names. Still going further he made an earnest effort to revive some animistic practices and cults already overcome by the Christian religion. Mobutu's *Zairization* reached such limits that Cardinal Malula of Kinshasa had to come out with a defense of Christianity. As an African, as a Zairian and as a Christian he could not accept Mobutu's radical policy. The Cardinal felt that there were Christian values that could never be rejected. Still more, pagan beliefs could not be revived without betraying the Christian religion. A return to those beliefs was simply a return to animism and to the forest. The two leaders were recognized as true representatives of a new and dynamic

Zaire. In the end, however, Cardinal Malula was declared "persona non grata" and had to leave his own country for some time.[125]

Are we going to argue from this that Malula did not know what he was talking about? Did he perhaps lack the intellectual capacity to understand the culture and religion of his own people?

Some Filipino historians hold that Spanish missionaries did not preach Christianity as such, but a peculiar brand of Christianity. They did not bring here the salvific religion of Christ but rather a Western Christianity that took no notice of Filipino cultural values. In so doing they destroyed the Filipino cultural heritage.

It is further argued that a missionary should divest himself of his values, his cultural background and his national traits before proceeding to the mission lands. And this because people need Christ, but a Christ incarnated in the culture of the people. I ask myself: can a missionary divest himself of all the cultural values that individuate him, that specify his personality, that make him what he is? Should it be so, then only Christ could be a missionary. Even then, I doubt if he would be very successful. For He tried to preach His doctrine, to 'incarnate' his divine message in the socio-cultural-historical context of contemporary Judaism. Yet he failed. He was a complete failure.

To further stress my point I will call as witness a man who belongs to a culture different from that of the ordinary Filipino people. That this man should defend the missionaries is a proof that what we have been saying is not a fabrication of our mind, but is in consonance with the concrete existential reality we are living in. Belonging to a cultural minority, his testimony acquires a value transcending the short lines by which it is expressed. He writes:

> "Let me end where I began, with the issues of nationalism and cultural identity. The way things are

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[125] Cfr. *The Tablet*, vol. 224, No. 6803, 17 October 1970, p. 1009; *Ib., A question of Nationalism*, vol. 226, No. 6870, 12 February, 1972, p. 142; *Ib., A Clash of personalities*, vol. 226, No. 6872, 26 February, 1972, pp. 182-183. Quite a large number of Christians from the nations of the Third World are advocating a return to the "God of our ancestors" and a rejection of the "God of the Europeans".

turning out all over the Third World these days, it looks like from now on every foreign missionary will have to be ready to suffer the consequences of the ever intensifying growth of nationalism in developing countries. The Yankee-go-home phenomenon is with us to stay, and the missionary better get used to the idea that henceforth the xenophobic attitude towards him is something he will have to live with, probably all his life as a missionary. The fact will make his work harder but it should have the salutary effect of making him realize evermore strongly what the real mainspring of his missionary vocation is: Christ Himself, His call to go and preach to the nations, His charity for those same people who regard him with distrust and aversion.

"And on the part of the people to whom the missionary is sent: I think we are demanding the impossible when we expect the foreign missionary to shed his cultural identity to become Filipino like us, to think and act Filipino in all things. He cannot. His specific cultural conditioning is very much a part of his total personality and it is something he cannot divest himself of so easily, no matter how hard he tries. This is not to say he should not therefore adopt the ways of thinking and acting of us Filipinos. He must, but adaptation is by no means denial of one's identity; rather, it is an acceptance of the other and an affirmation of one's own. Come to think of it, it is only in this simultaneous acceptance of the other and an affirmation of self that we can have dialogue — and the preaching of the Gospel is dialogue!"[26]

With this wonderful quotation from an 'Igorot', a man who is fighting for the recognition of the cultural identity of his own people, I close this paragraph.

THE MISSIONARY ACHIEVEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Bernad credits the Spanish missionaries with the founding and development of most towns in the Philippines (pp. 209-210). He credits them obviously with the Christianization of the country, too. Thus we read:

"These five missionary orders — Augustinians, Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, and Recollects — were main-

[26] FRANCISCO F. CLAVER, S.J., *Letter to a Missionary*, in: *Philippine Priests' Forum*, vol. IV, N. 1, March 1972, pp. 86-87.

ly responsible for the work of Christianizing the islands" (p. 125).

And in another place:

> "But the work of the five missionary orders.... had made the Philippines at the close of the nineteenth century, the only Christian nation in Asia" (p. 218).

No doubt, this is an achievement unparallelled in any other part of the world. The Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia. This is the achievement of the missionaries. However, Bernad also writes in his book:

> "Eventually the missionaries became themselves a problem. Much of the anti-Spanish feeling that culminated in the Revolution of 1896 had been directed against the Friars" (p. 211).

This quotation provides us with a starting point for a more detailed study of the problem under review.

Throughout his whole book, Bernad is extremely careful to separate the Jesuits form the Friars when the odium of the people seems to be directed against them (cfr. pp. 162-170; 194-196; 204; 211; 220; 240; 241-254; 312; 317; 318; 320; 329; 332; 335). But when an occasion arises for mentioning the fantastic achievement of the evangelization of the Philippines the Friars revert, very rightly, to being the missionaries or the religious. In fact, wherever there is something great to report: a victory to celebrate, good news to share, new changes introduced in the islands, missionary successes, etc.... there is always the Jesuit chronicler to report about it.[127]

A very clear instance of this attitude is borne in the following passage:

> "The expulsion of the Jesuits had an unforeseen effect. It saved them from the odium in which other

[127] The Christianization of the Philippines is so complex and so vast an enterprise that the glory goes to all the religious missionaries and also to the unknown *encomenderos* and famous *conquistadores* like Legazpi, Salcedo, Goiti, Dasmariñas et al. All these people contributed their share in achieving this astonishing feat. The missionaries alone could never have accomplished the evangelization of the Philippines. The glory for this belongs to all of them.

> missionaries (the friars) were held. When the Jesuits returned to the islands, they did not get back any of the parishes in Luzon or the Visayas. They had to dedicate themselves to educational work at the Ateneo and the Normal School for Teachers, and to such scientific research as was being carried on in the Manila Observatory. Their only parishes were the remote and often difficult mission in Mindanao. The fact that they had no parishes in Luzon or the Visayas exempted them from native rancor. During the Revolution, and in the periods preceding and subsequent to it, the Filipino nationalists made a distinction between the Spanish Friars whom they opposed and the Spanish Jesuits whom they at least tolerated, and perhaps in some cases admired. The words of Jose Rizal may have had an echo in some of the revolutionary leaders who had studied under them: "I owe a good deal to this order... perhaps all that I am taken to be" (p. 254).

The Friars were not hated by the ordinary people of the Philippines. Then as now, the common *tao*, the ordinary man, did not reject the Spanish Friars. The Filipino people behaved in a very humane way towards the Spanish Friars of the Provinces during the revolutionary years. They can feel proud for their fair dealings with the Friars during those terrible times.

There was odium against them, but that was among the *ilustrados*, the intellectual elite who lived separated and segregated from the people, from the masses. The fight of the intellectuals against Spain was greatly coloured by their craving for personal gain. Some of the so-called *ilustrados* were motivated by individual interests. They wanted to take over the country from the Spaniards not in their desire of changing the life of the people but in the hope of becoming masters themselves. The real man of the people, born a *tao*, Andres Bonifacio soon fell victim to the interests of the oligarchs.

I am of the opinion that there was no native rancor against the Friars just as there is none today, save in some selected circles which are still resentful of not having themselves become masters. No doubt, resentment, odium, hatred and rancor were directed against the Spanish Friars in the case of the Propaganda Move-

ment. But the Propaganda Movement was after all a Western creation, the effect of an anticlerical culture born in Europe after the Enlightment and the French Revolution.[128] The *ilustrados* hated the Friars, as the European 'enlightened' people hated the Church. Their accusations against the Friars' corruptions are rather the signs of their apostasy from the Church instead of being proofs of the Friars' vices. Their accusations show their alienation from the Church and from the current Christianity of their times. It has an explanation. In an age of reason, where faith was descredited, in an age of eccentric and irrational optimism man believed only in his own powers and his own perfectibility. Any man who stood as a testimony of a different life, a witness to a supernatural life, had to be rejected, ridiculed, mocked and vilified. Such were the Friars of the Philippines.

The Propaganda Movement did not distinguish, as a general rule, between Jesuits and Friars. For the *ilustrados*, all were alike. The hate against the Friars had an all-embracing dimension.[129] All of them belonged to the same club: *frailocracy*. Why Bernad's attempt to separate the Jesuits from the frailocracy club?

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[128] I reject the aims of the men of the Propaganda Movement against the Church. I have no quarrel against their fight for independence against Spain. Their revolution was something necessary. But in the end the revolution failed because with the entry of the United States the Propaganda Movement betrayed the hope of the country. The men of the Propaganda capitulated to the North American, accepted a setttlement that favoured their interests and happily forgot their 'redemptive' outcries of the past. The people were forgotten. The Revolution was doomed to failure due to the interests of the *ilustrados*, alien to the basic interests of the common people of the Philippines.

[129] The Bourbonic monarchies of Europe which expelled the Jesuits in the XVIII century, and later on pressured the Holy See to suppress the Society of Jesus altogether, did so out of hatred for the Church as such. Let us not be naive and think that their hatred was solely 'Jesuitic'. It was hatred against Christianity as such. As the Jesuits had been the most outstanding soldiers of the Church, the first arrows were expectedly against them. Can we not see a similar parallel in the Philippines during the Propaganda Movement of the XIX century?

According to Bernad the *ilustrados* did not draw a positive picture of the Friars.[130] Are we going then, on this account, to accept that they were right? After all Rizal, Pardo Tavera, Buencamino, Paterno, M. H. del Pilar[131] were biased. Those ilustrados had not a monopoly on the truth.

The Spanish history of the Philippines begins and ends with the Friar. But who were the men called Friars? This is the question asked by Bernad (p. 240). For the answer he does not consult the Friars themselves. Nor does he consult the great Jesuits Sánchez, Sedeño, Chirino, Colin, Alzina, Murillo, Delgado and others. He simply quotes a man of today. He writes:

> "At first, writes Ambassador Guerrero, the friar was Fray Andres de Urdaneta the navigator. Then he was Fray Domingo de Salazar, the first bishop who did in the Philippines what Las Casas had done in Mexico, namely, defend the rights of the natives against the encroachments of the Spanish colonizers. Later he was Fray Juan de Valderrama, provincial superior of the Augustinians charged with violation of celibacy" (p. 240).

These are the Friars in the mind of Ambassador Guerrero. Are these the Friars in Bernad's opinion? Bernad closes the paragraph thus:

> "One thing is certain. Almost three fourths of the Philippine archipelago was Christianized by the friars. That is an achievement for which history must give them credit" (p. 240).

Yet how many give them credit? Bernad himself had said that Christianity in some cases was only skin-deep (p. 197). Even worse, did not Christianity mean the obliteration of anything Filipino, especially culture, civilization, the social fabric,

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[130] "Rizal did not draw a positive picture of the friars; nor did Marcelo H. del Pilar and other Filipino leaders who wrote against the abuses of the "frailocracy" ", Bernad, p. 240.

[131] M. H. del Pilar was brimming with hatred for the Friars. Cfr. *La Frailocracia Filipina,* Barcelona, 1889; *La Soberanía Monacal en Filipinas. Apuntes sobre la funesta preponderancia del fraile en las Islas así en lo político, como en lo económico y religioso,* Manila, 1898.

the freedom of the people and foreign domination? Bernad had written:

> "The people indeed became Christians, but they paid a terrible price: no less than their personal dignity, their liberties, and their social fabric" (p. 190).

With this idea in their mind, the *ilustrados* of the Propaganda Movement were justified in denouncing the work of the Spanish Friars. Freedom, dignity, and culture demanded to break off the domination of the Friars responsible for all the evils of Filipino society. After all, for many people the Friars' achievement in the Philippines can be reduced to the person of Father Dámaso, that brutal, ugly, repellent, hateful, vile, villanous figure of a Friar who, in the end, against his vow of celibacy, begets a beautiful Maria Clara. Are we to swallow this? We are not crazy![132]

As Bernad does not give us his opinion on the Friars' achievement, but rather relies on the opinion of an enemy of the Friars, I will quote the opinion of a Protestant scholar, Frank Laubach:

> "Spain did accomplish what no other European nation has ever done in the Orient, and did accomplish it without crushing the people under her heal... Scant justice has ever been done by writers in English to the colonial regime. Spain altered the Filipino ways of life for the better... The Spaniards could go as far as America for gold, but if they crept across the boundless Pacific it was because it was the thing that heroes did for the Cross of Christ".[133]

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[132] Let me offer my readers a passage where the Friars are accused of immorality. "The confessional box, apart from having been warped into an illicit and criminal den of love dating, can be compared to a fountain overflowing with pure clear waters that serves to wash off the dirt from a man. We must therefore not be afraid of getting dirty. What does it matter if a wife is unfaithful to her husband, especially if the seducer is a priest and a representative of God on earth? She only has to enter the confessional box and there she will find a compassionate lover who will try to wash away her sinful actions by caresses and forbidden impure pleasures.

"Filipino people, awake! See to it that your women evade the confessional box. No benefit can they reap from it. On the contrary it is the very place where your daughters are in danger of being abused and raped...", VICTORIANO RODRIGUEZ, *De todo un poco. Ligeros Apuntes*, p. 18, as quoted by ISACIO R. RODRIGUEZ, *Gregorio Aglipay y los Orígenes de la Iglesia Filipina Independiente* (1898-1917) (2 vols.), Madrid, 1960, vol. I, p. 17, note 46.

[133] FRANK LAUBACH, *The People of the Philippines*, New York, 1925, as quoted by J. M. CAVANNA Y MANSO, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

Still another quotation from an American Protestant:

"I have to admit, gentleman, that due to the unfavourable judgement pronounced against the Friars in the Philippines, I arrived in this country with a prejudiced mind and a negative opinion about them.

However, ever since I have been able to personally observe things and study the question in the field, I have completely reformed and changed my opinion. Had the Friars defects? Indeed they had! They were not gods but men. Could there be some who might have dishonoured their holy vocation or state? Perhaps yes. But as we lament such defects or errors, we must not for that reason be cruel by passing a general judgement on the basis of a few particular cases.

We must never forget that the Friars were responsible for the great radical transformation wrought in these Islands. The immense benefits brought about by the Christian religion as well as the sound moral life and customs imparted to the people were due to their instrumentality. Is this not enough merit to counterbalance their defects?

And this is not the only general benefit achieved by the Friars in the Philipines. They took a keen interest in the material prosperity of the Filipinos. The Filipinos' knowledge of Spanish, their proficiency in crafts and industry and their expertise in agriculture were the result of the Friars' efforts. They also imported highly useful plants from Mexico, such as maize, coffee, tobacco, sugar cane, American agave (magüey), camote, indigo plant, etc... Together with this they brought the knowledge of many other practical arts such as painting, music, foundring, the Roman alphabet, stone-building, brick-building, tile-making, mortar-mixing, etc...[134]

In the opinion of Spanish liberal Tomás de Comyn, this is the Friars' achievement:

"Of little avail would have been the valour and constancy with which Legazpi and his worthy companions overcame the natives of these islands if the apostolic zeal of the missionaries had not seconded their exertions, and aided to consolidate the enterprise. The latter were the real conquerors; they who, without any other arms than their virtues, gained over the good will of the islanders, caused the Spanish name to be loved, and gave to the

[134] Quoted in ISACIO R. RODRIGUEZ, *Gregorio Aglipay*, vol. I., pp. 48-49.

> King, as it were by a miracle, two millions more of submissive and Christian subjects. These were the legislators of the barbarous hordes who inhabited the islands of this immense Archipelago, realizing by their mild persuasion the allegorical prodigies of Anphion and Orpheus".[135]

When Comyn wrote this passage in 1810 the Propaganda Movement, anti-clericalism, anti-Friarism and "Frailocracy" did not yet exist. Bernad does not seem ready to concede to the Friars what Comyn, a layman visitor to the Philippines, has admitted above. There is a sound historical principle which says: *Distingue tempora and concordabis mores.* Bernad should have realized that the Propaganda Movement, born in the last quarter of the XIX century, has poisoned the hearts and minds of many Filipinos. This poison is still very active in modern times.

John P. Chidwid, an American priest, had this to say at the beginning of the present century:

> "Dear citizens... Is it possible that a handful of Friars, living and working among millions of uncivilized Filipinos... is it possible, I repeat, that these men, finding themselves at the mercy of such a numerous multitude, could despoil the Filipinos of their lands and properties and corrupt their habits and customs? Do you believe this, you who know by experience the natives of our nation, you who know that human nature is not heir to civilization, but rather that it is one and the same in the savage and in the civilized man, you who know how the Indians defended inch by inch the land that we were wresting away from them by force and violence? Do you believe that the early Filipinos permitted or tolerated the Friars to do with them what the wild Americans never allowed our parents to do?
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> Citizens, when we read the history of our relations with the Indians, when we read that our ancestors killed them without any compassion in the North, in the South, in the East and in the West; when we read how England, in the conquest of Tasmania, has not left a single native alive; when we read that after the conquest of Australia by England hardly a handful of aborigenes has been left alive... Then I cannot understand why we, the Americans, and our so-called cousins, the English people, sit

[135] TOMAS DE COMYN, *State of the Philippines in 1810 and Philippine Progress Prior to 1898*, Filipiniana Book Guild, XV, Manila, 1969, p. 104.

down in judgment to condemn the Spanish Friars for having converted seven million people without civilization, not by reducing them into corpses but by elevating them into brotherhood in Christ.

Thus, dear friends and citizens, when you hear those ridiculous accusations and invectives about the Philippine Islands and against our brothers the Spanish Friars, demand from those who so dare to defame them to show you another page in World History that could be, compared with the civilizing work of the Friars in the Philippine Islands".[136]

I can still offer my patient readers a longer list of historians who have expressly studied the contribution of Spain and the Spanish Friars to the making of the Philippines. E. G. Bourne, a specialist in Hispanic-Philippine studies, has this to say:

"In the light, then, of impartial history raised above race prejudice and the religious prepossessions, after a comparison with the early years of the Spanish conquest of America or with the first generation or two of the English settlements, the conversion and civilization of the Philippines in the fourty years following Legaspi's arrival, must be pronounced an achievement without a parallel in history".[137]

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[136] Cfr. M. B. GARCIA, *Reparaciones de la Historia,* in: *España y América,* IX, 1911, pp. 70 & ff., quoted by ISACIO R. RODRIGUEZ, *op. cit.,* vol. I p. 50

[137] E. G. BOURNE, *General Introduction* to 'The Philippine Islands, 1494-1898', BLAIR-ROBERTSON (55 vols.), vol. I, p. 37. In another place before he had written: "The tragedies and blunders of English colonization in America are often forgotten and only the tragedies and blunders of Spanish colonization are remembered. In the period which elapsed between the formulation of the Spanish and of the English colonial policies religious ideals were displaced by commercial, and in the exaltation of the commercial ideal England took the lead. Colonies, from being primarily fields for the propagation of Christianity and incidentally for the production of wealth, became the field primarily for industrial commercial development and incidentally for Christian work... The Spanish policy aimed to preserve and civilize the native races, not to establish a new home for Spaniards and the colonial legislation provided elaborate safeguards for the protection of the Indians. Many of these were a mere dead letter but the preservation and civilization of the native stock in Mexico, Central and South America, and above all in the Philippines stand out, in marked contrast, with the fate, past and prospective, of the aborigenes in North America, the Sandwich Islands, New Zealand and Australia, and clearly differentiate in their respective tendencies and results the Spanish and English systems. The contrast between the effect of the Spanish conquest in the West Indies, Mexico, and the Philippines, reflects the development of the humane policy of the government", Ibidem, pp. 35-36.

Mallat,[138] La Perouse,[139] Crawfurd,[140] Comyn,[141] Palgrave,[142] Jagor,[143] Sawyer,[144] Petters[145] and other foreign travel-

[138] "L'indigène des Philippines est l'homme les plus heureux du monde. Malgré son tribut, il n'est pas d'être vivant en société qui paye moins d'impôt que lui. Il est libre, il est heureux et ne pense nullement à se soulever", J. MALLAT, *Les Philippines, histoire, geographie, moeurs, agriculture, industrie, et commerce des colonies espagnoles dans l'Oceanie* (2 vols.), Paris, 1846, vol. I, p. 369.

[139] *Voyage autour du Monde* (2 vols.), Paris, 1797, vol. II, p. 347.

[140] "Almost every other country of the Archipelago is, at this day, in point of wealth, power, and civilization, in a worse state than when Europeans connected themselves with them three centuries back. The Philippines alone have improved in civilization, wealth, and populousness. When discovered most of the tribes were a race of half-naked savages, inferior to all the great tribes, who were pushing at the same time, an active commerce, and enjoying a respectable share of the necessaries and comforts of a civilized state. Upon the whole, they are at present superior in almost everything to any of the other races. This is a valuable and instructive fact", *History of the Indian Archipelago* (2 vols.), F. R. S. Edinburgh, 1820, vol. II, pp. 447-448.

[141] "Let us visit the Philippine Islands and with astonishment shall we there behold extended ranges studded with temples and spacious convents, the Divine worship celebrated with pomp and splendour; regularity in the streets and even luxury in the houses and dress; schools of the first rudiments in all the towns, and the inhabitants well versed in the art of writing. We shall see there causeways raised, bridges of good architecture built, and, in short, all the measures of good government and police, in the greatest part of the country, carried into effect; yet the whole is due to the exertions, apostolic labours and pure patriotism of the ministers of religion. Let us travel over the provinces, and we shall see towns of 5, 10, and 20.000 Indians, peacefully governed by one weak old man, who, with his doors open at all hours, sleeps quiet and secure in his dwelling without any other magic, or any other guard than the love and respect with which he has known how to inspire his flock". TOMAS DE COMYN, *State of the Philippines in 1810 and Philippine Progress prior to 1898*, FBG, Manila, 1969, pp. 216-217.

[142] "To clerical government, paradoxical as the statement may sound in modern European ears, the Philippine Islands owe, more than to anything else, their internal prosperity, the Malay population its sufficiency and happiness...", W. GIFFORD, PALGRAVE, *Malay Life in the Philippines*, in: *Cornhill Magazine*, 1878, p. 616, as quoted by E. G. BOURNE, Ib., pp. 74-75.

[143] "Credit is certainly due to Spain for having bettered the condition of a people who, though comparatively speaking highly civilized, yet being continually distracted by petty wars, had sunk into a disorder and uncultivated state. The inhabitants of these beautiful islands, upon the whole, may well be considered to have lived as comfortably during the last hundred years, protected from all external enemies and governed by mild laws, as those of any other tropical country under the native or European sways... The Friars also, have certainly had an essential part in the production of these results...", FEDOR JAGOR, *Travels in the Philippines*, FBG, Manila, 1965, 264.

[144] FREDERIC H. SAWYER, *The Inhabitants of the Philippines*, New York, 1900, pp. VI; VIII; 125 & ff.

[145] 'I am a Dutch, that is to say, a victim of national antipathies towards Spain, deep-rooted ill feelings, sucked almost with mother's milk and

lers or residents of the Philippines could not but note down the immense work done in the Philippines by the Spanish Friars.

I want to conclude and close this paragraph with a quotation from a Friar, J. M. de Zúñiga, a veteran missionary of the Philippine missions and perhaps one of the best writers on the Philippines. Writing at the beginning of the XIX century he said:

> "Spanish rule has imposed very little burdens upon these natives which has freed them from the misfortunes brought about by the continuous wars of some barrios against others. Aside from the fact that many have died in the war, it also led to the miserable lives of those whose were taken as slaves. This has resulted in the slow increase in the population of the towns. This is what happens now in the mountain strongholds of the non-Christians who do not recognize the sovereignty of the King of Spain.
>
> After surrendering to the Spanish monarch, these same people have become happier and have increase in population. Their having put themselves under the protection of the Spaniards have proved useful to them not only physically but also spiritually, bringing upon themselves the blessings of eternal happiness for their souls.
>
> These I say not as a missionary but as a thinker".[146]

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fostered by an absurd system of education and teaching of history in our schools

But I am a 'convert' in whatever concern things of Spain since my arrival as a Catholic missionary to the shores of this pearl of the Orient, back by the end of 1908...

So profound was the shame I felt when the scales that blinded my eyes were removed at the first contacts with the beautiful reality in the Philippines; so high my indignation against the slanderers of the heroic friars of the Philippines: shame and indignation which grew from day to day during my eleven years residence in this my adopted country, that I considered it a duty of conscience, aside of my parochial ministry, to exercise the apostolate of the pen and go to meet face to face and silence all the slanderers, ancient and modern, of Catholic Spain..., HENRY PETTERS, quoted by J. M. CAVANNA, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

[146] *Status of the Philippines in 1800*, FBG, XXI, Manila, 1973, p. 150; Cfr. *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* (2 vols.), ed. W. E. RETANA, Madrid, 1893, vol. I, p. 174.

MILESTONES IN PHILIPPINE HISTORY

We read in Bernad's book:

> "The coming of the Jesuits proved a turning point in the development of the Philippine Islands in at least two respects. They brought with them the art of building in stone; and they established the first schools in Manila and the provinces" (p. 247).

This passage needs a commentary.

The Jesuits' achievement in the Philippines is indeed fantastic. Their expulsion from the Spanish dominions in 1767 and their final suppression by Pope Clement XIV in 1773 was so serious a blow that the Church seemed to be shaken to its very foundations. What the Church and the world lost by this unjust action cannot be measured historically.

The art of building in stone

In regard to the two turning points mentioned by Bernad let me give a few clarifications. The Jesuit Antonio Sedeño, who arrived in the Philippines with the first bishop of the Philippines in 1581, is held to be responsible for putting up the first stone building in the city of Manila and, consequently, in the Philippines. This cannot be denied, but Domingo de Salazar, the first bishop of the Philippines, rendered an incalculable service to Manila and the Philippines precisely on this particular point.

In 1583, while the 'Most Noble and Ever Loyal City of Manila' was grieving the loss of Governor General Ronquillo de Peñalosa, and the people were holding the funeral rites at San Agustin Church, the catafalque caught fire. In a few seconds the Church was in flames. From the Church the fire spread rapidly to the adjacent nipa houses. For several hours the fire raged unabated. Everything crumbled to ashes in its fiery swath. By the evening of February 7, 1583, the city of Manila had ceased to exist.

At that hour, one of the darkest the city has ever known, a voice of encouragement roused the people, that of Domingo de

Salazar. Grieved as he was, he had time to impress upon the officials the need to rebuild the city *in stone*. In a letter he wrote to the Spanish King, Philip II, in 1583 he informed him that the city had been destroyed three or four times previously by fire. It would be destroyed countless times more should it be rebuilt in wood and nipa as before. And he specified:

> "I have striven and indeed insisted to the governor, the officials and the *cabildo* of this city as well as to the most prominent citizens that they must never build again the houses with straw. They have witnessed what has happened and there is grave danger that they face a similar possibility of losing the city again. Instead, I told them to build all the houses with stone and mortar. Those unable to build them out of stone should use *adobe*. We can roof them with *tejas* (texas: special Spanish tiles). This can be done here as well as in any other place in the world, because near the city there is plenty of good stone for buildings of mortar and good soil for *adobes*. The *teja* can be made as good as in Spain because I have asked that it be tried and from the results it bears out well. We have constructed two ovens of mortar and the *tejas* come out just perfect.
>
> The materials can all be transported by water, the best commodity one could imagine. I myself went to discover the quarries and have brought the stone to the city. I have made all possible efforts to convince the governor and the rest of the citizens to build up the city in stone. Alas, I have been unsuccessful to shake them from their indifference. The reason for this is that all, or most of them, have only an eye for enriching themselves and then going somewhere else to enjoy it. For this, the city and the country will not recover themselves.
>
> As your Majesty has to send a person to govern this land, one of the first things you should charge him with should be to build up out of stone and mortar the fort, the powder arsenal and the main church of the city. Once these three are done the citizens of the country will be encouraged to build up their own houses similarly. This done, the city will start to grow and feel secure, something it has not experienced up to the present moment".[147]

[147] "... Yo he trabajado y porfiado con el gobernador, oficiales y cabildo de esta ciudad y con los principales vasallos de ella que no tornen hacer las casas de paja, pues ven lo que ha sucedido y el peligro en que quedan de que otra y otras veces suceda, sino que hagamos todas las casas de piedra y cal; y los que no pudieran de piedra las hagan de adobes y las

The officials of the Royal Audiencia certified to the Spanish King, Philip II, that had it not been for Salazar, the city would have continued to wallow in the same wore of misery it had been submerged in 1583.[148] Salazar spent his money in opening up the quarries near Manila and in shipping the stone down the river Pasig to the city itself.[149]

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cubramos todas de teja, para lo cual hay en esta ciudad tan buen aparejo como en otra cualquiera parte, porque alrededor della hay mucha y muy buena piedra para edificios y cal y muy buena tierra para adobes. La teja se hace tan buena como en toda España, porque yo lo he hecho probar y sale muy bien. Hanse quemado dos hornos de cal y también sale muy caliente

Todos los materiales se pueden traer por agua, que es la mayor comodidad que desear se puede. Yo mismo he ido a descubrir las canteras y he llevado gente que corte piedra y la ha traido a esta ciudad y he hecho todas las otras diligencias que me han sido posibles y no he podido alzar los ánimos del gobernador ni de los otros vecinos a que se dispongan a edificar de piedra. Porque sin duda todos, o los más de ellos, tienen ojo aprovecharse lo más que pueden en esta tierra e irlo a comer a otra parte. Y por eso nunca ha de alzar cabeza ni valer nada. Y pues ahora V. M. ha de enviar persona que la gobierne, una de las cosas que parece V. M. le debía principalmente encargar es que el fuerte de que en esta ciudad hay mucho necesidad, y las atarazanas y también la iglesia mayor se hagan de piedra y cal; porque hechas estas tres piezas animarse han los vecinos a hacer ansí sus casas y esta ciudad comenzará a tener asiento, el cual hasta aquí no ha tenido ni adelante podrá tener yendo como hasta aquí va, porque no hay en ella cosa segura....", *Letter of Domingo de Salazar, first bishop of the Philippines, to Philip II*, Manila, June 18, 1583, Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Audiencia de Filipinas, Legajo 74.

[148] *Consulta Original del Consejo de Indias*, April 12, 1590, AGI, Audiencia de Filipinas, 1, 1, n. 4.

[149] "... Por información recibida de oficio en la Audiencia Real de la ciudad de Manila de las Islas Philippinas y el parecer de la dicha Audiencia ha constado que cuando fue a ellas el obispo eran todas las casas de madera y caña y cubiertas de paja. Y que visto que se habían quemado muchas veces y particularmente el año de ochenta y tres que con un incendio se asoló casi toda y las haciendas de los vecinos, con la iglesia catedral, monasterio, hospital y fortaleza, municiones y artillería; y el peligro que venía así del fuego como de los naturales, de quien se tuvo mucho recelo, se dispuso el dicho obispo a socorrer a los vecinos y soldados con tres mil pesos suyos y agenos, repartiéndolos entre todos para reedificar sus casas, con que remediaron su extrema necesidad; y que después procuró persuadir al gobernador y ciudad a que se edificase de fábica de cal y piedra y se hiciese teja. Y como quiera que todos lo dificultaban grandemente, él se dispuso por su persona y con mucho trabajo y costa a buscar y abrir canteras y que se hiciese cal y teja y mediante su diligencia se consiguió el efecto de que se seguirá grande aumento a la dicha ciudad. Porque él labró casas con grandísimo trabajo y costa, y luego comenzaron a hacer lo mismo muchos vecinos, con que la ciudad se ha asegurado y fortalecido y se va haciendo fortaleza, hospital, iglesia y monasterios todos de cantería...", *Ibidem*.

Plan to establish a college in Manila (1583)

Salazar's contribution to the field of education had not the lasting effect of that of Miguel de Benavides, the founder of the university of Santo Tomas of Manila. However, he was instrumental in this field by dissuading the Jesuits from the idea of leaving the Philippines and pressing on them the need to put up a college in Manila.

In a long letter to Philip II[150] Salazar tried to convince the king of the urgent need to erect a college in Manila under the direction of the Jesuits. In it the Filipino children could study the Christian religion, the *mestizos* and children of nobles and *maharlikas* could take up humanities. Furthermore, young clerics could finish philosophy and theology. The college would also be extremely convenient for those who arrived in the Philippines without having completed their formal studies for the priesthood. Worth noting down is the fact that Salazar foresaw the college as the best means to keep, study and learn the customs of the Filipinos.[151] He had a positive approach to the culture and customs of the inhabitants of the Philippines.

Salazar's idea did not materialize perhaps due to the lack of teaching personnel and the lack of students in the Philippines. Yet let us remember that we are in Manila in *1583*. At that time not even in Europe were people much inclined to study. The inclination to follow a career for higher studies was the privilege of a very few. His attempt was a failure, no doubt, but a very understandable one. The time and the place were not yet ready for such an enterprise. His attempt, nonetheless, is notable and important.

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150 *Letter of Domingo de Salazar, first bishop of the Philippines, to Philip II,* Manila, June 18, 1583, AGI, Filipinas 74.

151 *Ibidem.*