

En las Cuencas del Río Panay:
The Church of Panay Across Centuries
(1566-2008)

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Los Yligueynes de Panay:
Panay in Pre-Hispanic Philippines

The province of Capiz during the pre-Hispanic period covered the western area of the island of Panay,¹ which included the present-day Aklan. At the beginnings of the Spanish contact, Romblon and its adjacent islands were placed under the jurisdiction of Capiz. The Augustinian chronicler Fr. Gaspar de San Agustin in his *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas* describes the island of Panay, with the first two provinces, Panay (before the capital was transferred to Capiz in 1716) and Oton: "Eight leagues away, to the West of the island of Negros, is the large island of Panay, the Sicily of the Philippines, known both for its abundance of rice, as well as for its triangular shape at three points: Bulacave, Naso and Potol, measuring more than one hundred

¹ Antonio de Morga in *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* situates Panay Island in Philippine geography: "It is impossible to number all these islands – counting larger and smaller – of this vast archipelago. Those comprised in the name and government of Filipinas, number about forty large islands, besides other smaller ones, all consecutive. The chiefest and best known are Luzon, Mindoro, Tendaya, Capul, Burias, Masbate, Marinduque, Leyte, Zamar, Ibabao, Sebu, Panay, Bohol, Catanduanes, Calamianes, Mindanao, and others of less renown" (Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson, eds., *The Philippine Islands (1493-1898)*, Vol. 16 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1904-1908, 71). From hereon, BRPI.

leagues. It is divided into two very opulent provinces which are Panay and Ogtong.”²

Formerly called “Bamban,” derived from “a reed with which they sew the nipa,”³ the name “Panay” (with the variant “Pan-ay”), therefore, was used to refer altogether to the island, the province, and the town.⁴

According to missionary accounts, the pre-Hispanic townsfolk of Panay⁵ were named “Visayans” like all other settlers of the island and its neighboring islands, because of their happy disposition.⁶

² Gaspar de San Agustin, O.S.A., *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas, 1565-1615*, Luis Antonio Mañeru, trans. (Manila: San Agustin Museum, 1998), 61. [From hereon, San Agustin.] Fr. Casimiro Diaz, O.S.A. in his 1890 *Conquista* calls these three promontories of Bulacave, Naso and Potol as “Trinacria.” He writes: “This province [Oton] and that of Panay are united in one island, yielding a great abundance of rice; it is the Sicilia of Filipinas for its fertility, and also resembles that island in its extent, and in having three promontories such as gave it the name Trinacria. This island is called Panay, so even its name suits it; for in it there grows so great an abundance of rice, which is the bread of this country” (BRPI, Vol. 38, 216).

³ “Junco con que cosen la nipa.” From Alonso de Mentrída, O.S.A., *Diccionario de la Lengua Bisaya, Hiligueina y Haraya de la Isla de Panay* (Manila: Imprenta de D. Manuel y D. Felix Dayot, 1841, 51). Fr. Juan Fernández, O.S.A. in his *Monografías de los Pueblos de la Isla de Pan-ay* writes the scientific name of the plant: “which is the Ascitaminea, Marantha Arundinacea of Blanco and the Marantha Dichotoma of Wall” (Jose G. Espinosa, Jr., trans., Iloilo City: University of San Agustin Publishing House, 2006, 174). From hereon, *Monografías*.

⁴ “Pan-ay was the capital of the province for two centuries and had the glory of having given the name to the whole Island” (*Monografías*, 174).

⁵ In the 1890 *Descripción física, geológica y minera en bosquejo de la Isla de Panay*, Enrique Casariego Abella writes: “To the north of this island extends what is called as the *tablazo de Capiz* or a small interior sea comprising the whole Panay and the smaller islands of Tablas, Romblon, Sibuyan and Masbate” (Escolta: Tipo-Litografía de Chofre y Compañía, 1890, 7).

⁶ Fr. Ignacio Alcina, S.J. in his *Historia de las islas e indios de Bisayas* of 1668 explains: “The name *Bisaya*, therefore, if we are to draw it out from its own language, means “a happy man,” “a man of a fine and pleasant disposition.” This meaning is derived from certain rootwords: for example, *Aya*, *Saya* or *Caya* are all one and the same thing and in compounded forms as *Macaya*, it means “a person of a fine disposition”; *Mamicaya*, it means “an affable individual or one who has many friends”; *Masaya*, “a happy man”; *Mimaya*, “joy.” *Bisaya*, therefore, would mean “a pleasant and a happy person.” The root-words, as we shall see later, when we deal with the Bisayan language, take on different meanings as we combine them with different particles” (*History of the Bisayan People in the Philippine Islands (1668)*, Vol. 1, Cantius J. Kobak, O.F.M. and

They were also popularly called “Pintados,” because their bodies were decorated with tattoos.⁷ Fr. Ignacio Alcina, S.J. in his *Historia de las islas e indios de Bisayas* of 1668 writes: “The natives of these Bisayan Islands are commonly known by two names, because the Spaniards who live here refer to them thus. One name is *Bisaya*...; the other is *Pintados*...”⁸ San Agustin in his *Conquistas* affirms: “The natives of the island are Visayans, and called Pintados because they would paint their bodies in the past.”⁹ He, however, quickly adds of the virtues of the natives of Panay: “The people are populous, with a more docile nature than any of the Pintados.”¹⁰

As to their physical appearance, the Visayans, including those of Panay, were described by Alcina as “usually more corpulent, better built and somewhat taller than the Tagalogs. Even on some other islands (or in the same one perhaps) they distinguish themselves, not a little, by their larger bulky body, for some are more stout than others depending upon their occupation in life.”¹¹

The settlers of Panay spoke the language called “Hiligaynon.” But during Spanish times, the term also referred to the inhabitants. The Spanish official Miguel de Loarca in his account *Relación de las Yslas Filipinas* used the word “Yligueynes” (Hiligaynons) to refer to “the people of the coast.”¹² Santiago Alv. Mulato speaks of the etymology of the word “Hiligaynon” embellished by a local story: “When the Spaniards came, and since they also used water for travel, they came upon these people from upriver and their buyers transacting

Lucio Gutiérrez, O.P., trans., eds., annots. (Manila: UST Publishing House, 2002. Vol. 1, 71). From hereon, Alcina. This debunks the theory that the name “Visayas” came from the empire of Sri Vijaya.

⁷ Alcina narrates this common practice among Bisayans: “So, whether it originated with the people themselves or from their common enemy, who by his designs, (none of them ever good,) could have taught it to them, one thing is certain: all the Bisayan men usually tattooed themselves, except those who were called *asug*... Not all, however, practiced it in the same way nor did they execute it all at one time. They began tattooing themselves at about the age of twenty years and up; although some overcome by fear, deferred it until they were filled with shame when a little older they agreed to allow themselves to be tattooed. Aside from the pain they had to endure, the entire body oftentimes became inflamed and some even died, as a result” (Vol.1, 141 and 143).

⁸ Alcina, Vol.1, 71.

⁹ San Agustin, 61.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Alcina, Vol.1, 97.

¹² BRPI, Vol.5, 121.

business at the river mouths in the Kalanagan Area and in Pan-ay, in Capiz. When the Spaniards asked the name of this group of people who navigated the river by using bamboo rafts like the *balzeros* (raftsmen) of Mexico the inaccurate answer they received was “Iligaynon” as the informant thought they were being asked what profession those “manog-ilig sang kawayan” (bamboo “floaters”) people had. From the word “Iligaynon,” the Spaniards wrote in their records “Hiligueynes,” believing that they had discovered a group of people called by that name.”¹³

Furthermore, San Agustin speaks of the purity and elegance of the Hiligaynon language in the town of Panay: “Its administration is in the Visayan-Hiligaynon language, which is the most widespread among the provinces of the Pintados. However the one spoken in Panay is the purest and most elegant.”¹⁴ The Augustinian historian of Panay Fr. Juan Fernández in his *Monografías de los Pueblos de la Isla de Panay* gives a detailed description: “The inhabitants are mellow when they speak, and in their pronunciation they rather resemble the Andalucians, but they don’t have the poor taste of those from the capital of Cebu who omit letters in their pronunciation distorting, consequently, the naturalness and simplicity of the Visayan dialect. The ancient writers noted already what we say about the Pan-ayanons.”¹⁵

¹³ Mulato describes the local bamboo trade during that time: “In our study of the change in the meaning of words, the basis of Hiligaynon, which was pronounced before as “Iligaynon” was not the language of the people inhabiting those places mentioned but of the people whose occupation was floating downriver bamboo poles from the places upriver. The moment those bamboo products reached the river mouth, they were sold to those who needed them for building their houses; the ones not sold were hauled by little boats (*paraws*) and brought to places far from the river mouth. These people from upriver tied together bamboo poles and on these rafts they placed their merchandise as during those times there were no functional roads and transportation facilities” (Santiago Alv. Mulato, “The Hiligaynon,” *Ani*, Vol.3, no. 2, June 1989, 5).

¹⁴ San Agustin, 609.

¹⁵ *Monografías*, 174.

Men commonly wore g-strings (*bahag*); and women skirts of bark cloth.¹⁶ They were also fond of jewelry, made of gold.¹⁷ San Agustin reports of the abundance of gold in the province of Capiz: "Going upriver on the left-hand side, it connects to another river called Mayong [Maayon], which means good, perhaps due to the abundance of gold, that was originally discovered mixed in with the sand."¹⁸

They practiced rice farming, planted root crops, went hunting and fishing for their daily living.¹⁹ They were skilled in ironworking, woodworking, boatbuilding, pottery, goldworking, and weaving. They had domestic trade with people from other islands; and international trade with the Chinese and the Borneans.²⁰

¹⁶ Alcina observes: "Aside from the above-mentioned (i.e., jewelry and tattoos—*mine*), their first article of clothing was something they call a *bahag*. This was a piece of cloth about two or more brazas in length and either made of abaca, which is the most common, or a *manta* which resembles our linen, or even of linen itself (although very few wear this); finally, it is made of silk which only the *datus* wear... (Alcina, Vol.1, 115). Concerning the women, aside from what has been mentioned, we may say that the *principalas* wore short skirts reaching to the knees more or less; while the slaves wore them even much shorter. The common people had them made from abaca, while the *data* or *principalas* had them made of linen of cotton embroidered with silk or cotton of various colors" (Alcina, Vol.1, 117).

¹⁷ Up to the nineteenth century, gold can still be mined in Capiz. Jean Mallat in his book (published in 1846) speaks of gold mines in Dumarao: "There are gold mines in Dumarao, and some persons claim that there is also one of quicksilver (*Les Philippines: Histoire, Géographie, Moeurs, Agriculture, Industrie, Commerce des Colonies Espagnoles dans L'Océanie* (1846), Pura-Santillan-Castreñe, trans. Manila: National Historical Institute, 1998, 192)." Nicholas Loney likewise reports: "Gold is found in the bed of a river near the village of Abaca in this province (of Iloilo), and near Dumarao in Capiz" (*Document 287: Economic Report on the Island of Panay* (1857), *Documentary Sources of Philippine History*, Vol. 7, Gregorio F. Zaide, comp., ed., and annot., Manila: National Book Store, Inc., 1990, 119).

¹⁸ San Agustin, 609.

¹⁹ Visayans practiced *kaingin* when they were farming. See William Henry Scott's *Barangay: Sixteenth Century Philippine Culture and Society* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1994, 37).

²⁰ Meanwhile, Scott mentions the presence of a commercial trade in Capiz with the Chinese: "But the Spaniards never saw either these Chinese or their ships: not until 1569 when Legazpi moved to Capiz did they capture a Chinese vessel and its crew – that is, on the far western littoral of the islands. (One of those Chinese taught his language to Fr. Martin de Rada, and twenty years later was the head of the Chinese community in Manila – Don Francisco Zanco)" (*Barangay*, 74). Scott continues "that Visayans called "foreign nations like the Borneans and Sangleys (Chinese), *Sina*," and that Chinese sailing directions published in 1617 avoided inland Visayan waters

These developments in local trade and seafaring, which contributed to the social and cultural interactions of peoples in Southeast Asia, would define the succeeding centuries in Capiz until before the coming of the Spaniards during the sixteenth century.

Even during Spanish times, these commercial trades were still maintained by the people of the town of Panay, as San Agustin affirms: "The town sees much commerce from Spanish, *Sangleys*, mestizos and numerous tributary natives."²¹ Hence, the principal industries of this locality which dated back even to precolonial era were "fishing, abaca and cotton fabrics, manufacturing of sack matting for sugar, and weaving with leaves for the roofs of the houses; nipa wine distillery, or brandy, for which there are ten *alambrics*. They export the brandy to Manila."²²

The people lived together in villages or hamlets.²³ They were organized according to three social classes: *datus*, the chieftains or heads of their communities called *haop* (or *sakop*); *timawas*, the freemen or freedmen; and the *oripuns*, the slaves.²⁴ Aside from these natives, San Agustin speaks of the other inhabitants of the province:

Towards the interior of the sierra, there are also Negroes who are said to be the older residents of the island. These are not as black nor as large as those of Guinea, but they are as barbarous as

by passing from Mindoro to Oton (Iloilo) to Dapitan" (*Barangay*, 75). The Australian archeologist Peter J.F. Coutts also remarks: "Later again Chinese traders began to reach the shores of Panay. Under the stimulus of trade, the pressures on the forest resources continued to increase. Urbanization had its roots in this period (following Hutterer 1974), agriculture intensified, and socio-political systems evolved to cope with the trade. The coastal areas were completely colonized by agricultural communities. This phase is manifested archaeologically in the cemetery sites which are found around the coastal margins of Panay... Traders probably moved into the interior in order to trade with hunter-gatherer communities and exploit the forest resources themselves. Again the fact that jar burials do not seem to be found in the caves in the interior suggests that trading settlements tended to be confined to specific areas" (*An Archeological Perspective of Panay Island, Philippines*, Cebu City: University of San Carlos, 1983, 172).

²¹ San Agustin, 607 and 609. In another section, he adds: "Panay should have close to two thousand native tributaries, as well as a ghetto of Christian *Sangleys* and merchants with more than fifty stores that sell necessary items" (*Ibid.*, 609).

²² Monografias, 174.

²³ Scott, *Barangay*, 136. According to Scott: "The villages and towns where one or more *haop* lived were *bongto* or *lungsod*; and hamlets or neighborhoods were *gamuro*, a cluster of houses within earshot" (*Barangay*, 136).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 127-135.

those who live without king or lord or town. They stay wherever the night catches them to suffer the inclement weather. Their weapons are bows and arrows, with which they are very adept. They normally inflict much harm to the Visayans if they ever catch them unaware; but not as much as other Visayans who also live around the mountains in hiding. They are commonly called *Mundos* against whom they usually wage wars.²⁵

This is confirmed by the archeological diggings in the different caves of Capiz. The Australian archeologist Peter J.F. Coutts expounds on the pre-Hispanic settlers of Panay Island:

By the time the Spanish arrived in the 16th and 17th centuries, Panay was controlled by powerful clans of brown-skinned Filipinos; the Negrito population occupied most of the interior, and coexisted with nucleated settlements occupied by traders, their dependants and an expanding agriculturally based population. The Spanish, as noted above, further stimulated trade, accelerated inroads into the forests and were responsible for reducing Negrito territory and ultimately, the Negrito population. Today there are only a handful of Negrito people left on the Island of Panay.²⁶

As to their religion, they were animists or nature worshippers. They worshipped different gods and their ancestors, which were represented by small idols. Alcina writes: "All in all, today when they say *diwata* it is understood that they mean the false gods."²⁷ He continues: "Their gods if not totally a product of human inventiveness substantially... had been altered by their superstitions."²⁸

Sacrifices called "paganito"²⁹ were offered through a religious practitioner, who is generally a female called *baylan* or *daitan*, but sometimes also a male – an effeminate man called *asug*. Alcina remarks: "Now, therefore, as far as their priests or petty sacrificers, who were of two different classes and who in ancient times had two names, I have discovered with very little doubt that they were commonly women and not men. If there was some man who might have been one, he was

²⁵ San Agustin, 611 and 613.

²⁶ Coutts, *An Archeological Perspective of Panay Island, Philippines*, 172.

²⁷ Alcina, Vol. 3, 225.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Alcina writes: "(S)o too *anitu* means 'a sacrifice made to God.' Hence, from this is derived the term *paganitu* – "to sacrifice" (Ibid., 223 and 225).

called *asug*... To these women they called in their language *daitan* or *baylan*..."³⁰

There were no temples, so worship took place "in private homes or fields; at grave sites or sacred spots outside the community; or along beaches or streams where little rafts could be launched, aboard which were disease and bad luck, or live pests like locusts or rats."³¹ Loarca affirms: "The natives of these islands have neither time nor place set apart for the offering of prayers and sacrifices to their gods. It is only in case of sickness, and in times of seed-sowing or of war, that sacrifices are offered."³²

Finally, they believed in the afterlife, which is manifested by their practice of jar burials.³³

***Pan hay en esta isla:* Panay during Spanish Contact**

On the 27th of April 1565, Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and his fleet arrived in Cebu (formerly *Sugbu*). The natives were initially wary and

³⁰ Alcina, Vol. 3, 257.

³¹ Scott, *Barangay*, 84. Taking from an early source, Fr. Juan Plasencia, O.F.M. in his *Relación* writes: "In the villages, or in other parts of the Filipinas Islands, there are no temples consecrated to the performing of sacrifices, the adoration of their idols, or the general practice of idolatry. It is true that they have the name *simbahan*, which means temple or place of adoration; but this is because, formerly, when they wished to celebrate a festival, which they called *pandot*, or "worship," they celebrated it in the large house of the chief. There they constructed for the purpose of sheltering the assembled people, a temporary shed on each side of the house, with a roof, called *sibi*, to protect the people from wet when it rained. On the posts of the house they set small lamps, called *sorihile*; in the center of the house they placed one large lamp, adorned with leaves of the white palm, wrought in many designs..." (BRPI, Vol. 7, 185-186).

³² BRPI, Vol. 5, 132-133.

³³ Coutts in *An Archaeological Perspective* speaks of prehispanic burial sites in Pilar, Capiz: "The Pilar sites are somewhat anomalous in this suite of coastal cemetery sites. The major points of difference [with the caves in Iloilo] are: few trade ceramics are present, slipped earthenwares (particularly black and brown slipped wares) are rare, and a distinctive largely utilitarian, incised and impressed earthenware complex is present. However, there are also similarities. For example, the presence of stone and clay beads, earthenware net sinkers, a shell bracelet and metal at Pilar sites is paralleled at the historic site of Cubay, San Dionisio, which dates from the 10th century AD... Although it is not known how long the Pilar sites were used, it is established that they were still in use just prior to the coming of the Spaniards, and were contemporary with the so-called 'cemetery sites' (166)."

cautious, which Legazpi managed to amend by the power of his tact and presence. Hence he convinced Tupas, the chief of Cebu, to acknowledge the sovereignty of Spain and later to accept Christianity because of his broadminded and friendly dealings with them.

Later on, Legazpi set forth the reconstruction, beautification and reorganization of the city of Cebu as the first Spanish settlement in the Philippines. It was named *Santísimo Nombre de Jesús* after its patron, the *Señor Santo Niño*, whose image was found in a small hut by the Spanish soldier Juan Camus, which was actually a gift of Magellan to the newly baptized wife of Humabon, Queen Juana, in 1521.

The following months were critical to the Spanish conquest. Because of the spiteful conduct of some soldiers, the natives refused to produce and provide food supplies to the Spaniards. With the growing hunger and scarcity of provisions as well as the continuing threats of Portuguese attack, Legazpi sent his men under Mateo del Saz, his *maestre de campo* (ship commander), to explore the other islands for food.

They lingered for a while on the coasts of Bohol, Negros and other islands, until they finally reached the island of Panay in the early part of June 1565, and landed in Jalaud River of Dumangas, Iloilo.³⁴ They, however, relocated later at the mouth of the Panay River, where Juan de la Isla built some fortifications. San Agustin in *Conquistas* reports:

Everyone agreed to move the camp to the river of Panay, since the place was impregnable and the island abundant with everything necessary to resist any enemy invasion. Having decided on this, the governor ordered his captains, together with their companies, to spread themselves to the neighboring islands, under orders that once they were informed of the Portuguese armada's return, they were all to gather at the Panay river to defend themselves.³⁵

³⁴ Jalaud (Halaud or Araut) River; now, Dumangas. Demy P. Sonza in his article "History and Legend in Western Visayan Place-Names" follows Fernández's account: "The expedition reached Panay, landing first in Halawod in what is now Dumangas, Iloilo, where the Spaniards procured some 1,000 sacks of rice. Then they sailed to the north and landed again in a place known as Bamban, where they found food to be plentiful. Bamban became the town of Panay, Capiz" (*The Journal of History*, Vols. 28-31, 1983-1986, 46).

³⁵ San Agustin, 523.

Seeing the fecundity of the land, they were not frustrated by what they found. Panay since then earned the title of “the Sicily of the Philippines.” As Alcina affirms: “Panay Island was the first landing place of most of the Spaniards, after they crossed over from the Island of Cebu, because it is more fertile and has a greater abundance of rice. It is like another Sicily with all its wheat.”³⁶

For some authors, this explains the legend about Panay’s name. As Felix Regalado and Quintin Franco relate: “(W)hen Legaspi was establishing his colony in Sugbu (Cebu), he was faced with the problem of food shortage. He sent his captains to scour the surrounding islands for food. One of the captains reached the island of Madia-as and anchored right at the mouth of the river running through Pan-ay, Capiz. Having found plenty of food in the place, he returned to Cebu and reported the news to Legaspi who exclaimed in thanksgiving, “Pan hay en esta isla.” The first two words eventually identified the island.”³⁷

Fernández, however, differs with the etymology of “Panay”: “With the entry of the Spaniards they started calling it with the name it bears now, which means “island channel” of the river, because the new settlers have taken residence in Banica where Juan de la Isla constructed a small castle. About the end of the 16th century everybody was calling it Pan-ay. It was the King’s encomienda.”³⁸

Around 1566-1567, Fr. Martin de Rada, O.S.A., who accompanied Mateo del Saz, was reported as having evangelized the natives living by the banks of the river Pan-ay, Capiz,³⁹ then afterwards to the river

³⁶ Alcina, 165. San Agustin affirms the description: “The island of Panay is very similar to that of Sicily, not only because of its triangular shape, but also because of its fertility and abundance of supplies. It is located to the southeast of Manila (San Agustin, 611).” In 1846 Mallat writes about the fertility of the province of Capiz. He writes: “Capiz is admirably fertile. It produces an almost unbelievable abundance of rice... Two harvests of rice are made per year, this foodstuff being so cheap there that it is sold for only two silver reales per *caban* of 48 *gantas* whereas in the other provinces the same measure is worth 25 reales (*Les Philippines*, 192).”

³⁷ Felix B. Regalado and Quintin B. Franco, *History of Panay* (Iloilo City: Central Philippine University, 1973), 6.

³⁸ Monografias, 174.

³⁹ Mallat describes Panay River: “The principal rivers are those of Panay, which is full of crocodiles, and that of Dumarao. The river of Capiz, as large as the Pasig, presents at its mouth a bank called Baton Bagui, which prevents brigs from entering at low tide; the rivers of Calibar and Batan fall into the Capiz, which they feed. The banks of all these rivers are shaded by masses of trees, abodes of birds of all kinds and

Jalaud in Dumangas, Iloilo. Fernández in his *Monografías* presents the argument:

It (Panay) is the only town of the Island that can rightly question Dumangas on the priority of having the word of God preached there. If we based it on the fact that each vessel parting from the fleet of Legazpi took a friar with it in order to prevent any harm against the indios, Halaud would take the glory. It should imply that the missionary would preach in those places at which he would arrive, since they had come for that. If we abide by the record that in 1566 and 1567 Fr. Rada was preaching the word of God from the river basins of Pana-ay until those of Halaud, both inclusively, rather than in the other towns of the Island, Pan-ay would take the glory.⁴⁰

Fr. Pedro Galende, O.S.A. in *Apologia Pro Filipinos* speaks of Fr. Rada's Christianization efforts in Panay Island:

In his labors, he was able to gather in some towns a sufficient number of Christians, enough guarantee for the Order to maintain convents there. These convents were admitted to the Order by Rada himself when he was Provincial in Manila. Rada extended his preaching along the shores of the Panay and Halaud rivers and according to the historians, he had made many converts in a brief period of two years. In Dumangas, Rada began the Christian community which later was to rise to a glorious era under Fr. Alva who constructed a church of strong materials over the small rural chapel built by Rada. It is possible that Rada might have made several excursions and had gone to work in Otong, once

monkeys, and some white and others of different colors (*Les Philippiness*, 192).” In the 1890 *Descripción* Casariego writes about the location and importance of Panay River: “Los dos ríos más notables e interesantes de esta región, y por tanto los que descuellan sobre todos los demás de la isla, son el Panay y el Jalaur, que presentan entre si mucha semejanza por su caudal, recorrido y otras circunstancias... Las cuencas de cada uno de estos dos ríos forman las más extensas e importantes zonas de las provincias de Capiz e Iloilo, individuando, por decirlo así, una y otra; y su divisoria de aguas es también la de las jurisdicciones de ambos distritos... (48) En el caserío Agbangbang se presenta la actual confluencia de la gran rama que, pasando por el pueblo de Panay, sale al mar por tres bocas principales llamadas respectivamente de Jamulaon, de Paua y de Guibuangan Daco... Otra bifurcación notable existe también, en el barrio de Tansasud, que se llama rio Banica, el cual así mismo comunica por dos esteros con la bocana de Guibuangan Daco que acabamos de citar... El recorrido total del río Panay es de unos 144 kilómetros aproximadamente (Casariego, 58).”

⁴⁰ *Monografías*, 174.

Christianity was established in Dumangas and in Panay. His itinerary must have covered Panay first, then Dumangas and finally Otong.⁴¹

In 1567, Legazpi sent a regiment led by his nephew Felipe de Salcedo to Panay, who was later followed by his son Juan Salcedo.⁴² The plan was to build another Spanish settlement after Cebu. Upon their arrival, they were welcomed by the townsfolk of Panay who received them with much affection.⁴³ San Agustin narrates:

The governor sent Captain Felipe Salcedo to accompany the camp and the artillery to the Panay river with the people who accompanied him when the Capitana was lost. They were well-received by the natives of Panay and after seeing to their lodgings, the natives asked them for help against some enemy villages who had come to their area and done them great harm, capturing some of them while they were fishing.⁴⁴

In return, Felipe Salcedo helped them in their fight, and succeeded, against the neighboring tribes who constantly raided them. San Agustin adds: "Felipe de Salcedo did so, burning the enemy villages as well as levying other forms of punishment."⁴⁵ This attests to the fact that there were inter-tribal raiding and slave trading among prehispanic Filipinos.

Moreover, the town of Panay was always under threat of Moro raids. As a consequence, in the nearby town of Capiz, a garrison was discharged to defend the natives from these Moros. San Agustin writes:

⁴¹ Pedro Galende, O.S.A., *Apologia Pro Filipinos: The Quixotic Life and Chivalric Adventures of Fray Martin de Rada, O.S.A., in Defense of the Early Filipinos* (Manila: Salesiana Publishers, 1980), 73-74.

⁴² San Agustin reports: "The governor stayed in Cebu to fix the *San Lucas* to send it to new Spain, as he had no other ship to send. It was decided to send Captain Felipe de Salcedo on it, as he was the most expert in the route. He therefore sent his brother to Panay to succeed him in command, with all his clothes on a frigate, since he was looking forward to moving to Panay once the *patache* had left (San Agustin, 525)."

⁴³ As Fr. Juan Fernández, O.S.A. says: "Embarcáronse, y con felicidad llegaron a Pan-ay, en donde fueron recibidos con mucho afecto de los habitantes, con los que continuaron viviendo pacíficamente y con gran armonía." In "Apuntes Históricos de la Isla de Panay," *Archivo Histórico Hispano-Agustiniano*, Vols. 13 (January 1920) and 14 (December 1920), 98.

⁴⁴ San Agustin, 523.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 523.

"There is a garrison of soldiers to guard the island, with a stockade sufficient to defend against invasions from the Jolo and Mindanao pirates, who entered this port many times and did much harm, burning the sampans and ships they found moored there, as well as the Church and homes of the natives."⁴⁶ Even on the later part of the Spanish period, Fernández confirms the incidents involving these Moro raids, especially in the town of Panay:

The Moro pirates attempted to surprise the town many times, but they succeeded only on two occasions. The first one was in 1599, when Pan-ay was without military forces. After setting fire on all the vessels that were in the river, they set the town in fire also, killed many people and captured others after committing thousands of atrocities. The second raid took place in the middle of the 18th century when the wicked pirates took away the young mestizas who numbered considerably at that time.⁴⁷

When Felipe de Salcedo returned to Cebu with such favorable reports, Legazpi decided to come to Pan-ay in 1569, where he stayed until April 15, 1571, when he sailed to Manila.⁴⁸ San Agustin recounts the coming of Legazpi to the Panay river to settle, who was warmly welcomed by the natives, led by their chieftains named *Madidum* and *Manicabug*:

After the governor left instructions for the good government of Cebu, and very solemnly held the honors due Prince Charles, as the sad news of his death was brought by the ship San Juan, that he had died on July 24, 1568 at twenty-four years of age, the governor left for Panay river accompanied by the *maestre de campo*... The governor was lovingly received by the natives whose highest leaders, named *Madidum* and *Manicabug*, proved in everything to be well-intentioned and more loyal than those of Cebu. Seeing their good behavior and obedience, he attempted to build some fortifications in the areas that seemed appropriate to him in the event the Portuguese armada returned. They were at all times suspicious of the Portuguese being close at hand to Panay amid reports that they had been sighted.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 837.

⁴⁷ *Monografías*, 174.

⁴⁸ "From the last months of 1569 until mid-April of 1571, this town was the residence of Adelantado Legapi, whom the Pan-ayanons welcomed with much courtesy and entertainment. Distinguishing themselves on this occasion were *Madidong* and *Macabog*, the very respected figures in the town" (*Ibid.*, 174).

⁴⁹ San Agustin, 529 and 531. Cf. *Monografías*, 174.

The Augustinian provincial Fr. Diego de Herrera, after his visit to Panay with Captain Juan de la Ysla [Isla] on June 7, 1570, however, speaks of the unfavorable conditions of their new settlement:

When I got to this river of Panay where the Governor was, they were glad that I had come and they were equally glad of the aid and reinforcements sent by His Majesty and Your Excellency aboard the three vessels and the Governor ordered that the vessels should come to Panay although many were of different opinion. I myself thought that his decision was wrong for the port was bad and it would be hard to unload the vessels. Also, there was over one league and a half from the anchorage to the town and the sandbar at the mouth of the river made passage difficult. Nevertheless on June 22 the vessels got there and when the men aboard saw this sad and stricken place in which we are now settled they were sad. The swamps looked bad and the houses were built by the bank of the river where the water is brackish so that when the river rises it is necessary to go by boat from house to house. It is hot and unhealthy and it rains day and night and although before we came, food was abundant; now we lack food. Also, we are very much afraid of the Portuguese so that if the men here found a place that is better hidden they would go there although it might be a worse place and although the Portuguese may not come in the end, these men will not dare to leave for Cebu unless somebody should impose some order.⁵⁰

The town of Panay indeed suffered from scarcity of food because of pestilence, as San Agustin narrates:

In Panay he instructed that an excellent *gaillot* in the shipyard be finished while he was coming and going from Cebu. He intended to use it for the pacification and conquest of the island of Manila. In the same way, he sent the *San Lucas* to Leyte to buy rice for the trip, since they did not find any on the island of Panay, due to the terrible damage wrought by grasshoppers this year and the year before throughout the island.⁵¹

⁵⁰ "Documento Número XIII: Copia de carta de Fr. Diego de Herrera dirigida al Virrey de Nueva España, dando cuenta de un viaje desde Nueva España a Filipinas con Juan de la Ysla: malas condiciones del sitio (Panay) en que estaba el Governador por miedo a los Portugueses. Desorden en que encontró la tierra. Escrita a fines de Julio de 1570" (*The Christianization of the Philippines*, Rafael Lopez, O.S.A. and Alfonso Felix, Jr., trans., Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1965, 333).

⁵¹ San Agustin, 543.

In return for the timely visit of Fr. Herrera and Captain Isla from New Spain [Mexico], Legazpi in his letter to Philip II thanked the king for the favors he received while in his settlement at the town of Panay: He writes: "With Captain Joan de la Ysla, who arrived at this river on St. John's eve last, I received a letter from your Majesty from the Escorial dated the sixteenth of November, of the year sixty-eight, with the dispatches and the favors that your Majesty was pleased to grant this camp. For these and for other things that we expect from your Majesty, all these faithful vassals of your Majesty, and in their name for all, kiss your Majesty's royal feet and hands."⁵² From the town of Panay, where this plant grew in abundance, San Agustin says: "The *adelantado* sent twelve pimienta trees to present to His Majesty at court."⁵³ Fernández remarks about these pepper harvests in Panay: "We believe that there was a good yield of pepper at that time. From this port Legapi sent to Spain as present of great refinement twelve flowerpots of that species, which was of much esteem in Europe in those times. The Compañía de Filipinas did great efforts in the 18th century to establish again that industry here, but it failed."⁵⁴

In 1569, the encomiendas were apportioned by Legazpi himself before embarking on for the conquest of Luzon, with that of the town of Panay under the Spanish Crown. In his *Apuntes Históricos*, Fernández writes:

As soon as they decided to leave Pan-ay, Legazpi started the preparations to begin their conquest of Luzon, careful that none of the things needed were left out. Before they embarked, he judged it convenient to distribute and assign the encomiendas as follows: the town of Pan-ay for the encomienda of the Spanish king; from the banks of the river Pan-ay he gave the encomiendas of a thousand and two Indios to several soldiers, in the river Barbarán, Bago and its rivulet he gave a thousand and one to Baltasar Rodríguez and Alonso Sánchez; from Hamindang until Banga two thousand to Francisco Rivera and two thousand to Diego García; in Mahalud to Alvaro Angulo; by the creeks of Batan, etc., two thousand to Gonzalo Riquen; in Mayon two thousand to Francisco Rey; in Aclán to Antonio Flores; in Marabagui, Pengao, etc. to

⁵² "Letter from Miguel Lopez de Legazpi to Philip II. Panay, July 25, 1570," *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, 1965), 183. Cf. San Agustin, 541.

⁵³ San Agustin, 541.

⁵⁴ Monografías, 174.

Hernando Monroy; in the river Aruy to Rodrigo Bargas; from Tigbaoan to Bangningguing to Esteban de Figúeroa; in Haro, etc., to Francisco Durán (transferred on April 5, 1572 to the hands of Luis Pérez. By the highlands of Dumangas, four thousand Indios to Gabriel Rivera; near the sea, six thousand, to Luis de la Haya; in Dulingan, Antique, Bunital and Asluman to Diego Jiménez; in Ogtong to Miguel Loarca.⁵⁵

The settlement in Panay, therefore, marked the beginning of the process of the Spanish conquest of Luzon and the establishment of their colonial capital in Manila.⁵⁶ And when Legazpi journeyed to Manila in 1571, the major settlement was moved to Oton-Arevalo area.

In the *Account of the Encomiendas in the Philippinas Islands*, twenty-two years after Legazpi's division of the encomiendas, Governor Dasmariñas reports of the encomiendas existing in Capiz in 1591, which manifested the need for ministers in some areas:

Panay: *King* – His Majesty has along the river of Panay and its branch, the Mayo [Maayon], eight hundred and fifty tributes, which represent two thousand four hundred persons. They have instruction and justice.

Panay: *Guarnico; Lievana* – Captain Guarnizo and Ensign Pedro Guillén de Lievana collect, along the said river, two thousand three hundred tributes, which represent nine thousand two hundred persons. It has justice, and one ecclesiastic who furnishes instruction. It needs at least two more ministers.

Mambusao: *Rivera; Morales* – Francisco de Rivera and Gaspar Ruiz de Morales collect, along the branch river Mambusao, one thousand tributes, which represent four thousand persons. It is pacified, and has justice, but no instruction. It needs one minister.

⁵⁵ Apuntes, 219.

⁵⁶ Fernández narrates Legazpi's journey to Manila: "Once he [Legazpi] finished this affair, he transferred with Fr. Diego Herrera, his counselor, to the islet of Lutaya [now, Olotayan Island]. There he reviewed his strengths, and they counted 27 ships, 280 Spaniards, and some faithful Visayans. There with him, aside from Fr. Herrera, the Maestre de Campo, Andres Ibarra, Luis de la Haya and Juan de Salcedo. On the 15th of April 1571, they left the shore. They bade goodbye to the hospital village of Pan-ay. After two or three days of navigation unfortunately the ships lost the course, but step by step, without none of them having suffered any damage. They could follow again the same route, and with luck they continued towards Manila. They took possession of Manila on the nineteenth of May, naming it the capital of the Archipelago on the 24th of May [June] 1571" (Apuntes, 101).

Yguisan [Ivisan]: *Captain Sarmiento* – Captain Sarmiento collects, along the river of Yguisan, ninety tributes, which represent three hundred and forty persons. It has justice...⁵⁷

In 1693 the town of Capiz (now, Roxas City), known as *El Puerto de Capiz*, was finally created, but its ecclesiastical needs depended still on the parish of Panay.⁵⁸

It was only in 1716 when Capiz was organized into a separate politico-military province that the capital was transferred, which was previously the town of Panay.⁵⁹

El Pueblo Único: First Christian Town

From Cebu, the Augustinians, the first religious Order to evangelize the country, went on to the island of Panay, where Fr. Rada preached the Gospel to the natives along the banks of the rivers Panay and Araut. In 1569, Fr. Juan de Alva, O.S.A., who accompanied Captain Luis de la Haya, built the first chapel in Dumangas.⁶⁰ On May 3, 1572, Oton was accepted as a house of the Order, the third after Cebu and Manila, whose edifice was built by Fr. Rada himself around 1570.⁶¹

There were fifteen (15) parishes founded by the Augustinians in the province of Capiz: Panay (1581), Dumarao (1581), Dumalag (1596), Mambusao (1607), Roxas City, formerly Capiz (1707), Sigma (1744), Panitan (1806), Dao (1836), Ivisan (1840), Loctugan (1848), Pilar (1865), Cuartero (1872), Tapaz (1874), Pontevedra (1878), and Maayon (1893).⁶²

⁵⁷ BRPI, Vol. 8, 134.

⁵⁸ Monografías, 166. See also Pedro G. Galende, O.S.A., *Angels in Stone: Augustinian Churches in the Philippines*, Manila: San Agustin Museum, 1996, 313.

⁵⁹ The American historian Milton Walter Meyer writes about this event (albeit with a different date): "In 1757, the capital transferred to Capiz and the town began to overshadow that of Panay." In *Colonial Bonding – Americans and Capiz: The First Decade (1899-1901)* (California: The Paige Press, 2005), 2.

⁶⁰ San Agustin, 533.

⁶¹ See San Agustin, 591.

⁶² Elviro Jorde Perez, O.S.A., *Catálogo Bio-Bibliográfico de los Religiosos Agustinos de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús* (Manila: Establecimiento tipográfico del Colegio de Sto. Tomas, 1901), 816-825; Monografías, 166-176 and 180-181; Julian Martin, O.S.A., *Mapa General de las Almas que administran los PP. Agustinos en estas Islas Filipinas, 1848* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico de los Amigos del País, 1848), 142-147. From hereon, Martin.

There were only three parishes established by the Spanish missionaries during the sixteenth century, although the other succeeding parishes were former stations (*visitas*) of the early missions (*doctrinas*), which were Panay, Dumarao and Dumalag. In the seventeenth century, only one was added, that of Mambusao; while from the early to the late eighteenth century, two became parishes, Roxas City, with Capiz as its old name, and Sigma, which was absorbed by the parish of Mambusao shortly after its foundation. However, a great number of parishes, nine of them – Panitan, Dao, Ivisan, Loctugan, Pilar, Cuartero, Tapaz, Pontevedra, and Maayon – flourished as ministries of the Augustinians during the late Spanish period.

San Agustin in his *Conquistas* writes about the first parishes administered by the Augustinians in Capiz, namely in the towns of *Panay, Capis, Mambusao, Dumalag* and *Dumarao*. The friar-chronicler remarks:

They are administered by the religious of our father Saint Augustine, whose tributaries number more than sixteen thousand in the towns of Batan, Panay, Capis, Mambusao, Dumalag, Dumarao, Pasi, Laglag, Dumangas, Jaro, Ogtong, Tigbauan, Guimbal and Antique...

All the aforementioned towns are the capitals of as many *visitas* as they have. The larger ones have resident religious because they are so numerous that they presently surpass twenty-eight.⁶³

The first ministry established by the Augustinians in Capiz is Panay in 1581 as a parish, but as a mission center as early as 1566, under the patronage of St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine.⁶⁴ San

⁶³ San Agustin, 61 and 63.

⁶⁴ Isacio Rodriguez, O.S.A. *Historia de la Provincia Agustiniana del Smo. Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas*, Vol. 17, writes: "Fr. San Agustin did not fix the exact date, limiting himself to say that the town of Panay was declared independent in the mandate of the Provincial Fr. Martin de Rada (1572-1575) – San Agustin, *Conquistas* I: 255-256; Espineyra writes that it was in 1573: AGI, *Aud. De Filipinas*, 1035, f. 903v; Medina, *Historia de los sucesos*, 482, and Jorde, *Catálogo*, 816, opt for the year 1581. We accept the latter date because we only encounter Panay as a town cited in the original acts of the provincial chapter [Manila, 22.4.1581], having already its own Prior: "De Panai. In convento nostro de Panai praeficamus in Priorem P. fratrem Bartholomeum de Alcantara [tachado: Ildephonsum de Castro] et Conventualem fratrem Augustinum Camacho. APM LGP, I, f. 38v. As to the rest of the towns of the Visayas, except the convent of Cebu [Santo Niño], Panay was accepted according to the decree of 7.10.1587 (ibid., f.

Agustin describes the town of Panay:

A minister was also appointed in the town of Panay, the capital of the island from where it takes its name, because the legitimate capital of this town is Bamban. Its advocacy is our mother Sta. Monica. It also has a vote in the Chapter. It is a very good convent with sufficient construction and living quarters...

Finally, the juridical area of Panay is the major ministry throughout the island. Its capital has the largest Christian group known there, exclusive of the state that the rest of the ministries have on the island of Panay; i.e., twelve of our men, four clerics, with the port of Iloilo where the Company of Jesus has a college, and where they administer the infantry assigned there. The Panay natives are somewhat more peaceful and easy to deal with than those of other areas...⁶⁵

San Agustin likewise enumerates the earlier *visitas* of the town of Panay, namely *Suysan* (now, Ivisan), *Aranguen* (now, a barrio of Pres. Roxas), *Sibara* (now, Pilar), *Capiz* (now, Roxas City), *Ipiong* (now, Panitan), and *Divingdin* (now, Dao). He says:

It has the following *visitas* which encompasses many administrative personnel: Suysan, whose patron saint is San Nicolas de Tolentino; Aranguen, under the patron saint San Jose; Sibara, whose patron saint is San Nicolas. Of the three, the latter two are practically on the beach, and the first one is very near the ocean. The town of Capis, under the patronage of Nuestra Señora de la Concepcion is a seaport, and the most famous in the province, where all the boats land to attend to their business. It is a league and a half from the town of Panay in one of the three mouths that its river has before it empties into the sea. Going upriver on the left-hand side, it connects to another river called Mayong, which means good, perhaps due to the abundance of gold, that was originally discovered mixed in with the sand. The convent of Panay has two *visitas* on this river. One is called Ipiong, under the protection of San Lorenzo. The other is Divingdin under the protection of Saint Augustine.⁶⁶

58v), as a town through the petition of Governor General Gomez Perez Dasmarinas: *ibid.*, f. 66vv." (Manila: San Agustin Monastery, 1965, 171). From hereon, *Historia*. [Translation mine.]

⁶⁵ San Agustin, 607 and 609.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 609.

In another section, San Agustin interestingly provides these detailed descriptions of the *visitas*:

A convent and ministry was established in Bulacabe, which is one of the three main points on the island of Panay on the northeast. Fr. Diego de Solis, an exemplary religious, was appointed its prior. This ministry is the same according to what I found out – as that of Panay, because there is no other mention of it in the Registry, other than that of Santa Monica of Panay. Thus, I will not remiss in describing this island again, even considering what we have covered previously regarding it. The ministry of Panay has five parishes. The first is Mayong, under the advocacy of San Jeronimo, with another small parish called Ypion, under San Lorenzo. This town was originally rich in gold, since the natives would pan for gold among the rivers in placers. However, because of the vexations they used to receive at the hands of some magistrates, they stopped panning for gold, preferring to live in poverty rather than suffer similar hardships. The second is Aranguen, under the advocacy of San Jose. This town has a very healthy river that cures anyone who bathes in it from any contagious diseases. The third is called Sibara, under the advocacy of San Nicolas de Tolentino. The fourth, located in the mountain, Dumingding, under the advocacy of our father Saint Augustine, is a town of numerous people with a very kind disposition. The fifth parish is Juisan, a town near the ocean, with many people. San Nicolas de Tolentino is the patron of its church, whose sculpted image is very beautiful, devout, and by whom God wrought many miracles in curing different sicknesses. They have seen it perspire many times, especially when the natives of the town, forgetful of their Christian obligations, engaged in some superstitious acts which they used to do during pagan times by virtue of a demonic sacrifice. In times past, it is said that a native malcontent, on seeing the saint uncovering some crimes, went to the church and slapped him. His boldness, however, did not go unpunished, because on the same day a crocodile carried off the native's right hand, leaving him alive to realize his guilt and forever serve as proof of his crime. In addition to these parishes, the military garrison and the port of Capiz are also under the responsibility of the Panay ministry. There is a garrison of soldiers to guard the island, with a stockade sufficient to defend against invasions from the Jolo and Mindanao pirates, who entered this port many times and did much harm, burning the sampans and ships they found moored there, as well as the Church and homes of the natives. The advocate of the church is *La Concepcion de Nuestra Señora* (Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception).⁶⁷

⁶⁷ San Agustin, 837.

Los Agustinos de Panay: **Augustinian Curates of Panay**

Of the 2,830 Augustinians who came to the Philippines during the 333 years of Spanish rule, around 84 friars had served as ministers in the town of Panay from 1566 until 1898. In 1581, Fr. Bartolomé de Alcántara, O.S.A. was named first prior with Fr. Agustin Camacho, O.S.A. as his companion; and in 1895 Fr. Gregorio Hermida, O.S.A. served as the last curate with Fr. José Garmendia, O.S.A. as his companion.

Fr. Martin de Rada, O.S.A., <i>Evangelizer</i>	1566
Fr. Bartolome de Alcantara, O.S.A.	1581
Fr. Agustin Camacho, O.S.A., <i>Companion</i>	
Fr. Miguel de Siguenza, O.S.A.	1582
Fr. Bartolome de Alcantara, O.S.A.	1584
Fr. Pedro de Arce, O.S.A., <i>Companion</i>	
Fr. Pedro del Campo, O.S.A.	1584
Fr. Luis de Haro, O.S.A., <i>Companion</i>	
Fr. Francisco del Bustos, O.S.A.	1585
Fr. Pedro de Arce, O.S.A.	1587
Fr. Luis de Haro, O.S.A., <i>Companion</i>	
Fr. Miguel de Siguenza, O.S.A.	1591
Fr. Bernabe Villalobos, O.S.A.	1593
Fr. Juan de Villalobos, O.S.A., <i>Companion</i>	
Fr. Pedro de Lara, O.S.A.	1596
Fr. Hernando Guerrero, O.S.A.	1597
Fr. Agustin de Tapia, O.S.A.	1599
Fr. Gaspar de Avila, O.S.A.	1600
Fr. Gabriel de Pernia, O.S.A.	1600
Fr. Pedro de Lara, O.S.A.	1602
Fr. Hernando Guerrero, O.S.A.	1605
Fr. Alonso de Mentrída, O.S.A., <i>Preacher</i>	1607
Fr. Gaspar de Avila, O.S.A.	1611
Fr. Lucas de la Peña, O.S.A.	1615
Fr. Miguel Suarez, O.S.A.	1617
Fr. Juan de Medina, O.S.A.	1619
Fr. Antonio de Porras, O.S.A.	1623
Fr. Juan de Trejo, O.S.A.	1626

Fr. Antonio de Porras, O.S.A.	1629
Fr. Juan de Medina, O.S.A.	1632
Fr. Martin Claver, O.S.A.	1636
Fr. Alonso Quijano, O.S.A.	1638
Fr. Tomas de Villanueva, O.S.A.	1644
Fr. Juan Lozano, O.S.A.	1647
Fr. Justo Ubeda, O.S.A.	1650
Fr. Diego Martinez, O.S.A.	1651
Fr. Tomas de Villanueva, O.S.A.	1656
Fr. Anselmo Andrada, O.S.A.	1657
Fr. José Gutierrez, O.S.A.	1659
Fr. Juan Ponce, O.S.A.	1662
Fr. Pedro de Mesa, O.S.A.	1665
Fr. Bartolome de la Torre, O.S.A.	1674
Fr. Juan Ponce, O.S.A.	1677
Fr. Alonso Antunez, O.S.A.	1678
Fr. Luis Diez, O.S.A.	1680
Fr. Julian Zapata, O.S.A.	1681
Fr. Luis Diez, O.S.A.	1683
Fr. Juan Bautista Bover, O.S.A.	1686
Fr. Nicolas de la Cuadra, O.S.A.	1690
Fr. Manuel Lopez, O.S.A.	1692
Fr. Sebastian de la Oya, O.S.A.	1695
Fr. Fausto Calvo, O.S.A.	1696
Fr. Manuel Lopez, O.S.A.	1698
Fr. Fausto Trepad, O.S.A.	1701
Fr. Hipolito Casiano, O.S.A.	1703
Fr. Pedro de Vera, O.S.A.	1707
Fr. Hipolito Casiano, O.S.A.	1710
Fr. Juan Antonio Sanz, O.S.A.	1713
Fr. Andres Alonso Martinez, O.S.A.	1716
Fr. Pedro Beltran, O.S.A.	1719
Fr. Manuel Solano, O.S.A.	1722
Fr. Antonio Ruiz Villar, O.S.A.	1725

Fr. Vicente Urquiola, O.S.A.	1728
Fr. Miguel Hernaez, O.S.A.	1731
Fr. Jaime Trasot, O.S.A.	1732
Fr. Miguel Herrera, O.S.A.	1734
Fr. Juan Landaburu, O.S.A.	1737
Fr. Juan Jugo, O.S.A.	1740
Fr. Francisco Magarzo, O.S.A.	1744
Fr. Jacinto Pico, O.S.A.	1747
Fr. Andres B. Solar, O.S.A.	1750
Fr. Antonio Lopez, O.S.A.	1753
Fr. Francisco Avalor, O.S.A.	1756
Fr. Luis Torreblanca, O.S.A.	1759
Fr. Francisco Valenzuela, O.S.A.	1762
Fr. Tadeo de la Consolacion, O.S.A.	1765
Fr. Pedro Resano, O.S.A.	1769
Fr. Antonio Pardo, O.S.A.	1773
Fr. Miguel Murguia, O.S.A.	1774
Fr. José Cuadrado, O.S.A.	1777
Fr. Sebastian de la Oya, O.S.A.	1795
Fr. Placido M. Mendez, O.S.A.	1798
Fr. Juan Campos, O.S.A.	1799
Fr. Vicente Elías, O.S.A.	1805
Fr. Vicente Rivas, O.S.A.	1807
Fr. Bernardo Giganto, O.S.A.	1817
Fr. Joaquin Bagis, O.S.A.	1824
Fr. Isidro Lopez, O.S.A.	1829
Fr. Agustín Durán, O.S.A.	1840
Fr. José Veloso, O.S.A.	1844
Fr. Gregorio Hermida, O.S.A.	1887
Fr. Elías Rivarte, O.S.A.	1887
Fr. Miguel Roscales, O.S.A.	1889
Fr. Gregorio Hermida, O.S.A.	1895
Fr. José Garmendia, O.S.A., <i>Companion</i>	1896.

Two of these Spanish missionaries became bishops: Bishop Pedro de Arce, O.S.A. of the Diocese of Cebu (1612-1645),⁶⁸ who served as assistant (*compañero*) to Fr. Bartolomé de Alcántara, O.S.A. in the parish of Panay (1584-1587) and later as its minister (1587-1591);⁶⁹ and Archbishop Hernando Guerrero, O.S.A. of the Archdiocese of Manila in (1634-1641),⁷⁰ who served as the minister of the parish of Panay (1597 and 1605-1609).⁷¹ Archbishop Guerrero was also previously the Bishop of Nueva Segovia (1627-1634).⁷² A number of them were also appointed as superiors of their religious Order, the first of whom was Fr. Martin de Rada, O.S.A., the evangelizer of Panay.

There was a steady growth of Christian population during the Spanish era: 4,604 in 1732; 5,033 in 1773; 5,685 in 1818; 6,605 in 1835; 11,160 in 1845; 12,445 in 1854; 13,562 in 1866; 18,772 in 1883; 14,701 in 1890 and 16,672 in 1898.⁷³ There was however a terrible epidemic spread of cholera in 1882 which killed 1,005 of its residents.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Pedro G. Galende, O.S.A., "The Augustinians in the Philippines 1565-1890," *Boletín Ecclesiástico de Filipinas*, Vol. 39, 1965, 60. Ma. Lourdes Díaz-Trechuelo in her article "Episcopologio Agustino en Filipinas 1595-1645" speaks of Fr. Arce's character as a bishop: "The kind-hearted character of Fr. Pedro de Arce has been manifested in many occasions, among others, in his good relationship with the religious of the different orders, who are under his See" ("Episcopologio Agustino en Filipinas 1595-1645," (*Episcopologio agustino en Filipinas 1595-1645*, Valladolid: Actas de Congreso Internacional V Centenario Agustinos en América y Filipinas, 1990, 784). Cf. Historia, Vol. 17, 243-245.

⁶⁹ Jorde, 23-24.

⁷⁰ Galende, "The Augustinians in the Philippines 1565-1890," 61. The *Anales Ecclesiásticos de Filipinas 1574-1682, Vol.1* speaks of the elevation of Archbishop Guerrero, O.S.A. to the seat of Manila: "(He) was presented (to the Holy See) as Archbishop of Manila on January 16, 1632... Archbishop Guerrero waited for two (2) years in Manila for his Papal Bull and Pallium. Finally with a testimony that said documents have already been sent and are forthcoming, he was given possession of the Archdiocese on June 23, 1655" (Manila: The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila, 1994, 67).

⁷¹ Jorde, 48-49.

⁷² See Díaz-Trechuelo, *Episcopologio agustino en Filipinas 1595-1645*, 791-792.

⁷³ See Historia, Vol. 27, 171; Hipolito Casiano, O.S.A. "Estado de los Pueblos de Pan-ay en 1714," *Archivo Histórico Hispano-Agustiniano*, Vol 12, 1919, 288-296, 351-361; Jorde, 816-824, 829; *Estado General de los Religiosos de que se compone la provincial del Dulcísimo Nombre de Jesus de padres agustinos calzados de estas Islas Filipinas, 1818-1819*; and *Mapa General de las Almas que administran los Padres Agustinos Calzados en estas Islas Filipinas, 1835*, Sampaloc, 1836.

⁷⁴ Guillermo Kabelle, *Memoria sobre la epidemia de Cólera Morbo que se padeció en la Cabecera de Capiz en el año 1882*, Capiz: 1882.

Los Edificios Públicos de Panay: **Panay Ecclesiastical Complex**

The original ecclesiastical structure of Panay was built during the term of Fr. Manuel López, O.S.A. (d. 1705) between 1692 and 1698,⁷⁵ and was rebuilt by Fr. Manuel Murguia, O.S.A. (d. 1797) in 1774.⁷⁶

In the past, the town of Panay was often visited by storms and earthquakes which destroyed the church and its convent several times.

In 1884 after the destructive typhoon of 1875, the famous Augustinian builder, Fr. José Beloso, O.S.A. (1815-1888),⁷⁷ renovated the stone church.⁷⁸ In 1895 Fr. Lesmes Pérez, O.S.A. (1849-1915) restored it in its beautiful grandeur from the aftermath of the typhoons of 1874 and 1875.⁷⁹

The convent, made of rubblework, also constructed by Fr. Beloso, was destroyed also by these consecutive typhoons.⁸⁰ It was elegantly reconstructed in 1892 by Fr. Miguel Roscales, O.S.A. (1849-1905),⁸¹ and finished by Fr. Gregorio Hermida, O.S.A. (1848-1917),⁸² but unfortunately was burned, alongside with the Municipal Hall, by the

⁷⁵ Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 320. For his biography, see Jorde, 139 and Manuel Merino, O.S.A., *Agustinos Evangelizadores de Filipinas 1565-1965* (Madrid: Ediciones Archivo Agustiniiano, 1965), 218. From hereon, Merino.

⁷⁶ Jorde, 393; Marin, 139; Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 320. See also Alicia M.L. Coseteng, *Spanish Churches in the Philippines* (*Spanish Churches in the Philippines* (Quezon City: New Mercury Printing Press, 1972), 106; Norma I. Alarcon, *Philippine Architecture during the Pre-Spanish and Spanish Periods* (*Philippine Architecture during the Pre-Spanish and Spanish Periods*. Manila: UST Publishing House, 1998), 183. For his biography, see Jorde, 393 and Merino, 234. A Mexican by birth, his name was registered "Miguel" in Monografias, 216 and in Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 320.

⁷⁷ Jorde, 450. "Velo" is the variant spelling of his name (Monografias, 175).

⁷⁸ Jorde, 450; Marin, 139. See also Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 320; Coseteng, *Spanish Churches in the Philippines*, 106; Alarcon, *Philippine Architecture during the Pre-Spanish and Spanish Periods*, 183; Benjamin Locsin Layug, *A Tourist Guide to Notable Philippine Churches* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 2007), 149.

⁷⁹ Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 321. See also Alarcon, *Philippine Architecture during the Pre-Spanish and Spanish Periods*, 183; Layug, *A Tourist Guide to Notable Philippine Churches*, 149. For his biography, see Jorde, 549 and Merino, 226-227.

⁸⁰ Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 321.

⁸¹ Marin, 139. For his biography, see Jorde, 598-599 and Merino, 163.

⁸² Marin, 139. For his biography, see Jorde, 564-565; Merino, 489.

Spanish Governor General Diego de los Rios to dislodge the rebels from the town during the 1898 Philippine Revolution.⁸³

Aside from constructing the convent garden, the cemetery with its chapel made of stone, the public schools, the municipal house, various bridges and ditches,⁸⁴ Fr. Beloso commissioned Don Juan Reina for the casting of the largest bell in the Philippines and in Asia and the third biggest bell in the world in 1878 (aside from other bells under his name). The *Dakong Lingganay* (meaning, "big bell"), as it is popularly known, was made from 70 sacks of coins donated by the townsfolk and measures seven feet in diameter, five feet in height with a weight of 10,400 kilograms.⁸⁵ It carries a meaningful inscription which reads: "Soy la voz de Dios que llevaré y ensalzaré desde el principio hasta fin de este pueblo de Panay para que los fieles de Jesús vengan a esta casa de Dios a recibir las gracias celestiales" ("I am God's voice which I shall echo and praise from one end to the other of the town of Panay, so that the faithful followers of Christ may come to this house of God to receive the heavenly graces.")⁸⁶

Fr. Pedro G. Galende, O.S.A. tells an interesting account about its casting and its blacksmith:

With just few rudimentary tools, Reina set up temporary shop at the foot of the town and hurried with the casting of the bell. Priest and caster agreed on the testing time. When the bell was tried during the *Angelus*, the sound was so loud that "every nearby town heard the voice of the bell of Panay." After being paid by the parish priest, Don Juan returned to his shop in Iloilo. In a month's time, the bell cracked. From then on, it sounded more like a frying pan than a bell. Furious, the priest summoned Don Juan Reina and ordered him to have the bell recast, for free. Don Juan, who had the temper of a genuine *baturro* (country man from Aragón) would

⁸³ Marin, 139; Monografias, 175. Fr. Fernández writes: "There was another convent in construction of stone and bricks, but General de los Rios destroyed it, setting on fire likewise a big stock of wood that was there for the new convent. He also burned the Municipal Hall in order to dislodge the insurrectionists from the town" (Monografias, 175).

⁸⁴ Jorde, 450; Merino, 172; Monografias, 175.

⁸⁵ Jorde, 450; Merino, 172; Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 321. See also Layug, *A Tourist Guide to Notable Philippine Churches*, 149.

⁸⁶ Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 325. Galende opines: "The bell in the words of the town's mayor, is very dear to the Panayanos both in moments of happiness and in times of tribulation" (Ibid.).

have none of it. Fr. Beloso, no less stubborn appealed to Bishop Cuartero who, after a heated discussion with the blacksmith, sent a circular to all the priests of the island, prohibiting them from contracting any job to Don Juan... The deadlock was broken in a very strange manner. Bishop Cuartero would spend long sleepless nights due to a chronic toothache. Ironically, the only dentist who could help him was no other than Don Juan, the blacksmith! Don Juan was sent for, and the bishop meekly submitted himself to have his toothed pulled out. The *sacamuelas*, as Don Juan was called, laughingly relished the great opportunity. As he got ready to apply the hook he asked the Bishop with unfeigned insolence: "Your Excellency, is there any job for the bell caster?" "Of course, Don Juan, there is," whispered the Bishop. A big pull and the tooth went out. After this twist of events, it was no longer difficult for the blacksmith to find work.⁸⁷

According to local tradition, "artisans from Manila fashioned the Baroque decorations, set in silver, of the main altar. The town's greatest sculptor, Joseph Bergaño or *Sarhento Itak*, did most of the bas-reliefs and religious statuary."⁸⁸

At present, the parish church of Panay, an excellent example of Filipino Baroque style with Neo-Classic influence, is endowed with the distinctions as a National Historical Landmark in 1997 and as a National Cultural Treasure in 2004.⁸⁹

As a center of pilgrimage during the Spanish period, Fernández writes about the miraculous cross inside the Panay church. He recounts:

In the first quarter of the 17th century a devotional image of the Crucified Christ venerated in the Church of this town became famous for its miracles. The judicious historian Fr. Juan de Medina, eyewitness of some, relates different miracles in his appreciable story, for he was the parish priest.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 320.

⁸⁹ Layug, *A Tourist Guide to Notable Philippine Churches*, 149. For the discussion on Filipino baroque art, see *Endangered: Papers from the First International Congress on Fil-Hispanic Architecture* (Manila: Instituto Cervantes, 2005).

⁹⁰ Monografías, 174. Fr. Juan de Medina, O.S.A., (d. 1637), known as the "Apostle of Panay," served as parish priest of the town of Panay from 1619 to 1623. For his biography, see Jorde, 83-85 and Merino, 431.

In the same town of Panay, a unique and peculiar Good Friday procession called *Considerad*, from the first words that begin each verse, which means “reflect” or “meditate,”⁹¹ offers a veritable witness to a religious custom introduced by the Augustinians in Capiz that has survived the vestiges of time. *Considerad* was said to have been introduced in 1895, probably by Fr. Miguel Roscales, O.S.A., (1849-1905), who served as minister of Panay from 1889 to 1895 but remained there until 1898.⁹²

This religious practice in Panay is accompanied by the recitation of prepared texts on the sufferings of Christ, similar to the popular *Pasyon*. Situating it in the rich context of Filipino popular religiosity in the different parts of the Philippine, Galende and Fr. Rene Javellana, S.J. remark:

⁹¹ Leothiny Clavel, “Philippine Revolution in Capiz.” *Diliman Review*, Vol. 43, No. 3-4, 1995, 33.

⁹² Actually, no mention of the priest’s name was made by Clavel. Most probably, he only knew its circumstances by local tradition. In fact, the dating of this religious custom could be much earlier, yet no mention was made in his biography. But the researcher assumed that, granted 1895 was the start of this practice, it was Fr. Roscales who propagated it because of the following reasons: *firstly*, he stayed for nine years in this town, enough to be acquainted with the religiosity of the people; and *secondly*, interestingly, he was a renowned author according to Jorde and Merino, who wrote, among many useful canonical-liturgical works, *Memoria sobre titulares, patronos y fiestas...* Malabon: A. de H., 1895, 108 pp. (Jorde, 599), which may contain the said practice (but is unfortunately not available to the researcher). Nonetheless, it could have also been Fr. Gregorio Hermida, O.S.A., who was the regent of Panay in 1875 and 1895 or Fr. José Garmendia, O.S.A. (1861-?), who was a companion of Fr. Hermida in 1896 (see Jorde, 641, but no mention in Merino). Surprisingly, there was no mention of him in Hernandez’s *Augustinians in the Philippines*. But Rodriguez in his *Historia* provides an account of him and his famous work: “*Memoria sobre titulares, patronos y fiestas* written by Very Rev. Fr. Ex-definidor Miguel Roscales, Parish Priest in the Province of Capiz. With the necessary permits. Malabon, 1895.” (Vol. 4, 383). He remarks: “The *Memoria* was printed together with the calendar for 1896, of which a little later the “*Separata*” was made. Formerly, it was presented in the Philippine Exposition held in Madrid in 1895, and merited the gold medal award. Fr. Roscales, having seen the recognition his work deserved thought of completing it with another study which exists unedited in the library of Valladolid. It consists of Volumes II and III, the first (I) comprised the beginning of the former *Memoria*” (Ibid.). Cf. R. Morales Maza, *Augustinians in Panay* (Iloilo City: University of San Agustin, 1987). 285. For his biography, see Jorde, 598-599 and Merino, 163.

"Considerad, los Cristianos; Pamalandongan ta mga Kristiyano," begins the refrain, a Good Friday custom unique to Pan-ay. The *Considerad*, a meditative antiphonal hymn, in alternating Spanish and Hiligaynon, is sung by a choir of boys holding symbols of Christ's passion – a rope, a whip, a lance, even a live rooster – and who intone, at the top of their voices, verses which explain the meaning of the symbol each holds. Some churches are centers of popular rites. In Obando, Bulacan, a fertility rite in honor of Saint Clare, the Virgin Mary, and Saint Pascual Baylon, is held during the town fiesta, where women desiring to have children dance to ask for a child. In Pakil, Laguna, the Virgin of Sorrows is the object of a healing dance called Turumba which mimics the movements of the lame, maimed and blind.⁹³

The official *Considerad* text, usually with twenty-two verses, exhorts the Christian listener to contemplate on each symbol or instrument in the passion of Jesus Christ, from his betrayal to his death through crucifixion. A sample of the text of *Considerad* reads:

I

Let us reflect, fellow Christians
on these cards
which the Jews dealt
after selling our
Lord, Jesus Christ.

VII

Let us reflect, fellow Christians
on this palm
which the Jews used to slap
the dear face of our
Lord Jesus Christ.

XIV

Let us reflect, fellow Christians
on this ladder
which Joséph of Arimathea climbed
to uproot the nails on the cross.

⁹³ Pedro G. Galende, O.S.A. and Rene B. Javellana, S.J., *Great Churches of the Philippines* (Manila: Bookmark, Inc., 1993), 55.

XXI

Let us reflect, fellow Christians
 on this cotton
 which was saturated
 with gall and vinegar,
 the mixture the Jews made
 for our Lord Jesus Christ to drink.⁹⁴

***Los Insurrectos Panayanos:* Panay during Philippine Revolution**

As early as 1896, the outbreak of the Philippine revolution against Spain, a provincial chapter of the revolutionary society *Katipunan* was formed in Capiz (in today's Aklan area), with Francisco del Castillo and Candido Iban generally considered as its founders.⁹⁵

According to accounts, there were two insurgent movements in the province of Capiz in 1896: the Aklan group, which had close associations with the *Katipunan* led by Del Castillo and Iban, and the Ilaya (the present Capiz), as early as 1897, which were actually isolated rebellions led by several personalities like Esteban Contreras and Macario Lukso.⁹⁶ The *Insurrección en el Partido de Aclan de la Provincia*

⁹⁴ For the full text, see Clavel, "Philippine Revolution in Capiz," 32-33. For his discussion on the *Considerad*, see Leothiny Clavel, *Social History of Capiz* (Roxas City: Leopoldo P. Clavel Infoshop, 1996), 38-43 and 126-127.

⁹⁵ Digno Alba, *Fragments of the Philippine Revolution in Capiz and a Brief Historical Account of the Separation of Aklan to be Province* (Manila, 1955), 1-2. Del Castillo and Iban were active members of the *Katipunan* in Luzon since 1895. They held several positions and donated their money for buying a printing press to publish the *Kartilla*. As donors of the *Katipunan* printing press, Teodoro Agoncillo in his book *Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* confirms: "In that part of the present Carriedo Street which forms a right angle with Rizal Avenue, the *Bazar El Cisne* stood with its small printing plant. Iban and Del Castillo sought the owner, Antonio Salazar, and offered to buy his press. The owner agreed to part with it for P400. The press was not much to speak of, and the buyers, with the help of other members of the *Katipunan*, succeeded without much difficulty in transferring it to Andres Bonifacio's house in Oroquieta Street near Zubaran. Having donated the machine to the society, the good-hearted philanthropists went to their native town of Kalibo, Kapis, to spread the doctrines of the revolutionary *Katipunan*" (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1956, 80-81).

⁹⁶ Clavel writes of this division: "When the Philippine Revolution broke out on August 23, 1896, Capiz had two sections namely, Ilaya and the Aklan Valley. For this reason, early accounts of the revolution in Capiz referred to the revolutionary events

de Capiz reported of a similar incident in Tapaz, Capiz on March 16, 1897. It reads: "The Captain of the Guardia Civil went to embark with 25 soldiers and the Captain of the port and some enforcement from this town. The lieutenant has given order that the encounter in Tapas with 20 guards in persecution of the babaylanes of two towns..."⁹⁷

The Augustinian Fernández, who witnessed these events, writes of what transpired in the province of Capiz in 1898, firstly, with the burning of the town of Panay by Gen. de los Rios.

On the 24th of April of 1898, the insurgents of Aclan passed through Ilaya and entered Pan-ay. The governor of the province Rafael Romero did not have enough forces to pursue them and they had to withdraw without attacking. The enemy was dispersed by General Don Diego de los Rios, and after burning the town he returned to Iloilo.⁹⁸

Of the Battle of Balisong in Pilar, Capiz, where a number of Capiz revolutionaries died, Fernández recounts:

Don Juan Lopez was named governor of Capiz and he situated the rebels at Mount Balison and there put them under control but not before 15 of his men had died, and many were wounded. They did nothing more after that but passed the time in conversation with the Chinese mestizo Simplicio Hugo and a native woman with the family name of Contreras in the town of Cayuyuman. Because P. Gregorio Hermida censured this conduct, General de los Rios had him exiled, then imitating the tactics of Blanco and

in both places. But in 1956, Republic Act 1414 separated Aklan from Capiz, making it an independent province. Since then Aklanon have appropriated all the revolutionary events in the Aklan Valley as part of their history. In response, many Capisnons or natives of Ilaya (now province of Capiz) have stopped citing these events as part of their own history" (Philippine Revolution in Capiz" 25)

⁹⁷ *Insurrección en el Partido de Aclan de la Provincia de Capiz*, 1897, 3. Esteban Contreras, on his part, led several battles. On May 4, 1897, the attack in Tanza, Panay, and later at Barrio Lahab. And the third and biggest battle was in Balisong, Pilar. Demy Sonza in his book *Visayan Fighters of Freedom, Vol. I* writes of the succeeding battles led by Contreras: "The Capiz revolutionists did not have many battles against the Spaniards for the following year the Ilongos also revolted and with the fall of Manila to the Americans in August of 1898... But there was another enemy to face. The Filipino-American war broke out and once again General Contreras found himself on the battle field" (Iloilo: Agustin Sonza and Sons/A Treasured Legacy Book, 1962, 14).

⁹⁸ Apuntes, 81-85, as translated by Maza, *The Augustinians in Panay*, 337.

Primo de Rivera, he tried to make the people believe that all was well in the islands, keeping away from the true situation.⁹⁹

At the height of the revolution in 1898, many Spanish friars abandoned their parishes in Capiz because they had been considered constant targets by the Filipino rebels and their adherents. This was due to the controversy regarding the secularization or Filipinization of parishes.

Ironically, it was a Spanish official, Gen. de los Rios who made the lives of the missionaries in the province miserable. As Fernández writes:

The conduct of de los Rios towards the religious was hardly humane and incorrect. When the parish priests from the Province of Capiz came to Iloilo to seek refuge since they had no one to defend them there from the atrocities of the rebels, de los Rios with incalculable cruelty had sent them back.¹⁰⁰

Finally, Fernández narrates the departure of the religious friars from the province of Capiz in 1898:

In Capiz, the forces also withdrew without firing a shot. The religious were able to embark secretly and thus were saved from falling into the hands of the insurgents, notwithstanding the insistence of the authorities of trying as witnessed by everybody, that not one of the priests would be able to save himself.¹⁰¹

The parish of Panay was taken over by the native secular priests after the war, but there was no recorded persecution against the Spanish missionaries and the Spaniards in general. An explanation is needed here. Spanish chroniclers would agree that: "(t)he Capizeños were always very prudent and peace-loving people, cheerful and entertaining."¹⁰² They were also fiercely loyal to Spain as shown by their material support for the war against the British invaders and the imprisonment of Governor Quintanilla who allied himself with the enemies.¹⁰³ However, they could not tolerate blatant abuse and rampant

⁹⁹ Apuntes, 81-85, as translated by Maza, *The Augustinians in Panay*, 337.

¹⁰⁰ Apuntes, 81-85, as translated by Maza, *The Augustinians in Panay*, 337.

¹⁰¹ Apuntes, 81-85, as translated by Maza, *The Augustinians in Panay*, 341.

¹⁰² Monografías, 166.

¹⁰³ Ibid. The parish priest during that time was Fr. Tadeo de la Consolación, O.S.A. (1731-1780) For his biography, see Jorde, 300; Merino, 266. Concerning the British

corruption from government officials like Governor Duran in 1836, whom thousands protested and plotted to kill, until the parish priest of Capiz [Roxas City], Fr. Placido Alva, O.S.A. (1812-1865) fortunately intervened.¹⁰⁴ A Protestant missionary of Capiz, Mary H. Fee in her memoirs *A Woman's Impressions of the Philippines* (1912) relates an instructive experience concerning the heroic behavior of the Capizeños towards their Spanish fathers and against the Tagalog rebels during the Philippine Revolution:

The Visayans are a peaceful race; even in the insurrection against Spain the Capizeños felt a decided pro-Spanish sentiment. Early in the rebellion a few boat-loads of Tagalog soldiers came down from Luzon, and landed on the open north coast two miles from the town. The valiant Capizeños had dug some trenches on the beach and had thrown up a breastwork there, and they went out to fight for Spain and Visaya. They fired two rounds without disconcerting the Tagalogs very much, and then, having no more ammunition, they "all ran home again," as my informant naively described it. The Tagalogs took possession of the town, and the Visayans lived in fear and trembling. Nearly all women, both wives and young girls, carried daggers in fear of assault from Tagalog soldiers.¹⁰⁵

***Los Clérigos Indios de Panay:* Panay under Filipino Secular Priests**

When the Philippines won its independence in 1898, the parishes of Capiz were now totally and completely under secular administration. The native clergy assumed the pastoral care of the Capizeños. They were products of the *Real Seminario de San Carlos* of Cebu (1779), and later on, the *Seminario de San Vicente Ferrer* of Jaro (1869). They belonged to the diocese of Cebu until 1865 when Jaro became a diocese. In the

Occupation of the Philippines, see Shirley Fish's *When Britain ruled the Philippines, 1762-1764 : The Story of the 18th Century British Invasion of the Philippines during the Seven Years War* (Bloomington: First Books Library, 2003).

¹⁰⁴ Monografías, 167. Sinibaldo de Mas in his *Report on the Condition of the Philippines in 1848* writes: "In Capiz in 1836, the inhabitants of the town attacked the house of the alcalde mayor, Duran, to kill him and he was only saved by his calm and fearlessness" (Carlos Botor, III, trans., Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1963), 157. For the biography of Fr. Placido Alva, see Jorde, 441-442; Merino, 374.

¹⁰⁵ Mary H. Fee, *A Woman's Impressions of the Philippines* (Claremont: The Paige Press, 2005), 130-131.

town of Panay, only two Filipino priests served as coadjutors of the Augustinian curates during the colonial era: Fr. Doroteo Carlos (1840) and Fr. José Reyes (1892).

From the American period up to the Japanese occupation, the following priests became ministers of the town:

Fr. Francisco Alba	1898
Fr. Florendo Tagle	1902
Fr. José Torres	1914
Fr. Magno Gomez	1917
Fr. Gregorio Santiagudo	1920
Fr. Fulgencio Delfin	1921
Fr. Adriano Billanes	1932
Fr. José Gargaritano	1933
Fr. Hermogenes Elmido	1935
Fr. Juan Cerdeña	1939.

La Diócesis de Capiz:

Panay after Creation of Diocese of Capiz

The province of Capiz was under the Diocese of Cebu in 1595, with Iloilo, Samar, Leyte, Caraga, Misamis, Negros and Antique. When Jaro became a diocese in 1865, Capiz belonged to its ecclesiastical jurisdiction, with Antique, Bacolod and Zamboanga. On May 28, 1951, with the papal bull of Pope Pius XII *Ex supremi apostolatus* Capiz was finally created as a diocese.¹⁰⁶ With the canonical erection of the new diocese, the parish church of Capiz (renamed Roxas City on April 11, 1951) became the metropolitan cathedral, the seat of the bishop of Capiz.¹⁰⁷

Most Rev. Manuel P. Yap, D.D. was appointed as the first bishop of Capiz (1951-1952), and was shortly transferred to the seat of Bacolod (1952-1966). He was succeeded by Most Rev. Antonio F. Frondosa, D.D., a native of Dumalag, Capiz, who also became its first archbishop when

¹⁰⁶ "Ex supremi apostolatus," *Boletín Ecclesiástico de Filipinas*, Vol. 25, No. 279, September 1951, 539-541.

¹⁰⁷ For an article on the history of the Church of Capiz, see Noel Vincent B. Abalajon, "History of the Church of Roxas City, Capiz: Celebrating the Three Hundred Glorious Years of an Old Parish (1707-2007)," *Boletín Ecclesiástico de Filipinas*, Vol. 84, No. 865, 277-295. This article is part of his Licentiate and Master of Arts in Theology thesis entitled *The Evangelization of Capiz by the Spanish Missionaries (1566-1898): Towards a Historical Reconstruction* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas, 2008).

Capiz was elevated to the rank of an Archdiocese on January 17, 1976, with Kalibo and Romblon as sufraggan dioceses, through the papal bull of Pope Paul VI *Nimum patens*.¹⁰⁸ Archbishop Frondosa served the Archdiocese of Capiz for thirty-four (34) years from 1952 to 1986.

Most Rev. Onesimo C. Gordoncillo, D.D. became the next Archbishop of Capiz on June 18, 1986. He was formerly the Bishop of Tagbilaran (1976-1986) and Auxiliary Bishop of Dumaguete (1974-1976). The present term of Monsignor Onie, as clergy and lay faithful fondly call him, is blessed by several important celebrations of the Church of Capiz: *the Golden Jubilee as a Diocese and Silver Jubilee as an Archdiocese, both in 2001*, and the Golden Anniversary of St. Pius X Seminary in 2007. He is also the revered founder of the Sancta Maria Mater et Regina Seminarium, the philosophy and theology seminary of the Archdiocese of Capiz, which opened in 2000.

The following Capizeño priests administered the parish of Panay from 1951 up to today:¹⁰⁹

Fr. Quintin Salido, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1952
Fr. Felipe Almosa, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1956
Fr. Jesus Patiño, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1957
Fr. Anacleto Selorio, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1956
Fr. Justo Beltran, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1969
Fr. Eugenio Bernas, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1970
Fr. Ruperto Fuentes, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1973
Fr. Vicente Hilata, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1973
Fr. Vicente Hilata, <i>Parish Priest</i>	1976
Fr. Roque Ortencio, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1977
Fr. Policarpio John Luza, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1982
Fr. Romualdo Azarcon, <i>Parish Priest</i>	1988
Fr. Julio Giner, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1988
Fr. Josel Beltran, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1991
Fr. Lowell Cayetano, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1992
Fr. Ronnie Bantias, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1996
Fr. Teodoro Tanalgo, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1996
Fr. Romil Aperoch, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1996
Fr. Mario Martinez, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1996

¹⁰⁸ "Nimum patens," *Boletín Ecclesiástico de Filipinas*, Vol. 50, No. 555, 1976, 199.

¹⁰⁹ See The Archdiocese of Capiz, *Golden Jubilee of Capiz as Diocese*. 1951-May 28-2001 (Roxas City: Archdiocese of Capiz, 2001). See also 2006 *Religious Fiesta Souvenir Program*, August 18-27, 2006: 440th Anniversary of the Evangelization of Panay and Re-Dedication of Sta. Monica Church (Panay: Parish of Sta. Monica, 2006).

Fr. Anthony Gonzales, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1997
Fr. Niel Olano, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1997
Fr. Jaime Abao, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	1998
Msgr. Benjamin Advincula, <i>Parish Priest</i>	2001
Fr. Roberto Alvin Lamirez, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	2001
Fr. Jaime Villanueva, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	2002
Fr. John Marlon Bordo, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	2002
Fr. Redan Apines, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	2005
Fr. Robert Alba, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	2007
Fr. Mark Granflor, <i>Parochial Vicar</i>	2008

As regards the current constructions of the Saint Monica Parish of Panay, Capiz, the installation of tile roofing of the Church and the renovation of the Convent and Museum were initiated during the present term of Msgr. Benjamin F. Advincula, P.C. □