

The Spanish Missions and Davao's Economic Development During the 19th Century

FAINA C. ABAYA-ULINDANG

ABSTRACT

Davao's history reportedly began with the coming of Don Jose Oyanguren in 1848,¹ when he was commissioned by Governor-General Narciso Claveria to "conquer and subdue the entire Gulf district, expel or pacify the Moros there, and establish the Christian religion." The mandate clearly specified the religious nature of his mission, but since Oyanguren was an entrepreneur with a history of failed businesses, his plan was expected

FAINA C. ABAYA-ULINDANG, Ph.D., is a retired professor of History from Mindanao State University, Marawi City. She is currently teaching at Iligan Medical Center College, and Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro.

to be for Davao to become a business district first, and a Christian province second. *Reduccion* by the religious missions, however, was a viable economic venture, too. This paper posits that it was the Jesuit Missions that served as the catalyst for Davao's trade and commerce, along with the significant conversions of the Mandayas and the other natives there. Second, that Oyanguren's efforts were underrated by his detractors but were actually significant in opening Davao to both internal and external trade. His initiative and courage paid off in the long run, in terms of progress for this southeastern province of Mindanao. Finally, the strong partnership between the Spanish civil and religious missions in subjugating the *Moros* and the *Lumads* was the key to Davao's rise as the colonial center in southeastern Mindanao vis-à-vis the central authority in Manila then and now.

KEYWORDS

Davao Economy, Jesuits, History of Davao's growth, Spanish colonization and Davao

INTRODUCTION

During the Spanish colonization times, the *conquistadores* often engaged the religious missionaries in the former's efforts to subjugate the natives through the latter's *reduccion* policy. The *reduccion* (or to reduce through systematic grouping of the natives into communities that

would eventually become towns or *pueblos*, and under the church's bell) was meant to answer the religious motivation behind all of Spain's exploration of uncharted paths in the New World. Thus, the euphemism "the cross follows the sword."

The Philippines during the sixteenth century was brought to the attention of the Western world. The eastern exoticism of Asian culture whet the Europeans' appetite for economic gain, which they tried to balance with the noble mission of spiritual conversion. A Eurocentric perspective thus defined world historiography that puts premise on the primacy of the rule of evidence, both material and non-material. This explains why Mindanao's history, particularly Davao's history, during the Spanish period would largely depend on the Jesuit Letters, and the voluminous writings of the missionaries who had the duty to report to their superiors the progress of their missions. Historians long for the day when both written and unwritten sources would be sufficient enough to have a balanced, more Filipino- or Asian-centric point of view prevail over the overweening Eurocentric perspective. Given the contributions of the likes of William Henry Scott in terms of his ground-breaking ethnohistory and Agoncillo *et al.*'s popular "history from below" interpretive methodology, this paper is not far from that goal. That said, Davao's history beginning from the coming of the Spaniards relies primarily on Spanish written primary sources as well as Shinzo Hayase and Haidee Gloria's studies as secondary background sources. Furthermore, the discussion narrows down to how the economy of Davao developed from the missionary and natives' interaction. Beginning with the coming of Jose Oyanguren, the narrative

shall show how the raw, native, isolated, sporadic *lumad* (native) communities of southeastern Mindanao evolved to one that is centrally significant and connected to the colonized, Hispanized country that is the Philippines. The community through *reduccion* would become what is now known as Davao—a metropolis, the latter-day “queen city” of southern Philippines. This paper therefore focuses on how the Jesuit’s *reduccion* helped in the economic growth of Davao.

THE PEOPLE OF DAVAO ACCORDING TO COLONIAL SOURCES

Mount Apo was a known source of the lifeways, largely spiritual, and a source of livelihood for the people of Davao and its environs. The first exploration was recorded in October 5, 1889 by the team headed by Don Joaquin Rajal and Joseph Montano, both “naturalists,” together with Fr. Mateo Gisbert (who wrote about this journey in the Jesuit Letters), one Bagobo *datu* named Manig and his men, and some eleven *disciplinarios* (or prisoners/inmates of the Davao penal colony). This mission was successful, according to Fr. Gisbert.² He also narrated the purpose of this exploration to Mount Apo as thus: “After this (exploration), one hopes the barbarous scenes which used to take place at the foot of Mount Apo, whenever the pagans wanted to climb it, will not be repeated. They had never dared without first appeasing Mandarangan with a human victim. But now that they have seen us ascend without any sacrifice, they will not repeat it in the future. This has

been a grand accomplishment in the eyes of all the unbaptized Bagobos.”³ Other than convincing the Bagobos of a non-existent deity, the naturalists were also curious about the potential mineral resource of sulphur, which was abundant at the summit of Mount Apo, and other forest resources. The beauty of Mount Apo as related in the report is worth quoting.⁴ To wit: White mountain streams descend from courses that sometimes rise to about a hundred meters. Upon its almost perpendicular precipices, festoons of orchids and other thick foliage [were] every now and then broken by torrents of waterfalls, epiphytes grow in profusion...The stillness of the forest is frequently relieved by the sound of water rushing over the rocks and by the cries of forest denizens such as the calao. The scenery is majestic and imposing.

It is thus, not difficult to understand why the Bagobos consider Mount Apo as the source of their being and, therefore, of their identity. The term “Bagobo” is a generic name for those living at the foot of Mount Apo. They are further classified as: Tagakaulo, Ubo, Ata, and Manobo. According to Hayase,⁵ on the other hand, the Bagobos are of three categories: the Tagabawa, Guianga, and the Manuvu, with the Tagabawas as the principal group. Faye Cooper Cole, meanwhile, posits that it is the Ata Manobo living on the northern side of the mountain slopes who were the most civilized compared with the Negrito Atas, who lived elsewhere on the mountain. It was from among the Atas, also called Matigsalug, that the Bagobos captured

their slaves. All considered this mountain as a resource for their hunting and gathering, *kaingin*, water for drinking and everyday use, and for the forest products that they bartered for goods coming from the lowlands.

Moreover, based on the Jesuit Letters, there were five more tribal groups in Davao, but not necessarily near Mount Apo. Among these are the Guiangans who, according to the Jesuit Letters, lived on the islets of Dulian, Gumalian, Tamungan, Cerib, and Biao. They raised corn, sweet potato, bananas, and other crops.⁶ Another native group is the B'laan, who lived on the southern side of the mountain, alongside the Buluan Lake and on the hills near Sarangani Bay. The Manobos lived on the coastline of Davao Gulf.

JOSE OYANGUREN AND THE DAVAO COLONIZATION PROJECT

The Spanish presence in Mindanao before the nineteenth century had always been sporadic and largely motivated by territorial expansionism where a completion of their political dominion of the Philippines was their overweening objective. Mindanao was too far-flung from the center, which is Manila, and material support from the Crown was needed to sustain this costly project. Fortunately for the Spaniards, they found a headway with the Mindanao Moros, who were considered as the area's most powerful group. This was the *San Rufo* Incident.

In 1848, the armed schooner *San Rufo* arrived in Sarangani Island with the purpose of trading with the

native Bagobos. An Italian businessman, together with Spanish officials and Filipino *disciplinarios* as crew, landed on the island bringing with them a letter signed by a Maguindanaoan datu for their own security and protection. However, even without any provocation on their part, they were suddenly attacked by the natives who ignored the letter. All of the crew, including the Spaniards, were slain and only the Italian and his companion were spared. The survivors worked as slaves for a few days but eventually escaped and returned to Manila after reporting at Caraga, the nearest Spanish fort, to recount their experience to the Spanish authorities. The Maguindanao sultan who wrote the letter brought by the *San Rufo* crew, upon being informed of the incident, said that he actually had no authority over the Moros of the Davao Gulf. This incident would pave the way for another engagement between Mindanaoans and the Spaniards. This time, these foreigners would succeed. On the *San Rufo* incident, Fr. Miguel Bernad wrote:⁷

Deceived by the friendly reception they (the San Rufo officials and their crew) received from the “Moros” on the Davao coast, the traders relaxed their guard. Some of the crew went fishing, leaving the Spanish officers, the Italian trader, and some of the native crew members who tend the ship and attend to the trading. Then suddenly, the Moros who came to bring beeswax, bared their kris and other weapons, killed all those on board, leaving alive only the captain and the Italian trader whom they held as slaves. The other crew members, hearing the commotion on board, hurried back to their boat and met the same fate. The Spanish captain and

the Italian trader eventually managed to escape in a small boat, rounded the Cape San Agustin and reported the incident to the authorities along the Caraga coast.

The following year (1845), an agreement between Sultan Escandar Funda and the principal datus of the Pulangi signed an accord in front of Brigadier General Agustin Bocalan and Cayetano Figueroa, governor of Zamboanga, which gave the Spaniards control rights over the inhabitants of Davao Gulf and Sarangani Coast, separating these areas from the rest of southwestern Mindanao.⁸ This signed contract between the Spaniards and the Moro datus became an opportunity for the former to subjugate Davao and bring it under their control without the meddling of the Moros of Cotabato and Zamboanga.

The accord with Sultan Funda, however, was tenuous. With the migration of the Moros from Zamboanga, Sulu, and Cotabato (due to the effective control of slave trade in these parts of Mindanao by the Spaniards) to Sarangani Island near Davao, there was a need for a more powerful Spanish naval frigate to subdue their enemies. It was under this situation in 1826, when Jose Cruz Oyanguren, a Basque Spanish businessman from Vergara, Guipuzcoa, Spain, volunteered to raise sufficient resources to meet this need of a Davao military expedition. He once operated a trading vessel in northeastern Mindanao and later in Catanduanes. He also served as judge of First Instance in Tondo.⁹ On February 17, 1827, his application was approved by Governor-General Narciso Claveria. Oyanguren was awarded, via a decree, full control over Davao as a

governor for a period of ten years and commercial and trading monopoly rights for six years. Claveria equipped Oyanguren with artillery, muskets, and ammunitions as head of a company. The latter's mandate was "to conquer and subdue the entire gulf district, expel or pacify the Moros there, and establish the Christian religion."¹⁰

In 1847, Oyanguren brought with him Bisayans and Spanish officials aboard the steamship *El Cano*. This gunboat was the first of the steam-powered gunboats of that time. He brought seventy men and women from Luzon aboard the ship and later allied with a Samal Mandaya (i.e., a Mandaya from the Samal Island) named Datu Daupan who "saw in Oyanguren's colonizing venture a chance to get even with Datu Bago, the Muslim (in some sources he was a Bagobo chief) who treated the Mandayas as vassals."¹¹ In the course of two years, Davao Gulf was brought under Spanish rule. Oyanguren's last battle was with Datu Bago, leader of the Bagobos, in April 1848.¹² The Spaniards also destroyed the Moro cottas with the help of the people from Samal Island and the Bagobos they conquered. Henceforth, Davao's population increased with the founding of a penal colony.¹³

Religious missionaries were also part of the pacification efforts of Oyanguren. He was "reported to have peaceful possession of the Davao Gulf territory at the end of 1849, despite lack of support from the government in Manila."¹⁴ As a policy of attraction, the Moro datos living on the Davao Gulf were given Spanish titles such as *principal* (for permanent power) and *saliling* for one with temporary powers as that of a *gobernadorcillo* in an ordinary town in

Luzon. He also tried to convince the natives to live in the settlements, or *reduccion*, for a more systematic and orderly trading of their goods, but failed. It was reported that their Moro neighbors continued to harass these natives, and threatened to punish them should they obey Oyanguren's command. Eventually, it was alleged that with the *El Cano* steamship military expedition to Rancheria de Hijo—called the last bulwark of the Moros—Oyanguren finally succeeded to get the Moros to surrender.¹⁵ Reinforcements coming from Zamboanga, under Don Manuel Quesada, helped in finally securing the victory of the Spaniards against the Moros in the Davao Gulf region. However, in this battle, Oyanguren's sword was reportedly stolen by a Moro and was never recovered.¹⁶

Oyanguren's jurisdiction included the greater part of Caraga on the eastern coast facing the Pacific Ocean, its northern boundary up to Agusan and its western boundary, up to Pulangi delta. Davao was renamed Nueva Guipuzcoa, the name of Oyanguren's birthplace in Spain. Its capital was situated on the mouth of the Davao river, which he named Nueva Vergara.¹⁷ The following is a description of Davao when it was only two years old, as quoted by Bernad¹⁸ from *Diccionario geografico* of Buzeta and Bravo (1850):

DAVAO: Town, provincial capital, residence of the politico-military governor, the parish priest and the "gobernadorcillo" in the island of Mindanao, province of Nueva Guipuzcoa, diocese of Cebu; situated on the southern coast of the province, on the gulf of its name; is airy and has a healthy climate although quite warm. It has very few houses, all

of very simple construction, the only one of some note being the parish house and the so-called casa real which also contains the jail. There is a primary school supported by funds from the community but with few pupils. The church is of very simple materials, served by a priest belonging to a religious order. Near the Church is the fairly spacious cemetery. Travel to the neighboring places is by sea when the prevailing winds allow it. Travel by land is over roads that are roads only in name, being merely bad paths. Mail from other parts of the archipelago takes unpredictable lengths of time. This town was founded only in the last few years by the incumbent governor, who has built a fort as protection against Moro pirates who in the past and even in the present have been the scourge of the region. The territory is quite extensive, mostly covered with forests of various kinds of hard wood. It affords good hunting of wild boar, buffalo, deer, doves and wild chicken and all kinds of birds. In the tree trunks and other sheltered places are the beehives with plenty of wax and honey, which the inhabitants harvest for their needs. All the land although fertile is in a virgin state, with only small parcels under cultivation planted to rice, cacao, maize, vegetables and fruits. The people's occupation is mostly farming and fishing. Being a new town, the people are still exempt from tribute.

Unfortunately, in 1852, just five years into his term as governor of Davao, Jose Oyanguren was fired from his office. He never recovered his losses from this Davao expedition.¹⁹ He was relieved by the successor of

his patron Governor Claveria, Governor Antonio Maria Blanco. Despite the intrigues about Governor Claveria, Oyanguren was able to defend himself and earned the respect of Governor Blanco, who commissioned him on a fact-finding mission regarding the Moro sultanates and the prospect of trading with them. Oyanguren recommended that monopolistic trading encouraged piracy and should stop. He also “urged the authorities to exempt the poverty stricken tribes from taxes for humanitarian reasons. His recommendation was echoed twenty years later by Fr. Pablo Pastells, SJ who worked among the Mandayas of Davao for some ten years.”²⁰ Regarding the end of Oyanguren’s career and eventual demise, Corcino narrated:

Don Jose Oyanguren y Cruz died on 10 October 1858 at one o’clock in the afternoon. According to Santayana, Oyanguren’s biographer, he died a despondent man, ruined and broken in spirit, “not suspecting perhaps that in the history of the colonization of Mindanao, he will be assured of a distinguished place. He played an important role in helping Christianity take root there, preventing the dominance of the Moros in the Davao Gulf territory.”²¹

THE ROLE OF MISSIONARIES IN THE FOUNDING OF DAVAO

There were three groups of Davaoeños when Oyanguren founded Davao. The first group consisted of the migrant settlers from Luzon and Visayas who were mainly

fugitives, army deserters, and political exiles²² brought by the Spaniards to supply the labor pool needed for the founding of a new town. They were categorized under the rubric, *Christians*. The second category was comprised of Muslims who were native of the place. The third group consisted of the indigenous peoples (or lumad), called then as *infeles* such as the Bagobos, Mandayas, Tagakaolo, and many others. It was also reported²³ that some Christian migrants came from Caraga and intermarried with the natives of Davao who later on were converted to Christianity.

Moreover, upon Oyanguren's assumption of governorship of Davao, there were yet a few Augustinian Recollects living in Davao since 1848. As soon as he defeated Datu Bago and finally pacified Davao, he went to Tandag where a Recollect priest lived. This was Fr. Francisco Lopez, the parish priest of Siargao. It was written that "he readily went with Oyanguren to Davao and there he served for six months as father confessor, community development worker, medical practicante, friend and adviser, and especially, confidence-builder of the settlers who must have invariably experienced the trials and difficulties of frontier life."²⁴ Later, three missionaries of the Discalced Order of St. Augustine came and built a mission house. They removed the small church built by Oyanguren and replaced it with a bigger church.²⁵ The Augustinians succeeded in baptizing fifty persons every year since they arrived.²⁶ They were eventually replaced by the Jesuits, who had a wider success in the conversion of the Davaoeños. Davao's population in 1868 increased to 1,064 baptized individuals.²⁷

The Jesuits arrived first on the Samal Islands and started their mission with what they called San Jose de Samal on October 19, 1869. Converting the people of Samal Island was reportedly far difficult than the Tiruray/Tedurays of Cotabato, where the Jesuits first had a mission.

The Jesuits offered to the Samal Island datos their services such as educating them and their *sacop* and teaching livelihood skills. The locals would also be taught catechism and converted if they so wished. Upon hearing the mention of baptism, the Samals countered “We will not be baptized.”²⁸ Also, when the governor asked that they construct houses for the priests, they immediately refused and left.

Two months later, the priests returned and constructed their own houses, intending to stay. They also conducted census (*padron*). Eventually, despite the intermittent grumblings from the natives, the house was built and sixty Samal families agreed to live near the priests’ house. However, as this is a *reduccion*, the natives were asked to pay tributes like any subject of Spain. *Reduccion* was intended to precede the founding of towns or *pueblos*. One incident is worth mentioning here:

After all their rejoicing, another disaster took place. The governor again mentioned the tribute, at which point the datu presented himself to the governor and the officials with a quantity of gold and silver, and asked how many tributes all that treasure would cover. The metal was weighed and assessed, and the number of tributes it would cover mentioned. The

datu thanked the governor courteously, gathered up the gold and silver and went away. The people went with him. The villages were again deserted.²⁹

When the Samals returned for the third time, they again left the *reduccion* because they learned that they would be sent elsewhere to cut timber and required to meet the *polo y servicio* as regular subjects of Spain. With this, the Jesuits thought that the situation was now hopeless and declared the Samal mission a failure since they could not carry out their mission independent of the government's intervention.³⁰ They believed that "tribute and forced labor were hindrances to their missionary work, from the very beginning."

Nonetheless, since they were mandated to establish missions in the entire Davao Island—having replaced the Augustinian Recollects by decree of the Spanish Monarch—the Jesuits continued to render religious services especially to the *reduccion* that were already established during Governor Oyanguren's administration.

FR. SATURNINO URIOS AND HIS FELLOW JESUITS: THEIR ROLE IN DAVAO'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

During their entire mission in Davao, the Jesuits did their best to convince the natives as well as the Bisayans to work and to benefit from Davao's fertile soil, where fruits and crops of wide varieties could grow. The cacao they produced was of good quality and could fetch for 36 pesos per cavan. Good quality coffee was also grown here.

According to Fr. Saturnino Urios—a Jesuit missionary first stationed in Agusan province and later came to be known as the Apostle in Agusan—what was only needed were a sustained work ethic/industry among the settlers in the area and an improved technology in the cultivation of the soil.³¹

The Bagobos, being the acknowledged head of the *lumad* groups of Davao, were considered most productive in agriculture. They were producers of abaca. They would clear their fields and plant abaca. Abaca grew very abundantly in so short a time. Harvesting their abaca, however, was very labor intensive, especially the preparation needed to make it market-ready.

The males took care of harvesting, while the females were in charge of bringing their products along the seashore for barter. They would also barter *lansones*, tortoise shell, *balete* (sea cucumber), *almaciga* (mastic), cinnamon, *palay*, bird's nest, cacao, and coffee. They exchanged their goods with products coming from all over Southeast Asia, including China. They exchanged their lansones for gongs, potteries, plates, etc.; their abaca, for textiles, tinwares, bronze gongs, small bells, and beads.³² They traveled to the markets on foot as there were no roads to connect the lowland to the highlands.

For the Bagobos, the most valuable good was the *agong*—a gong that came from Cotabato or Singapore. They exchanged their slaves, tin plates, and pigs for the agong. They had captured their slaves from among the other tribes they (Bagobos) considered inferior. Slaves

were also used as dowry for weddings and as rituals gifts to Mandarangan, their god of Mount Apo. A letter from Fr. Quirico More,³³ a clergy who spent his entire missionary career (1873–1893) in Mindanao, described how the slaves were captured: “They bound their captive by the hands and neck to a great tree and leave him there half-hanging so as to tire him and would have no strength to escape.”

The Bagobos used several kinds of bait, covered holes, and usually caught old people, children, and women. Fr. Gisbert reported that based on his interviews, the Bagobos would not hesitate to kill their captives who resisted. This they did to appease their god Mandarangan. They feared him and believed he was responsible for the volcanic fire and the terrible sounds coming out of Mt. Apo. However, for the missionaries, this belief was causing the underdevelopment of Davao since the rich resource of the volcano remained untapped. Eventually, the missionaries decided to follow through on their initial plan to scale the mountain and reach its summit so as to prove that Mandarangan was non-existent. According to Fr. Juan Doyle, who went with the second expedition to Mt. Apo on April 10–16, 1888:

So much do they fear this volcano that, unless a Spaniard or a Visayan goes ahead of them (the Mt. Apo expedition team), they will not even step on its soil. They carried the sulphur we had collected because we had not told them what it was. I could never ask a Bagobo to pick a flower of rare beauty for me. Branches kept in their houses remind us of these superstitions.³⁴

A year before the said expedition to Mount Apo, the Davao governor started a *tiangge* (market) in the hope that the natives would go down from the mountains to exchange goods and establish their settlement nearby. However, he was mistaken. Needing to barter their goods, it was the people from the lowlands who went up to the mountains and meet with the natives there. Thus, the *tiangge* system was another failed Spanish attempt to develop the economy of Davao.³⁵

Nonetheless, what remained in the mind of the natives was the value of having a currency. The Jesuits were considered to have introduced the concept of money to the natives. This happened in 1882, when during their failed mission in Samal Island, Fr. Gisbert was able to convince the Samals to stay on permanent settlements and plant cacao. After three months, the converted native would return with around fourteen gantas of cacao, which the Jesuits bought for 14 pesos.³⁶ According to Gisbert: "On seeing his hands filled with *salapi* (silver currency)... they were all filled with envy and firmly resolved to plant cacao for they see that he who has cacao has money."³⁷ The mission could have succeeded in sustaining the interest of the natives for this kind of livelihood but they (the natives) feared the "Muslim marauders and possible enslavement."³⁸ Moreover, "Money had no direct value as a medium of exchange although coins, such as Maria Theresa dollars and Chinese *keping*, were prized as materials to make rings and other ornamental objects."³⁹ This mindset, including the perennial natural disasters, discouraged the natives from becoming producers and earners of Spanish currencies.

Attempts by the Spanish government to stop the Muslims from harassing the natives also failed.⁴⁰

Eventually, the labor of the Jesuit missionaries started bearing fruit. Fr. Urios observed that their town Cristina “is going to be a good village. It is close to the plantations of the Spaniards, besides having about 200 Bagobos from Tagulaya who are joining them. There are many people in the plantations that provide work for one who seeks it... (However), debts that these people incur [bind] themselves on all sides, despite all the missionary's warning against a burden that shackles them.”⁴¹

There were attempts at converting eventually all of the Mindanao inhabitants, including the Moros. According to Father Arcilla:

The initial Jesuit plan for Mindanao was to create model agricultural colonies to surround Moro communities in the hope that, observing the life of the Christians, the former would at least think about the religion they have been brought up to hate. In Maguindanao and Sulu, the plan was necessary. But elsewhere in Mindanao, the moros were only nominally so, and with patience and zeal, the Jesuits were able to convert them.⁴²

Thus, after almost twenty years of Jesuit missions in Davao, there were overwhelming conversions, not only of the tribes but of the Moros as well. However, having many converts was also a big headache for the priests. Fr. Urios narrated:

When I ask these newly baptized moros to, for God's sake, leave me in peace and not pressure me so much, they answered that since their new Christian status inhibits those without authority from exercising justice, I must patiently settle their problems, give them food, and clothes if they go naked. Otherwise, why baptize them?⁴³

Despite the discouraging situation the Jesuits found themselves in, they consoled themselves with what they saw as their contribution to the economic progress in Davao. To wit:

These times (1895) then, we are seeing some plantations of one product, cacao, and abaca of the best quality, some of them started by the Spaniards whose laborers have been and are the newly baptized, or pagans (though fewer); Others from what we can guess for the future, we can say, knowing the facts, that in Davao we have the best district of Mindanao.⁴⁴

Thus, Davao's statistics in 1898 bear out the success of Jesuit missions: There were 5,966 old Christians; 9,872 new Christians; five fathers and three brothers; one town, three districts, and 49 *reducciones*.⁴⁵ Fr. Urios converted 720 tribal groups in 1893; 2,774 in 1894; and 741 in 1895.⁴⁶ This is a significant change when compared with the 1870 statistics when, apart from the natives, there were only seventeen merchants (four of whom were Spaniards), one mestizo, four Christian Filipinos, and eight Chinese.⁴⁷ On the whole, according to Fr. Pablo Pastells, there were 180,000 converted Christians in 1888; and four years

before the Revolution of 1896 broke out, there were already 191,493 Christians in Mindanao.⁴⁸

These converted Christians were reported to inhabit the coastal areas in Mindanao and already lived a settled existence. They cultivated crops such as rice, cacao, potatoes, coffee, tobacco, bananas, and many others. They also gathered wax and honey from their forests to be sold to the market. They also learned how to make salt through filtration, a method taught to them by the Chinese before the coming of the Spaniards.⁴⁹ Moreover, the males learned other occupations such as carpentry, metal works, masonry, tailoring, and the making of weapons. Women also learned to weave different kinds of fibers such as piña, *tindog* (a kind of banana plant), abaca, cotton, and silk.

CONCLUSION

The Spanish Jesuit presence in Mindanao was an inevitable reality when by 1800, the completion of what they believe to be their subjugation of the Philippine Islands should have been fully accomplished. By this time, the return of the Jesuit missionaries in 1768 coincided with a royal decree to place the entire island of Mindanao under their missionary jurisdiction. The Cotabato mission, which started in 1863, was considered successful since the Jesuit's Tamontaka experiment on an agricultural colony served to attract the native Tedurays to Catholicism. Davao, the neighboring province, was thus ripe for proselytization.

A colonization roadmap was largely followed in Mindanao: i.e., that the "cross follows the sword." This

pattern proved true in Luzon and Visayas, and was to be realized also in Mindanao. It should be noted, however, that for the Jesuits, their mission was independent of the colonial objectives of the Spanish Empire. Their objective had always been to humanize and not to convert to “consolidate colonial gains.”

Davao’s story could be likened to the story of the Luzon and Visayas colonization. The significant contribution of the missionaries’ *reduccion* policy that created towns harmonized the colonial blueprint. Davao became unique from among the Mindanao provinces because it was here that Christianity took root and conversion among the natives was successful in changing their lifeways. Davao’s coastal accessibility was an asset in the politico-economic and religious transformation for the Spanish colonizers. The aborted nationalism fought in Luzon, however, spread throughout the islands and for the Spanish missionaries, served to signal the end of their mission, too. Another colonizer came to reap the fruits of their labor, so to speak. Hence, Oyanguren and the Jesuit missionaries, including the Augustinian Recollects before them, might have despaired at the eventual demise of Spanish colonization but they have, in the eyes of the Davaoeños,⁵⁰ actually paved the way for the province’s evolution as a “queen city”—i.e., as an economically progressive city of southern Philippines.

NOTES

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- 2 Mateo Gisbert to the Mission Superior. Davao. October 19, 1880. *Cartas* 4:143–148. In *Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao*, Vol. 3, 29.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 *Cartas de los Padres dela Compania de Jesus dela Mision Filipinas*, Vol. 8, 187–196, cited by Heidi K. Gloria in *The Bagobos: Their Ethnohistory and Acculturation* (Q.C.: New Day Publishers, 1987), 29.
- 5 Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 19, citing John Garvan, *The Manobos of Mindanao*, 4–5.
- 6 Heidi Gloria, *The Bagobos: Their Ethnohistory and Acculturation* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1987), 58.
- 7 Miguel Bernad, *The Great Island: Studies in the Exploration and Evangelization of Mindanao* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2004) 145.
- 8 Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 34–45.
- 9 Bernad, *The Great Island*, 145.
- 10 Excerpts from a manuscript "Davao: An Introduction to its History" by Ernesto I. Corcino. In <http://www.davaocity.gov.ph/davao/profile.aspx> [downloaded August 15, 2016].
- 11 Ibid.

- 12 Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 36–37. For a detailed description of the Battles of Oyanguren with Datu Bago see "Davao History" by Ernesto I. Corcino, 1998.
- 13 Jose S. Arcilla, S.J. "Jesuits and Dollars," *Journal of History*, Vol. 30/31 (1985–1986), 123.
- 14 Ernesto Corcino, "Davao History," 1998. In <http://davaohistoryph.blogspot.com/2014/09/chapter-7-oyanguren-years-1848-858.html> [downloaded August 15, 2016].
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Gloria, *The Bagobos*, 54.
- 18 Bernad, *The Great Island*, 146, cited by Bernad from *Diccionario geografico estadistico historic de las islas Filipinas*, Vol. 2, by Fr. Manuel Buzeta and Fr. Felipe Bravo (Madrid, 1850), 15.
- 19 Montero Y Vidal, "Historia Piratica" Vol. 1, 382–403; in Notes of Blair and Robertson (eds.), *The Philippine Islands 1493–1898* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1906), Vol. 43, 194.
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- 22 Jose Fernandez Cuevas, "Relacion de Una Viaje de Exploracion de Mindanao" in *Cartas*, Vol. 7, as cited by Gloria, *The Bagobos*, 55.
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- 26 Baptismal Record, Davao Book 1:54, in Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 39.
- 27 Ibid, 37.
- 28 Bernad, *The Great Island*, 151.
- 29 Ibid. 152.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Saturnino Urios to the Mission Superior, December 12, 1894, in *Jesuit Letters from Mindanao* Vol. 3, 389–399.
- 32 Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 61–121, citing E. Arsenio Manuel, *Manuvu's Social Organization* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1973), 48.
- 33 Blair and Robertson (eds.). From *The Philippine Islands 1493–1898*, Vol. 43, 205.
- 34 Juan Doyle to the Rector of Ateneo de Manila on board Francisco Reyes, May 30, 1888, *Cartas* Vol. 8, 195–208. In *Jesuit Letters from Mindanao* by Arcilla (ed. and trans.), Vol. 3, 193.
- 35 Jose Arcilla, SJ, "Jesuits and Dollars," *Journal of History*. Vol. 31/32, 124.
- 36 Mateo Gisbert to the Mission Superior. San Jose de Samal. 14 May 1882. In *Jesuit Letters from Mindanao* by Arcilla (ed. and trans.) Vol. 3, 47.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 25.
- 40 One tragedy struck the Governor of Davao then, Don Pinzon y Furga who, along with eight bodyguards, was massacred by the Muslims on March 18, 1861. The Spaniards led by Antonio Reyes retaliated with the sweeping military expedition, which

annihilated the Moros waiting for them at the mouth of Tagum river. The Bagobos allied with the Spaniards when they saw the Moros being defeated by the superior might of the Spaniards. See Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers and Administration on Frontier," 39, citing Gisbert (1902).

- 41 Letter of Saturnino Urios to the Mission Superior. Cristina. November 2, 1894. In *Jesuit Letters from Mindanao* by Arcilla (ed. and trans.), Vol. 3, 380.
- 42 *Notes* by Arcilla (ed. and trans.), in *Jesuit Letters from Mindanao*, Vol. 3, 430.
- 43 Urios to Mission Superior. Davao, April 2, 1895. In *Jesuit Letters from Mindanao* by Arcilla (ed. and trans.), Vol. 3, 438.
- 44 *Ibid.* 439.
- 45 Hayase, 38. Citing the Archives of the Philippine province, Ateneo de Manila University, Vol. 7, 104. April 15, 1909.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 Hayase, *ibid.* 37. Citing from the Philippine National Archives' Memoria de Davao, año de 1870, 22.
- 48 Notes of Blair and Robertson (eds.) in *From The Philippine Islands 1493–1898*, Vol. 44. 651.
- 49 Pablo Pastells in *From The Philippine Islands* Vol. 43, by Blair and Robertson (eds.), 270, citing Census of the Philippines Vol. 4, 469.
- 50 Particularly their local historians.

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