Hidden Voices: Re-examining the Conquest of the Philippines

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In 1565, Miguel Lopez de Legazpi conquered the Philippines and established its capital in Manila. Spain would rule the Philippines for over 333 years. The Spanish goals for colonizing the Philippines were both economic and spiritual. Spain wanted to find an alternative route to the Moluccas that would circumvent the Portuguese. Also, the missionaries wanted to use the Philippines to spread Christianity in Asia, especially China. Both failed to materialize, but the Spanish presence in the Philippines remained for over three centuries. Spain used colonization as part of its nation-building agenda. The Philippines as a colony was a financial burden to the Spanish Empire. On the other side, economic reasons played a role in making the Philippines an entrepot of Asian, American, and European trade. Goods from different parts of the world became available, and Manila became an intermediary of world trade.

This paper aims to illustrate the continuity and change that occurred in the Philippines during the earlier stages of Spanish colonization. In contrast to the idea that Spanish colonization in the Philippines was a "benign" conquest compared to the Spanish colonization of the Americas, I argue that the conquest of the Philippines greatly impacted indigenous peoples of the archipelago. The Spanish hegemony in the Philippines altered the archipelago's existing social, economic, and political structures. Warfare and slavery expanded under Spanish rule, while women and transgender men, lost power within Philippine society. Finally, the Spanish colonization diminished indigenous voices.

The historiography of the Philippines in the Philippines is limited compared to the plethora of resources written about the conquest of Mexico and the Americas. Historians such as Matthew Restall, Patricia Seed, and Susan Schroeder emphasize how the Spaniards used indigenous people to subjugate empires such as the Mexica. Recently, Philippine historians utilize research in Latin America to illustrate how Spain ruled the

Philippines. Scholars of Philippine history have given attention to the role of the *principales* in solidifying Spain's reign in the archipelago. They used Spanish documents such as petitions, list of encomiendas, and letters to emphasize the native elites' collaboration with Spain. In their analysis, they conclude that the *principales* helped Spain due to their self-interest. The problem with this research is that they only examine the motivations of the elites during the earlier stages of conquest. What is being left out are the conditions of ordinary people and how they responded to Spanish colonization.

Historians in Philippine history have downplayed the impact of colonization in the archipelago. John Leddy Phelan (1959), a Latin-American historian at the University of Wisconsin, examines the effects of colonization of the Philippines in his seminal work *The Hispanization of the Philippines*. In his monograph, Phelan compares the Philippines' colonization with Spanish colonies in the Americas, such as Mexico and Peru. He argues that the conquest of the Philippines was benign compared to the American colonies. Phelan claims that the demographic decline experienced in the Americas did not occur in the Philippines. He mentions that the abuses were less severe in the Philippines. Because of its location, Spanish migration to the Philippines was limited.[1] The Crown used missionaries to pacify the archipelago. Finally, Phelan stresses the importance of the native elites in establishing the Spanish presence in the Philippines. His view on the conquest became ingrained in Philippine history scholarship.

Recent works have questioned Phelan's views. Linda Newson examines the demographic population of the Philippines during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She argues that Philippine society suffered from demographic decline. External conflicts and Spanish practices among the natives resulted in abuses in the population. She also supports Southeast Asian historian Anthony Reid that the European arrival in Southeast

[1] John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565-1700*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1959), 154.

Asia in the 1500s intensified warfare in the region.[2] Spain also benefitted from the existing slave trade in the region. Tatiana Seijas investigates the extent of the trans-Pacific slave trade in her work. Until the abolition of the Asian slave trade in 1679, thousands of slaves from the Philippines were sold to Mexico and other parts of America.

Pre-Hispanic Societies in the Philippines



Figure 1, Negrillos. The Boxer Codex.

The Philippines before the sixteenth century were composed of diverse nomadic and sedentary groups. For example, Negrillos (Figure 1) and Zambales (Figure 2) were hunter-gather communities that lived in forested mountains in the Philippines. On the other hand, the Bisayans and the Tagalogs were sedentary, low-lying polities. These small chiefdoms practiced different customs and cultures. Between the tenth and sixteenth centuries, chiefdoms participated in maritime trade and raiding expeditions. According to Laura Lee Junker, native elites showcased their authority by displaying prestigious goods. Materials such as gold and Chinese porcelain emphasized social status among native elites. Junker argues that prestige goods became essential to the trade and politics of different chiefdoms in the Philippines. The luxury goods also showed that these groups communicated to other



Figure 2, Zambales. The Boxer Codex.

[2] Linda A. Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Early Spanish Philippines*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 9.

Southeast Asia people based on maritime trade.[3]

Pre-Hispanic Philippine chiefdoms had social hierarchies. The Boxer Codex shows that the Bisayans and the Tagalogs had a political system based on social class. Pre-Hispanic Bisayas and Tagalog societies were divided into three groups. The head of the community is called a *datu*. The second group is called a *timawa,* and the bottom of the social structure was called *alipin.*[4] In Tagalog society, slaves were divided into two distinctions: *namamahay* and *sa gigilid*.[5] In the Tagalog language, *namamahay* means someone who is sharing a house, or a household servant. On the other hand, *sa gigilid* were slaves owned by a master in which their rights were more limited than a *namamahay*.

William Henry Scott uses Spanish accounts to figure out the political structure of the Philippines before the Spanish conquest. He concludes that there was no centralized political power in the Philippines. The *datu* holds the authority in the chiefdom called *barangay*. He settled disputes in his community as well as maintain judicial authority. He also waged war and redistributed goods to his domain. In contrast to European rulers, which emphasized control through land acquisition, the *datu*'s power resided on his victories in battle and his number of slaves. The second group is called *timawa*. They helped the *datu* in raiding expeditions and war. Lastly, the *oripun* was the lowest class in Philippine chiefdoms because of indebtedness. They planted the fields, oarsmen in ships and built houses for the upper classes.[6] A person can become a slave either through birth, warfare, crime, or indebtedness.[7]

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[3] Laura Lee Junker, *Raiding, Trading, and Feasting*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 374-376.

[4] *The Boxer Codex: transcription and translation of an illustrated late sixteenth-century Spanish manuscript concerning the geography, ethnography and history of the Pacific, South-East Asia and East Asia* . edited by George Bryan Souza and Jeffrey S. Turley, transcribed and translated by Jeffrey S. Turley, (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 41.

[5] *Boxer Codex*, 99.

[6] William Henry Scott, *Barangay: Sixteenth-Century Philippine Culture and Society*, (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1997), 130-134.

[7] Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 131.

Warfare was prevalent in the Philippines before the arrival of the Spaniards. Scott argues that war was essential because natural resources were abundant in the region while at the same time, there was a shortage of human resources. Because of this situation, the role of the *datu* is to extract human resources through raiding and slave-capturing.[8] Anthony states that the elites' control of human resources was essential in Southeast Asian polities. Rather than land acquisition, leaders waged wars to seize people.[9] Warfare also created a patron-client relationship among different chiefdoms.[10] When Spain arrived in the Philippines, they described how warlike the inhabitants were. The Boxer Codex describes the nature of the chiefdoms:

> These Visayans fight many wars amongst themselves. Before the Spaniards came to their land, it was rare for a village to be at peace with its neighbors. Neighboring villages would kill and plunder each other with great cruelty, committing a thousand treacheries; they were keen experts at this. They would make slaves of each other and fail to keep their word or honor their promises.[11]



Figure 3, Visayans. The Boxer Codex.

For many indigenous peoples of the Philippines, warfare was a prestigious action. People who participated in wars were famously acclaimed and rewarded. For example, the Boxer Codex describes how the Tagalogs valued bravery in battle: "in this land, there are some men whom the Indians call *bayani*, because of their prestige or dignity."[12] Also, slaves can rise to the social structure through their

[8] Scott, 153.
[9] Reid, 122
[10] Reid, 129.
[11] *The Boxer Codex* 344-345.
[12] *Boxer Codex*, 382.

prowess in battle. The Boxer Codex says that "if a slave on board has proven his courage, the chief seats him with the free Indios, and this is considered a great honor."[13]

The Philippine society before the arrival of the Spaniards was patriarchal. However, examining early Filipinos' religious practices through Spanish documents reveals that women and homosexuality played an essential role in early religion. This passage from the Boxer Codex is an example of the spiritual practices of the Tagalogs:

> All of these is administered by a male priest dressed in female garb. They call him *bayog* or *bayoguin*...Ordinarily the male priests dress in women's clothes, and their manner comes across as so coquettish and swishy. They are so effeminate that one who did not know them would believe that they were women. Almost all are impotent for the reproductive act, and thus they marry other males and sleep with them as if they were man and wife who have carnal knowledge of each other. Definitely these men are sodomites... (There is another kind that they call *catolonan* whose function is proper to the priestesses, but neither the male priests not the priestesses have such authority as those priests who go about dressed in women's clothes. Finally, neither one nor the other is a sorcerer, and when they perform, whatever witchcraft or deceits, it is for the purpose of emptying the pockets of ignorant people.[14]

The role of the *bayog* shows that transgender men were more accepted in early Filipino society. These *bayog* were important in religious functions within the community. Their position in animistic religion indicates that they were revered and respected within the community.

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[13] *Boxer Codex*, 384.
[14] *Boxer Codex*, 81,83.

The Bisayan allowed women and transgender males in religious positions. In the text concerning the Bisayan's spiritual practices, the anonymous author says that:

> They call this in their tongue *maganito*, and this can be done by men and women, and those who do it are called *baylanes* if they are men, and *baysanas* if they are women, who among us are known as witches or enchantresses, and among the heathen are the Roman priests and priestesses. They invoke their gods---or better still, their devils---with certain superstitious words and gestures they have, and using their own hands and a lance, they kill a pig. Cutting its head off its head, they set it apart from the rest of the meat, and no one present touches it except for the priest performing the sacrifice or *maganito*, as they call it.[15]

Although the terms were different, the functions of women and transgender men in both the Bisayans and the Tagalogs were similar. In examining this paragraph, the priests and priestesses were doing some form of divination.

Islam was spreading in the Philippines due to maritime commerce in Southeast Asia. In 1380, a mosque was built on the island of Jolo in the present-day Philippines.[16] In two hundred years, Islam was practiced in the southern portion of the Philippine archipelago. The islands of Mindanao and Sulu became part of the Islamic world. Before the Spaniards came to the Philippines, Islam was converting the islands of Luzon.[17] Although Islam was known in the archipelago, the conversion of the natives to Islam was in its infancy. An analysis of Spanish accounts suggests that the inhabitants of the Philippines did not practice conventional forms

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[15] *Boxer Codex*, 35, 37.
[16] Edgardo Angara and Carlos Madrid, *The World of Manila-Acapulco Galleons: Global and Human Context* (Quezon City: Vibal, 2019), 107.
[17] Tatiana Seijas*, Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 61.

of Islam on the islands of Luzon.[18] The conversion of the natives to Islam was in its infancy. It shows that during the arrival of the Spaniards to the Philippines, Islam was spreading in the archipelago. The religion more likely came from Borneo, which at this time was a Muslim Kingdom. The trade relationships between the Tagalog and Bornean allowed Islam to influence Tagalog culture. It is possible to assume that the conversion of the natives to Islam was for economic reasons. The natives adopted Islam, although animistic traditions still exist.

Spanish Conquest and the Elite Responses

After Spain established control of the Philippines, the Spaniards altered the existing political structure. The indigenous inhabitants were placed into missions, which later converted into towns. Spanish authorities removed the *datu* as the head of the local polity and replaced it with the position of *alcaldes* and *gobernadorcillos*. These positions were chosen via elections rather than birthright. Although Spain introduced elections, the indigenous leaders that had power in the community did not change. These new positions of power were solely reserved for the *datu* and the upper classes. Each election year, leadership rotated among upper families. Slaves cannot run for these titles. [19]

Spain also introduced new forms of labor aimed at solidifying its hegemony over the archipelago. The Spaniards imposed a new labor structure called the *repartimiento* and the *bandala* system. In repartimiento, the Indios were required to give their labor to the Spanish authority. The indigenous people served as laborers in shipbuilding and other Spanish projects in the Philippines, such as fortifications. In the *bandala* system, it was a requirement for the indigenous people to provide some of their agricultural products to the Spaniards. Although the tribute recipients changed from indigenous elites to the Spaniards, the tribute structure, and the idea of labor due to indebtedness remained. [20] According to Stephanie Mawson, these exploitative

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[18] Seijas, 61.

[19] Stephanie Mawson, "Philippine Indios in the Service of Empire: Indigenous Soldiers and Contingent Loyalty, 1600-1700" in *Ethnohistory* 63, no.2 (2016), 393.

[20] Mawson, 398-399.

methods used against the lower classes led the latter to join the military. The lower levels wanted to avoid tribute via enlisting in the army or using military service to pay for their indebtedness.[21]

The Spaniards also utilized native troops in their consolidation of the Philippines. The conquest of Mexico highlights the importance of indigenous soldiers, and the Spaniards used their expertise that they learned in Mexico when they arrived in the Philippines. Since Magellan's landing in the Philippines, indigenous soldiers were instrumental in Spanish objectives in the Philippines. In Antonio Pigafetta's account of Magellan's expedition, the natives were crucial in finding territories and information about the inhabitants living in the region. He narrated that when they arrived in Cebu, they allied with native indigenous leaders. Initially, natives were hesitant to join with Spaniards. For example, Rajah Humabon asked for tribute. Magellan denied Humabon's request. One of Magellan's crew mentioned to Humabon that the King of Spain was more powerful than the King of Portugal, whose troops just sacked the island of Moluccas. Because of that threat, Humabon allied himself with Magellan and both initiated a blood pact.[22] Magellan decided to impose Spanish might to allow the natives to side with him. Through the conquest of the Americas, Spain knew that a successful conquest must include alliances with native peoples. Humabon might have succumbed to Spanish power, but he used this alliance to solidify his rule. After their pact, Magellan and Humabon attacked Mactan, a rival chiefdom, but unfortunately, Magellan was killed in the ensuing battle.

Alliances between Spain and indigenous elites led to Spanish domination in the Philippines. Spain under Miguel Lopez de Legazpi conquered the Philippines in 1565 and established the capital in Manila, which became the entrepôt of the Galleon trade. Spain used native troops to solidify their presence in the archipelago. Most of the soldiers that the Spaniards used came

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[21] Mawson, 385, 402.

[22] Antonio Pigafetta. *The First Voyage Around the World (1519-1522) : An Account of Magellan's Expedition.* trans. T.J. Cashey, Jr.. (New York: Marsilio Publishers, 1995), 43-45.

from the region of Pampanga.[23] Having a large population and rich agriculture, Pampanga was one of the wealthiest provinces in the Philippines. The region was close to Manila, which supplied agricultural products that were vital for Manila's survival. Although the people of Pampanga initially fought the Spanish forces, Pampanga became one of the first provinces to be pacified by Spain. The people of Pampanga became instrumental in Spain's conquest of the Philippine archipelago. The Spaniards used the Pampanga soldiers to subjugate other territories in the Philippines. In his letter to the king with regards to the conquest of Cambales, captain-general Gomez Perez Dasmarinas said that:

> Under each captain was a troop of twenty Spanish soldiers and five or six hundred Indians--Pampangos, who were willing to go to war, and gave much assistance because of the damages received by them from the Cambales. They approached that country, which had never before been entered, by six routes; and although they were troubled by the roughness of the roads and the large brambles, they hid themselves and destroyed all the food and the crops which were either harvested or growing. In that region those whom they killed and took captive amount, men and women, to more than two thousand five hundred; and from the men taken the captains and soldiers gave me about four hundred Cambales.[24]

The Pampangan soldiers were vital in annexing the territory to the Spanish dominion. In this expedition, Pampanga troops greatly outnumbered Spanish soldiers. The Spaniards used the Pampangan's knowledge of the terrain and their existing hatred towards the people of Zambales to Spain's advantage. The

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[23] Borao Mateo Borao Mateo, José Eugenio. "Contextualizing the Pampangos (and Gagayano) Soldiers in the Spanish Fortress in Taiwan (1626-1642)." *Anuario De Estudios Americanos* 70, no. 2 (2013): 581-605, 587.

[24] "Opinions of the religious communities on the war with the Zambales" in *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1898*. Edited by Emma Helen Blair and James A. Robertson. Vol. VIII. (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark, 1903), 225.

Pampanga soldiers appeared to be conquerors in this expedition, destroying their enemy's properties and taking captives. The Spanish authorities justified this action. In the Augustinian opinion of the war in Zambales, they wrote that "slaves captured in the war might be apportioned to them; and in virtue of this compact they will not commit the cruelties and murders to be apprehended from them."[25] The previous conflict between the Pampanga and Zambales peoples were used by Spanish authorities to justify conquest. The Spaniards succeeded in using previous conflicts among native groups to subjugate the native population.

Pampangan soldiers were also instrumental in quelling rebellions. For example, Miguel Rodriguez de Maldonado wrote to Seville about the Sangley uprising in Manila in 1603, in which Spanish authorities attacked a Chinese community near Manila. Spanish authorities used Pampanga soldiers to suppress the rebellion.[26] It is evident that Pampangan troops participated in this massacre to plunder the riches in the Parian. Although there was no written account of animosity between the two groups, the pre-Hispanic practice of prestige goods must be a catalyst for the Pampangans to participate in this event. The Pampanga soldiers helped the Spaniards in subduing the Chinese in Manila. Aside from killing the Chinese, they looted the Parian and took over valuable materials such as silk and expensive materials. The Pampanga soldiers' motivation was not just to help the Spaniards, but also to enhance their self-interest. The Spanish authorities gladly appreciated their actions. After the rebellion, the Pampanga troops were "showered a thousand compliments on all the Pampanga captains for their good service" and that they "offered their persons, lives, and possessions to the service of his Majesty."[27]

Scholars have written about the role of Pampanga elites in creating Spanish authority in the Philippines. John Larkin and Nicholas Cushner (1978) examine land distribution in the early

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[25] "Opinions", 206.
[26] Pedro De Acuna, "The Sangley Insurrection" in *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1898*. Edited by Emma Helen Blair and James A. Robertson. Vol. XII. (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company. 1903), 128-129.
[27] De Acuna, 134.

Spanish conquest phase. Much of the land grants were given to Pampanga elites. Luciano Santiago (1990) lists people who received an *encomienda* during the Spanish era. Half of the recipients were Pampanga elites. Pampanga also provided indigenous soldiers that protect Spanish possessions in Southeast Asia. Jose Eugenio Bora Mateo (2013) examines the contribution of Pampanga soldiers in securing Spanish hegemony. He points out the importance of collaboration between Pampanga elites and Spain. On the other hand, Stephanie Mawson (2016) highlights debt peonage in establishing indigenous soldiers. She contends that ordinary people participated in the Spanish army to avoid abusive practices by native elites and Spain.

The natives' support for the Spanish authority meant that they would be rewarded for their services. Nicholas Cushner and John Larkin analyze the Royal Land Grants distributed in the Philippines between 1571 and 1626. It shows how the most prominent estates were given Spanish authorities in the archipelago, such as the captain-general of the Philippines. The data suggests that the distribution of estate was given the most during the rule of Santiago de Vera and Perez Dasmarinas, which coincided with Spain's highest conquest activity in the Philippines. The remaining land grants were mainly given to *principales* (native rulers). Also, the distribution of *cabalitas* was disproportionately provided to the province of Pampanga. Between 1571-1626, 7,168 *cabalitas* were given to native elites of Pampanga. This amount of *cabalitas* given to Pampanga is more than the other regions combined.[28] One reason why the Spanish favored the Pampangans was because of their support. Pampanga was one of the first provinces that went under Spanish control, and the Pampanga elites adopted Christianity and accepted the Spanish tribute system.[29] In the Spanish conquest of the Philippines, the upper classes gained considerable power. However, the conquest did not obliterate their influence within their local community. Their participation in the Spanish conquest also enhanced their material wealth by the new system of land

[28] Nicholas P. Cushner, and John A. Larkin. "Royal Land Grants in the Colonial Philippines (1571-1626): Implications for the Formation of a Social Elite." in *Philippine Studies* 26, no. 1/2 (1978), 100-104.
[29] Mawson, 386.

ownership. They become essential in making the conquest work by becoming intermediaries between the Spanish control and the natives.

Although the Pampangans were instrumental in establishing Spanish hegemony, the province did suffer from Spanish conquest. The imposition of the repartimiento and polo hurt the province's demographic population. In addition, Spain's constant battles with Moro armies in the south and the Dutch forced Spain to use the natives to fortify their stronghold and fight external enemies. As a result, many Pampangans object to Spain's treatment; some native soldiers became mercenaries and defected to Spain's enemies. For example, the Pampangan soldiers stationed in Formosa (Taiwan) switched sides and fought for the Dutch.[30]

Spanish abuses in Pampanga forced the Pampangans to revolt against the colonizers. In 1660, the Pampangans under Don Francisco Maniago led a rebellion against the Spanish. Maniago believed that the Pampangans should become independent of Spain. The province of Pangasinan followed the Pampangans in fighting the Spanish. Unfortunately for Maniago, Governor-General Marique de Lara allied himself with another Pampanga chief named Don Juan Macapagal. With the combined forces of Marique de Lara and Macapagal, the Maniago Revolt stopped the people of Pampanga from removing Spanish power in their province.[31]

Principales such as Macapagal were rewarded for their actions. Sources from the Archivos General de Indias reveal that Macapagal was given *encomienda* from the Crown. A petition written by Marique de Lara to Madrid on March 7, 1667, emphasizes the contribution of Don Juan Macapagal to the Spanish cause. The letter includes Macapagal's role in the Maniago Revolt and his ancestors' contribution to Spain. De Lara mentioned in the letter that Macapagal has the "love, loyalty, and

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[30] Mawson, 381.

[31] "Insurrections by Filipinos in the seventeenth century (1621-83)" *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1898*. Edited by Emma Helen Blair and James A. Robertson. Vol. XXXVIII (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1903).

fidelity which he has served His Majesty."[32] As compensation, De Lara asked the Crown to be given Macapagal an *encomienda* worth 1000 ducats. In another letter, the Crown granted Macapagal's wish. Authorities in Madrid gave Macapagal an *encomienda*, albeit a much-reduced price of 500 ducats.[33]

Principales' petition to the Crown shows that the former helped the Spaniards solidify their stronghold in the Philippines. These documents illustrate how *principales* participated in stopping rebellions and ending internal and external threats to Spanish authority. It also highlights how Spain granted the *principales'* desire for wealth and property. Individuals such as Don Juan Macapagal did benefit from Spanish rule in the Philippines. These documents clearly shows that *principales* such as Macapagal helped Spain for their self-interest.

While it was evident that the *principales* benefitted from the Spanish conquest, some scholars would argue whether whose voices are included in these documents. Spanish authorities wrote all the petitions in the archives in the Philippines. In the petition of Don Juan Macapagal, it is clear the motivations of Marique de Lara on why Macapagal should be given an *encomienda* because Marique de Lara was indebted to Macapagal; his reasons are much clearer in the document. While Macapagal asked the governor-general of his reward, it is unsure whether he had other motivations to help Spanish interest. In the Spanish account that narrates the Maniago Revolt, the author mentions that Macapagal's family was given "protection" by Spanish authorities in Manila.[34] It is possible that Macapagal's family was given safety, yet it could be possible that his family was taken hostage so that Don Macapagal would collaborate with Spain. If Macapagal betrayed Spanish authorities, his family would be in danger. Macapagal might have supported Spain because of self-interest, but it is also possible that his collaboration with Spain was an act of survival for himself and his family. Unfortunately,

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[32] *Petición de Juan Macapagal para que se le 67ension encomienda*. 1667-03-07. FILIPINAS,43,N.27 Archivos General de Indias. Seville, Spain.

[33] *Concesión de 67ension a Juan de Macapagal*. June 1, 667. FILIPINAS,348,L.5,F.76R-78V Archivos General de Indias. Seville, Spain.

[34] Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493–1898,* 38.

documents written by natives were not available for historians to analyze and examine.

When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, they utilized their methods of conquest in the Americas. They used indigenous soldiers to conquer the different chiefdoms in the Philippines. Although the natives collaborated with Spain, external conflicts took a toll on the native population. Spanish abuses led to revolts in Pampanga and other provinces of the Philippines. Spanish and native forces successfully stopped the rebellions. Document archives reveal that native collaborators received land grants from Spain. The native elites supported Spanish authorities because they kept their stature in their community. In the case of native elites, Spanish conquest had little impact on their authority within their territories. While the elites had to reply with Spain's demands, they also benefitted from Spanish collaboration. Spanish colonization also gave the elites new avenues to enhance their wealth.

Religious Impact of Spanish Colonization

One of the long-lasting legacies of the Spanish conquest in the Philippines is Christianity. When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, they wrote about the customs and practices of the people they encountered. One of those early Spanish writers was Pedro Chirino, a Jesuit missionary who in 1604 published Relacion de las Islas Filipinas. In his book, he described his evangelization and the progress that the Jesuits accomplished. Although he sometimes referred to the natives as "heathens," he wrote positive comments to the natives, especially the Tagalog tribe (in his book, he called them Tagalos). He said that "they have their politeness and good breeding, especially the Tagalos [sic], who are very civil and courteous in word and action."[35] Regarding their language, he stated that "it was the Tagal which most pleased me and which I most admired...I found in this language four qualities of the four greatest languages of the world, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Spanish."

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[35] Pedro Chirino. "Relacion de las Islas Filipinas" in *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898*. Edited by Emma Blair and James A. Robertson. Vol.XII, 1601-1604. Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company. 1903.

Nonetheless, Pedro Chirino, like other Spaniards that came before him, detest the natives' religion, labeling it as "Devil." He mentioned the natives' worship of idols, their priestesses, and their sacrifices and superstitions. He believed that they were "blinded by their ignorance, love and prize these things of darkness, and cannot open their eyes to any light beyond." Chirino and his Jesuits ordered to destroy the idols. This representation of the native's religion was similar to non-missionaries. For example, Antonio de Morga, a Spanish lawyer said that:

> In the matter of their religion, they proceeded more barbarously and with greater blindness than in all the rest; because in addition to being gentiles, and having no knowledge whatever of the true God, neither did they cast about in their minds to discover Him by the way of reason, nor did they fix their thoughts on any. The devil deceived then in general with a thousand errors and blindness.[36]

Chirino's and de Morga's accounts were like other explorers and missionaries who went to the Philippines during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They described the natives that they met, their physical characteristics and their material wealth, as well as the languages and customs of the natives. This detailed account of the natives shows the Spaniards' curiosity towards their subjects. Because all of them are Catholics, their perception of other religions as the work of "devil" is quite apparent in all accounts about the customs of the early Filipinos. The Spaniards denigrate the natives' religious practices, priestesses, beliefs, and morals, especially those involving chastity and women's purity. Although these accounts were trying to show their subjects' nature, their works show more the characteristics and ideologies of the Spaniards that were writing these accounts. In general, they were

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[36] Antonio De Morgan and Henry E. J. Stanley, *The Philippine Islands, Moluccas, Siam, Cambodia, Japan and China at the Close of the Sixteenth Century*. Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society, (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010), 305.

interested in the native's way of life. Unfortunately, when Spanish chroniclers saw customs that were different from Spanish beliefs, they resorted to the demonization of indigenous practices. For example, they described in detail the clothing and the jewelry that the native tribes wear. The Spaniards were also interested in the languages of the people that they countered. Despite their interest in the native material wealth, the Spaniards believed that they should spread Christianity. In the latter, evangelization was a "spiritual conquest." They were interested in the language and religion of the natives because by learning them, the Spaniards can propagate their faith.

On the other hand, the Tagalog religion resembled the Christian faith that the Spaniards practiced. The Tagalogs were different from the other tribes because they believed in one god in which the Tagalogs called *Bathala*. The Tagalogs knew that he created all things, although they did not know how he was created nor where he resided. The Tagalogs also believed in the soul and that after a person died, its soul would go to a place called *Casanaan*. The Tagalogs also had a priestly class. They were effeminate men dressed in women's clothing and were called *bayog* while the older women were called *katulungan*. They also had intercessors called anitos which the *katulungans* prayed for assistance.[37] One possibility why they had this belief is because they had interactions with Muslims from Borneo. The anonymous author mistakenly called them Moros because the author thought they were Muslims. After all, they followed Islamic customs, such as refraining from eating pork and the practice of circumcision. The author assumed that the Tagalog beliefs were different to the other tribes "because they have greater light of reason and their capacity are quicker and sharper."[38]

The religious practices of the Tagalogs and the Spaniards have similarities. Both groups believed in one deity. They also believe in the duality of humans and the existence of a place in the afterlife. Although the Tagalogs do not have worship, they have a religious hierarchy that the Spaniards would understand. Finally, the idea of *anito* resembles the Catholic belief in saints. Reading these sources not only illuminates scholars of the customs and

[37] *Boxer Codex*, 372-374.
[38] *Boxer Codex*, 357.

beliefs of the native people of the Philippines during the sixteenth century, but it also sheds light on the Spaniards' worldview and their notion of civilization. The Spaniards' idea of civilization was tied to Christianity. Because the Tagalogs' beliefs closely resemble the Catholic doctrine, the Spaniards think highly of the Tagalog tribe compared to the other tribes of the Philippines. Because of the similarities between Catholicism and animistic practices in the Philippines, conversion to Christianity was successful.

The introduction of Christianity diminished the role of women and transgender in Philippine societies. Many people that came to the Philippines were religious priests. Early accounts of the archipelago were written by religious people, such as Loarca, Plasencia, and Chirino. Therefore, it is not surprising that their depiction of priestesses and transgender priests was negative. The role of the priest and priestesses or early Filipino religion endangered the part of Catholic priests in the archipelago. Their status also was an antithesis of Catholic priests, which were composed of men. For Christianity to survive and thrive in the Philippines, the role of the priests and priestesses in early Filipino religion must be eradicated. According to Carolyn Brewer, it was necessary for them "to lose their privileged status in the spiritual sphere."[39]

The success of Christianity in the Philippines destroys the status of women and transgender in Filipino society. The Boxer Codex and other Spanish sources illustrate that women and transgender in the pre-Hispanic Philippines have essential religious functions and were important in their group. These sources also show that the men that wrote these texts eliminate women and transgender voice. The *bayog* and the *catalonan* could not speak for themselves. They have no agency in these texts.

While most of the Philippine archipelago was pacified under Spanish control, the southern part of the Philippines became a Muslim stronghold. From 1570, Spain established expeditions to subjugate the kingdoms of Mindanao. Although they achieved initial success, the Spaniards failed to consolidate the territory

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[39] Carolyn Brewer, *Holy Confrontation: Religion, Gender, and Sexuality in the Philippines, 1521-1685*, (Manila: Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica College, 2001),xviii.

under Spanish control. Between 1599-1630, wars were fought between Spain and the kingdom of Maguindanao under Sultan Kudarat. In 1637, General Corcuera sacked Kudarat's kingdom, burning mosques and destroying properties. Kudarat escaped, and he continued to fight the Spaniards until his death.[40]

The natives of the Philippines participated in these expeditions against the people of Mindanao. As a result, the Spaniards consolidated the multiple barangays and united them under the Spanish domination. In return, the alliance between the natives and the Spaniards became the start of what Ethan Hawkley calls a "Philippine Reconquista." According to him, this Reconquista was not a continuation of the Spanish Reconquista, but a conflict modeled under the politics in Southeast Asia. [41]

The Spaniards also preserved the practice of slavery in the archipelago. Although Spain abolished slavery in the colonies, the Spaniards justified slavery for religious reasons. Spain argued that many of the captives were Muslims. Francisco de Vitoria, one of the prominent Spanish theologians in the sixteenth century, argued that Muslims could be used as slaves because he believed that they reject Christianity. He said that it "would never be able to offer satisfaction for all the injuries done to Christians, consequently, and without a doubt, it is lawful to capture and enslave the children and women of the Saracens." For him, slavery was a form of punishment.[42] Even though Spain justified the continuation of slavery as a religious endeavor, many of the slaves that were sent to the Americas were indigenous Filipinos.

Conclusion

The arrival of Spain in the Philippines had a profound effect on the region. Spanish domination of the archipelago combined the multiple chiefdoms into one unified country. Historical evidence shows that Spain's consolidation of power in the Philippines resulted from the cooperation between Spanish and indigenous peoples. Although some natives collaborated with

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[40] Ethan Hawkley. 2014. Reviving the Reconquista in Southeast Asia: Moros and the Making of the Philippines, 1565–1662. *Journal of World History* 25 (2–3): 285–310, 302.
[41] Hawkley, 304-309.
[42] Seijas, 37-38.

the Spaniards, the conquest of the Philippines gravely impacted the indigenous communities. Finally, Spanish chroniclers in the Philippines allowed the colonizers to write the Philippines' history and limit the voices of the natives.

Despite the increased scholarship about the Philippines during the Spanish period, indigenous voices need to be included. Non-literary sources such as oral history and folk history can be used in showing native perspectives. Ecclesiastical and municipal records can be incorporated in order to analyze Philippine societies during the Spanish period. Finally, archives in the Philippines must be digitalized so that other historians could examine native texts.