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## **Igorot Responses to Spanish Aims: 1576-1896**

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# Igorot Responses to Spanish Aims: 1576-1896<sup>1</sup>

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WILLIAM HENRY SCOTT

**I**N John Leddy Phelan's well-known *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses 1565-1700*, the failure of the Spaniards to conquer the Ygolote mountains of Northern Luzon is relegated to one short paragraph and analyzed in one sentence: "In the face of the uncompromising hostility of the mountaineers and the reluctance of Manila to underwrite the expenses of a prolonged and costly territorial occupation, various military expeditions in 1591, 1608, 1635, and 1663 proved fruitless."<sup>2</sup> The contrast between this response and that of the lowland populations that formed the subject of Phelan's study, and the paucity of detail about how this response was expressed, may perhaps be explained by recourse to the opinion of Filipino historian Teodoro Agoncillo that

with few exceptions the documents of the pre-1872 Philippines deal almost exclusively with the history of Spain in the Philippines. In the three centuries before the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896, the Filipinos played or were forced to play, a passive role in the development of their polity, namely, that of slaves or near-slaves . . .<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A shorter version of this paper appeared in *Solidarity*, Vol. 5, No. 5 (May 1970), pp. 18-27, as "The Igorot defense of Northern Luzon."

<sup>2</sup> Page 140.

<sup>3</sup> Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Oscar M. Alfonso, *A Short History of the Filipino People* (Quezon City, 1960), p. ii.

Yet documents are not completely wanting to provide some insight into the motivations and methods of this Igorot defense of the Gran Cordillera Central, for Spanish records themselves leave no doubt that these mountain peoples fought for their liberty with every means at their disposal for 320 years, and that this resistance was deliberate, self-conscious, and continuous. That it was largely successful is indicated by the fact that at the end of the Spanish regime when Igorot territory had been carved up into a dozen military districts, the last census still listed one-third of the estimated mountain population as completely independent.

Although these facts seem not to have found a place in standard Philippine textbooks, they are available not only in remote archives but even in such popular English translations as the publications of the Filipiniana Book Guild. Sinibaldo de Mas, for instance, said, "One of the things which most attracts the attention upon arrival in the Philippines is to hear talk of the independent tribes that live in the center of the islands without either the benefit of missions or the force of arms having been able to subjugate them up to the present."<sup>4</sup> It was a thing, indeed, which attracted the attention of visitors to the Philippines during the entire Spanish regime. Italian traveller Giovanni Careri noted the independence of these "tall warlike" *Igolotti* in 1698,<sup>5</sup> and so did American Admiral Charles Wilkes in 1842 when he collected a Bontoc headax which can still be seen in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.<sup>6</sup> Nor did the economic implications of this independence pass unnoted — Frenchman Guillaume le Gentil was assured in 1766 "that every year two hundred thousand pesos are absorbed by this people,"<sup>7</sup> and German Fedor Jagor com-

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<sup>4</sup> *Informe sobre el estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1842* (Madrid, 1843). *Población*, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> *A Voyage to the Philippines* (from *Giro del Mondo*, Venice, 1728), Filipiniana Book Guild, Vol. 2 (Manila, 1963), p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> "The Irogotes [*sic.*] who dwell in the mountains are the only natives who have not been subjected by the Spaniards."—*Voyage round the world, embracing the principal events of the narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition* (Philadelphia, 1849), p. 599.

<sup>7</sup> Guillaume Joseph Hyacinthe Jean Baptiste le Gentil de la Galaisiere, *A Voyage to the Indian Seas* (*Voyage dans les Mers de*

mented of their mining techniques in 1873, "What Europeans yet appear unable to accomplish, the wild Igorots, who inhabit that trackless range of mountains, have carried on successfully for centuries."<sup>8</sup> And during the Revolution at the very end of the Spanish regime, Englishman John Foreman remarked, "The feeble efforts displayed to conquer them only served to demonstrate the impotence of the Europeans."<sup>9</sup>

In addition to such chance references, there is a voluminous manuscript collection of missionary accounts and military reports in Philippine archives, which, strangely enough, makes the Igorot response more immediately obvious than the Spanish aims.<sup>10</sup> For Spanish aims were not only mixed but mixed in different proportions at different times — to extend or protect conquered territory, to win new souls for Christ or save old ones from apostasy, to discover exotic products or exploit ordinary ones, or simply to respond manfully to pride of conquest and love of gold. They were, moreover, somewhat confused in statement by the tender legal conscience of a monarchy committed to the proposition that no government had a legitimate right to rule without the consent of the governed. In theory at least, if the Igorots had not embarrassed the exercise of Spanish sovereignty in the lowlands, they would have been left in peaceful possession of their homes, gold mines and religion—despite, presumably, whatever pangs of conscience missionary bishops would have suffered at such abandonment of

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*VInde*, Paris, [?] 1779-1781), Filipiniana Book Guild, Vol. 5 (Manila, 1964), p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> *Travels in the Philippines (Reisen in dem Philippinen)*, Berlin 1873), Filipiniana Book Guild (Manila, 1965), Vol. 9, p. 134.

<sup>9</sup> *The Philippine Islands* (Shanghai, Singapore and Yokohama, 3rd ed., 1906), p. 125.

<sup>10</sup> The National Archives Division of the Bureau of Records Management contains thousands of pages of nineteenth-century correspondence on Spanish contacts with Igorots in uncatalogued bundles variously labelled "Comandancias," "Erecciones," "Guerras," "Rancherías" and "Reducción de infieles," while some 2,000 pages of missionary correspondence between 1620 and 1900 are summarized in W. H. Scott, "Manuscript holdings of the Dominican Archives on the pagans of Northern Luzon," *Historical Bulletin*, Vol 11, No. 3 (Sept. 1967), pp. 249-273.

pagans to eternal perdition or such nagging doubts as theologians raised by wondering if God had really buried all that gold in the mountains of Northern Luzon just for the use of a horde of naked savages. It was this theory which was invoked as late as 1881 when the Colonial Minister ordered the Governor General to cancel an expedition he was mounting against the Igorots, although the subtlety of such reasoning would probably have been lost on any Igorots who might have heard it while Spanish garrisons were being maintained by armed might on the Cordillera at that very time. But, in terms of colonial jurisprudence, those garrisons were both the legal and logical extension of earlier punitive expeditions sent out in just retribution for such breaches of natural or international law as entering Spanish territory to attack Spanish subjects — or to sell them contraband goods like tobacco.

A fair sample of how this theory was carried out in practice may be taken from the report of the expedition of 1620 to the Baguio gold mines written by its commanding officer, García de Aldana y Cabrera. The decision having been made in the preceding year that a just war could be waged against the Igorots for their offenses to loyal vassals of the Crown — and that the discovery and exploitation of their gold mines would benefit everybody concerned—, Aldana was ordered to mount the appropriate punitive expedition. He organized a force of some 1,700 Spanish and Filipino soldiers, friars and *cargadores*, and set out from Aringay in the present province of La Union on March 12. After a two-day march, he was met by a party of 50 Igorot chieftains who desired a parley with him. He received them politely and explained that he had come to pardon all their crimes if they would but accept Christianity, missionaries and vassalage to the King of Spain. This they declined to do, saying rather that if he wished to proceed in friendship he would have to pay tribute to them; otherwise, he could climb up the mountains and find out for himself what stuff Igorots were made of (*vería para que los eran los ygolotes*). They then departed, and Aldana continued unopposed for another three days until he reached and occupied the town of Boa (just below Mines View Park in Baguio today), deserted and burnt to the ground.

Here he fortified himself and took possession in the name of His Majesty, while three Dominicans executed affidavits of having said mass unopposed by any other religious, thereby staking missionary claim to the area. Aldana then sent for the local Igorots and offered them the same choice, but they simply laughed, asked when he was planning to depart, and went off, leaving him with the impression they had retreated—until they took the heads of two lowlanders a few days later who had sneaked off during mass. He then sent out five companies, “did what seemed best to punish such audacity,” and took eleven chieftains alive, sparing them only on their promise to pay tribute, never to take heads again, and to turn over for punishment any of their fellows who might. Then, collecting 130 pesos in gold as tribute and delivering himself of his final threats, Aldana returned to Aringay where he wrote his report on May 20, and then proceeded to Manila to register the gold with the Royal Treasurer and execute a petition for bonus pay for himself and his troops.<sup>11</sup>

For the next three centuries, Spaniards who found themselves in the contested regions, whatever their aims, considered the Spanish Crown the legitimate government there, and so regarded all such resistance as illegal. An Augustinian, describing how “the inhabitants of Bontoc had been entertaining the idea of independence for a long time” in 1881, lauded the greater passivity of the “peaceful inhabitants” of Lepanto who rejected “so criminal a proposition.”<sup>12</sup> Juan de la Concepción in 1792 bemoaned the difficulty of civilizing the Igorots

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<sup>11</sup> In addition to Aldana's report in his own hand (Sevilla: Archivo General de Indias: Filipinas 7), the original affidavits executed in favor of the Dominican chaplains by Tomás Pérez, official notary of the expedition, have survived in the Quezon City Archivos de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario (MS, sección, “Cagayán,” informes), and their texts have been published in Hilario Ocio, *Compendia de la reseña biográfica de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario* (Manila, 1895), Vol. 21, pp. 53-55, footnote 1, while an English translation of the 1619 Jesuit opinion on whether a just war could be waged against the Igorots is in press in the *University of Baguio Journal*.

<sup>12</sup> Rufino Redondo, letter to Tirso López, Sept. 1, 1881, in *Revista Agustiniiana*, Vol. 3 (Valladolid, 1882), p. 458.

because they were all raised "in total liberty without any subjection at all."<sup>13</sup> Spanish authors inclined to the opinion that such recalcitrance was to be accounted for by the simple instincts of a savage people who had been enemies of the more peaceful lowlanders from time immemorial. The literature lends little support to this theory, however, for it provides no evidence that these mountaineers were at war with their lowland neighbors during the first generation of the Spanish conquest. Quite the contrary, Morga in 1607 implied a sort of commercial partnership between Igorots and Ilocanos in the gold trade, the former mining it and the latter refining and distributing it.<sup>14</sup> As a matter of fact, the Ilocanos appear to have been busy enough just fighting each other—a 1591 report states that before the effective imposition of Spanish police power, "every one of the *timaguas* and chieftains who took it into his head...

<sup>13</sup> *Historia general de Philipinas* (Sampaloc, 1792), Vol. 14, p. 381.

<sup>14</sup> "[Los Ygolotes] tienen ricas minas, y mucho de oro sobre plata, que dellas van sacando, solo lo que an menester para sus necesidades; y con el oro, sin acabarlo de afinar, y poner en perfección, bajan a contratar con los Ylocos, en lugares ciertos, donde les dan el oro en rescate de arroz, puercos y carauaos, mantas y otras cosas de que carecen; y los Ylocos, lo acaban de subir, y poner en punto, y de su mano corre por toda la tierra." — Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (Mexico, 1609), new ed. W. E. Retana (Madrid, 1909), p. 183.

A Pangasinan report of the same period suggests a kind of *suki* relationship: "They sell their pigs and carabaos when they happen to come down, and they don't buy from all but only from those who are friends and do them special favors." — Alfonso Jiménez, Aug. 11, 1593, quoted in Francisco Antolín, *Noticias de los infieles Igorrotes en lo interior de la Isla de Manila, de sus minas de oro, cobre, y su comercio* (Archivos de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario, MS, sección "Cagayan," informes), Part 2.

Antolín's *Noticias* is a compendium of all known references to the Igorots in 1789 and exists in three manuscript copies in the Dominican provincial archives and the archives of the University of Santo Tomás (see Scott, "Manuscript holdings of the Dominican Archives...", pp. 252-253), while a nineteenth-century transcription in the Philippine National Library was destroyed during the Battle of Manila in January 1945. The first five chapters were published in the Dominican periodical, *Libertas*, Vol. 7 (1905), May-June, and an English translation of Part 1 is in press as "Notices of the pagan Igorots in 1789" in *Asian Folklore Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2.

would sally forth into the roads and other natives' fields and kill and rob them."<sup>15</sup>

A few years later, however, lowland Filipinos who submitted to Spanish sovereignty were clearly under Igorot attack. A Jesuit document of 1619 urges a "just war" against the Igorots because they deny free passage to "the Ilocanos and Cagayanes, our friends and vassals of the King our Lord," and quotes a 1606 complaint that "they prevented the Filipinos from becoming Christians, and that they had fallen on Christian towns in troops, killing and robbing and carrying off baptized children whom they then raised in the midst of their idolatries."<sup>16</sup> Nor is the record wanting in evidence that the Igorots were not without grievances on their own side. In 1753 the Augustinian Provincial translated an Igorot petition to the Governor General for the return of the gold, silver and blankets seized by the agents of the Governor of Pangasinan (who then seized the chieftains with the petition to prevent them from delivering it), and in 1773 the Igorots burned the church in San Nicolas, Pangasinan, in revenge for the loss of gold entrusted to a business-minded *cacique* of that town. Dominican accounts of 1789 and 1849 say the Igorots collected land rentals in the nearby foothills under claim of ownership prior to Spanish relocation of lowland converts, and a friar writing in Kiangnan in 1857 said the major cause of friction between the Ifugaos and the Christians was conflicting claims to the same hunting grounds — "and it has been discovered that not always have the pagans been the aggressors, either."<sup>17</sup>

At any event, if the Igorots and the lowlanders were really implacable enemies before and during the Spanish occupation, how are we to account for the constant Spanish complaint that

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<sup>15</sup> Esteban Marín *et al.*, "El fruto de los Agustinos en Ylocos," Villa Fernandina, May 4, 1591, in Pablo Pastels, *Historia General de Filipinas* (Barcelona, 1928), Vol. 3, p. clvi.

<sup>16</sup> "An early seventeenth-century justification of making war on the Igorots," in W. H. Scott, "Notes on the history of the Mountain Provinces: I," in press, *University of Baguio Journal*.

<sup>17</sup> Ruperto Alarcón, "A description of the customs of the peoples of Kiangnan, Bunhian and Mayoyao, 1857," *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. 2 (1965), No. 1, p. 92.



the Igorots absorbed every sort of lowland Filipino refugee from government authority? An early seventeenth-century petition calls Igorotland "a den of thieves in which delinquent Christians take refuge and are not punished by law."<sup>18</sup> The Governor General called it a place "where rebels take refuge because they are their allies and our enemies" after the Maniago and Malong uprisings of 1660-1661.<sup>19</sup> (Murillo Velarde said the Igorots united with the Ilocanos and Cagayanans "to help kill all the Spaniards.")<sup>20</sup> Still more impressive is the number of times in 320 years that Spanish historians mention lowland refugees running off to the mountains of Northern Luzon. Indeed, so frequent are references to these *remontados* and *alzados*, and so noteworthy the declining population figures of the coastal regions in the early Spanish regime (e.g., Laoag—7,500 in 1591, and 5,600 in 1612) that the late Felix M. Keesing suggested that the entire Igorot population outside the Baguio gold-mining area may be nothing more than lowland Filipinos who fled Spanish domination,<sup>21</sup> an opinion later supported for the province of Ifugao by Father Francis Lambrecht on the internal evidence of native epic literature.<sup>22</sup>

Modern writers of the Republic of the Philippines have been almost as slow as their Spanish predecessors to give credit to the Igorots for this defense of their territory, and lecturers in college classrooms in the nation's capital have been known to dismiss the accomplishment as a simple accident of

<sup>18</sup> "Parecer firmado de ocho padres de la Compañía sobre la pacificación de los Igorrotes y sus minas. a 25 de noviembre de 1619," in Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 2. See also note 16 *supra*.

<sup>19</sup> Diego Saccedo, quoted in Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 2.

<sup>20</sup> Pedro Murillo y Velarde, *Historia general de la Provincia de Philipinas de la Compañía de Jesús* (Manila, 1749), p. 255.

<sup>21</sup> *The ethnohistory of Northern Luzon* (Stanford, 1962). The author's recital begins with a letter of Fray Francisco de Ortega of June 6, 1573, describing the occupation of Ilocos the year before—"Others, on account of having to give this [tribute] and of their fear at seeing a strange and new race of armed people, abandoned their houses and flee to the tingues [i.e., hills] and mountains." (Translation from Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. 34, p. 260).

<sup>22</sup> "The Hudhud of Dinulawan and Bagan at Gonhadan," *Saint Louis Quarterly*, Vol. 5, Nos. 3-4 (Sept.-Dec. 1967), pp. 318-336.

geography or international politics—that is, that it was too much trouble for the Spaniards to invade the rugged mountains or that they didn't want to do so in the first place.

The idea that the Spaniards did not want to invade Igorot territory is flatly contrary to the historic record. It took them only five years to reach the Igorot gold mines—that “magnet to men's hearts,” as the friars themselves said, which Divine Providence had placed in remote pagan lands so that “with this incentive men would be inspired to leave their countries and set out for lands so remote, and in their wake would come the preachers of the Gospel.”<sup>23</sup> They established short-lived garrisons in the Baguio area in 1620, 1623 and 1625, and occupied Kayan near the Mankayan mines in 1663. The pressure of political problems elsewhere prevented further exploration for almost a century afterwards (a 1713 Royal Order raised the question of the mines again but a 1718 expedition was cancelled), but in the middle of the eighteenth century new campaigns were begun to open safe passage from Pangasinan to Cagayan through Igorot territory in what is now Nueva Vizcaya. From 1750 on, there was not a decade without some punitive expedition into Ifugao—in 1767 government troops were repulsed in Kiangnan itself, in 1793 they were met by natives wearing metal breastplates, and a diary, in the Isinay language, of troop movements beginning in 1820 is still extant. Latter-day *conquistadores* like Guillermo Galvey and Mariano Oscáriz “pacified” the province in the 1830's and 1850's, and Manuel Lorenzo D'Ayot prematurely boasted of his military accomplishments in his 1880 *Excursiones militares del coronel D. Manuel Lorenzo al país de los Igorrotes*. Yet in the late 1850's the Ifugaos killed or drove out the Spanish missionaries resident in Mayaoyao, Bunhian and Kiangnan, in the 1880's were picking

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<sup>23</sup> Anonymous MS of 1787, probably by Fray Antonio Mozo, OSA, quoted in Antolin. *op. cit.*, Part 1.

Fifty years earlier, Hernán Cortés had asked the Mexicans for gold with the explanation, “I and my companions suffer from a disease of the heart which can be cured only by gold.”—Simpson-Gómara, *Cortés: the life of the Conqueror by his secretary* (Berkeley, 1965), p. 58.

off the members of the new occupation forces one by one, and during the Revolution massacred the entire Kiangan garrison.

The Spanish government itself never dismissed this Igorot independence so lightly. When Governor Salcedo called his first council in Manila in 1662, he spoke with considerable passion of his trip through Ilocos and Pangasinan during which "he took note of those mountain ranges still inhabited by the Igorots, owners of the gold mines, and other tribes of free peoples and enemies of the Christians. . . [for] it is certainly a shameful thing for the Spanish nation to permit them such excesses; it is also a scandal to the Christian Filipinos and a [cause for] derision and mockery for foreigners that in the very heart of the island which is the main one there should be such pagan enemies of ours—and with the fame of their rich gold mines, too."<sup>24</sup> So Joaquín de la Cuesta was to echo a hundred years later in urging the Governor in 1779 to invade this territory: "It is certainly a shameful thing for our nation to suffer such disorders without exacting satisfaction for their excesses, a scandal among the vassal natives, a derision and mockery among foreigners, and, finally, little love of country [on our part]."<sup>25</sup> Nor had this thorn in the side of Spanish pride been removed or rendered less painful another century later when Governor Primo de Rivera wrote in 1880:

It is certainly humiliating for Spain and her government at home and abroad to realize that thousands of human beings, some at the portals of the capital of the archipelago and many others within sight of Christian towns with resident civil, military and ecclesiastical authorities, not only live in pre-Conquest backwardness but commit crimes and depredations, carrying their audacity to the extent of demanding and collecting tribute from the very Christian towns without receiving castigation for their troubles and without any authority having been bold enough to impose itself upon them!<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix.

<sup>26</sup> Memorial to the Overseas Minister, Dec. 31, 1880, in *Documentos referentes a la reducción de infieles e inmigración en las provincias de Cagayán y La Isabela dictados como primeras disposiciones adoptadas*

The idea that Igorot independence was the natural result of living in the mountains is based on the historic observation that mountains are in fact easier to defend than open plains, and were even more so before the invention of modern aerial weaponry. Yet the Muslim Filipinos maintained their independence whether they lived in remote highlands, accessible seacoasts or vulnerable little islands—while, on the other hand, not everybody who lived in the mountains resisted the Spanish conquest or, apparently, even cared to do so. A case in point is the Caraballo Sur between Nueva Vizcaya and Nueva Ecija, a region so inaccessible, rugged and defensible that the modern equivalent of *remontados* and *alzados* forced the Philippine Army to provide armed convoys for public transportation through this area in the 1950's. When the Spaniards sent four expeditions across the Caraballo in the 1590's, they were received with tribute-paying welcome in some villages, had to fight their way into others, and were completely repulsed in some. Within the decade, however, native delegations from the area appeared in Manila requesting Spanish intervention, and for the next 150 years such requests continued together with the same mixed reception when they were acted on. Finally, the stubborn Panipuy Igorots of Ajanas were driven out of their last stronghold in the upper Magat River valley in 1745 to remove this threat to the Christian converts of St. Catherine's Mission in Buhay, only six kilometers away. Yet the co-operative inhabitants of Buhay occupied heights so impregnable they came and went by ladder while Ajanas lay exposed on the plain where Aritao now stands.

Moreover, refuge in the mountains did not render the Igorots immune to Spanish attack. The village of Tonglo in what is now Tuba municipality outside Baguio, for example, was a wealthy community of some 300 Igorots whose chieftain's personal fortune was evaluated at ₱5,000 in Augustinian accounts of 1755, and it was less than a day's hike from Spanish authorities on the coast. When they threatened to stone Father Pedro de Vivar—the first Spanish friar to reside unarmed in an Igo-

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por el Exmo. Sr. Gobernador D. Fernando Primo de Rivera (Manila, 1881), pp. 12-13.

rot barrio—for destroying their idols, and drove him out a few months later, they must have known they were risking military retaliation. In 1759 the attack came—three separate detachments that took three weeks to reach Tonglo, subjected it to five hours of artillery and rifle fire, razed it so perfectly no trace of its location can be found today, and then refused to follow their officers deeper into Igorot territory. Those who survived the battle, however, neither surrendered nor submitted: they simply retreated deeper into the Cordillera. This was the standard Igorot response to the standard Spanish tactic of applying the torch to thatched houses and ripening grain. (The official term was “enter with fire and blood,” and it was so taken for granted that one missionary in the 1870’s kind-heartedly recommended that it be restricted to those Igorots who returned to their homes after having been moved down to the lowlands).<sup>27</sup>

Thus, suffering the periodic destruction of their homes, fleeing across more and more remote mountain ranges, and enduring an ever more miserable existence constituted the considerable price the Igorots paid for their freedom. In the Baguio mining area, Aldana in 1620 encountered fortifications so solid that he used their timbers for his own fort. A 1740 account says the Igorot houses were spacious enough to accomodate three families. The 1759 expedition burned a settlement of 35 large houses of planks “neatly arranged along a regular street with a plaza, and also a church where they performed their gentile rites.”<sup>28</sup> No such signs of comfort and stability remained at the end of the nineteenth century, however. Galvey found 500 houses in the Trinidad Valley in 1829 and burned 180 of them, and German traveller Hans Meyer counted only about 50 there in 1883. Carl Semper found the Agno Valley full of stone walls overgrown with underbrush in 1861, and wrote, “Today most villages bear the stamp of misery and deprivation: the fields are badly maintained, the stone walls around the houses are dilapidated, and the great *rancherías* which

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<sup>27</sup> Juan Villaverde, “Informe sobre la reducción de los infieles de Luzón,” *El Correo Sino-Annámíta*, Vol. 13 (1879), p. 86.

<sup>28</sup> Concepción, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

existed in Galvey's time have been deserted."<sup>29</sup> Those proud Panipuys who held off Spanish arms until 1745 from an elevated fortress behind stone walls in Ajanas retreated into the mountain wilderness between Ifugao and Benguet and lived off root crops until their last pathetic remnant descended into the Agno Valley in the middle of the nineteenth century and tried to settle in Ambuklao but were driven off by the people of Bokod. So the Igorots paid for their liberty.

When they were not literally overwhelmed by sheer numbers and firepower, however, the Igorots proved formidable opponents. No Spanish force ever maintained a permanent garrison on the Cordillera before the Remington replaced the old muskets that were almost useless in wet weather, nor could the central government guarantee protection to conquered territory against attack from the mountains. The gold-mining Igorots drove off two expeditions before they could sample their ores, and when Martín Quirante finally succeeded in 1625, he was accompanied by 85 Spaniards (twice the number Salcedo took to the Ilocos in 1572) as well as 1,750 Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos. In the eighteenth century, according to Augustinian historian Antonio Mozo, Ilocano farmers sowed and reaped with "the sickle in one hand and weapon in the other," and travellers could not safely use the coastal *camino real* without armed escorts.<sup>30</sup> When an easy victory was assured against the Igorots in a proposed 1795 expedition, Governor Aguilar replied, "Don't forget to make an estimate of the pensions that should be given the widows and mothers of those who may be killed in battle."<sup>31</sup> José Rizal seems to have made a similar estimate of Spanish and Igorot military valor when he sarcastically assured General Salamanca the only objection to seating Igorots in the Cortes might be their smell of gunpowder.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> "Reise durch die nordlichen Provinzen der Insel Luzon," *Zeitschrift für Allgemein Erdkunde*, Vol. 13 (1862), pp. 88-89. -

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Keesing, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>31</sup> Melchor Lalama, Oct. 16, 1796, MS, New York Public Library, Arents Collection No. 1130.

<sup>32</sup> "Ahora bien; si el verdadero inconveniente de los diputados filipinos consiste en el olor a igorotes que le ponía tan inquieto en pleno Senado, el aguerrido general Sr. Salamanca, el Sr. D. Sinibaldo

The traditional Igorot arsenal consisted of wooden shields, bamboo lances and highly effective stakes planted along grassy trails at ankle height, rarely bows and arrows, and only later such weapons as iron-headed spears, two-edged bolos, and head-axes. Their defensive tactics included blockades in mountain passes where they could roll down stones and logs, such stratagems as feints of meekness till the invaders lowered their guard or outright offers of surrender to be followed up by ambush on the retiring forces, and a conspiracy of secrecy about their trails and villages. "Those who come down are only men in whom their chieftains have confidence, not women or children or slaves," said Father Antolín in 1789, and they killed an Igorot who guided a Spanish friar into the mountains in 1755. "If some missionary asks them for information about their land or mines, they act dumb or inarticulate and, if they say anything, it is all lies or inconsequential and only leaves him more confused."<sup>33</sup> The Igorots of Acupan successfully deceived Carl Semper in 1861—"I literally lived on the mines for five days and not until I arrived in [the Trinidad Valley of] Benguet did I learn of it with great anger"—, and the famous metalworkers of Buguias flatly denied their trade when he went there to observe it.<sup>34</sup> José María Santos could get no native production estimates on either gold or copper for his *Informe sobre las minas en el Distrito de Lepanto*, and as late as 1906 Dean C. Worcester wrote, "The method employed in making kettles is kept secret by those familiar with it, and numerous attempts on the part of Americans to surprise them at work have proved abortive."<sup>35</sup>

Comparisons of Igorot and Spanish military vigor, however, do not offer any significant comment on Igorot indepen-

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de Mas, que ha vista de cerca a los igorotes y ha querido vivir con ellos, puede afirmar de que olerán, quand pecr, como las pólvora, y el Sr. Salamanca sin duda, no tiene miedo a ese olor."—"Filipinas dentro de cien años," *La Solidaridad*, Vol. 1, No. 21 (Dec. 15, 1889), p. 240.

<sup>33</sup> Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 1.

<sup>34</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 83, 92.

<sup>35</sup> "The non-Christian tribes of Northern Luzon," *The Philippine Journal of Science*, Vol. 1, No. 8 (Oct. 1906), p. 848.

dence since the lowlands were neither conquered nor kept by simple force of Spanish arms. As José Rizal analyzed it, "The people, accustomed to bondage, would not defend them against the invader, nor would they fight; for the people it was just a change of masters."<sup>36</sup> Until the Revolution the Spaniards never numbered more than 2,000, yet a handful always managed to quell any uprising by the use of native troops from other provinces and a little well-placed Filipino treachery. "This phenomenon," says Teodoro Agoncillo, "may be ascribed, first, to the paramount influence of the Spanish friars over the natives who blindly followed anything their spiritual counselors told them to do, and, second, to the Spanish policy of divide and rule."<sup>37</sup> Certainly the Igorots left no record of following the counsel of Spanish friars either blindly or otherwise; quite the opposite, the friars described their obstinacy as monumental.

The pagans of Tonglo, for example, only put up with Father Vivar's preaching, baptizing and idol-smashing for six months before they told him, "It's no easier for the people to give up their ancient practices for the word of a priest than for him to give up what he believes," and their priestess looked him straight in the eye, said coolly, "If you're the priest of the Christians, so am I of the Igorots, and if you have your god, I have mine," and went on with her business.<sup>38</sup> When Fray Manuel Alvarez wanted to minister to the pagans of Banna during the smallpox epidemic of 1762, they prevented his entrance by force of arms, and when Father Cristóbal Rodríguez tried to pass through the mountains near Kayapa in 1755, he was turned back by Igorots who said "their god didn't want him to go through because they would all die if they let him pass," though they did reluctantly let him through a month later on condition that there be no baptizing.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Annotation by José Rizal to Morga's *Sucesos...*, José Rizal National Centennial Commission, *The writings of José Rizal*, Vol. 6 (Manila, 1962), p. 281.

<sup>37</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>38</sup> Angel Pérez, *Relaciones agustinianas de las razas del norte de Luzon* (Manila, 1904), pp. 143-144.

<sup>39</sup> Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 1.



The Igorots seem to have their own use for baptism, however. An Augustinian account of the mid-eighteenth century says they would not let missionaries into the mountains but were pleased to have some converts living in the lowland villages as trading agents. Le Gentil wrote in 1799, "Some of them, from 15 to 18 years of age, come into the villages from time to time, upon the pretext that they want to be Christians [and] allow themselves, with much facility, to be given instruction; but as soon as they have obtained what they want . . . they never fail to return to the mountains."<sup>40</sup> Father Vivar analyzed this particular strategy as follows:

The Igorot comes down on his business and makes a habit of visiting the priest, not because he likes his face but to cover some debt of the many he owes the Christians, or for some cloth or wine, etc.; indeed, nobody comes to the priest without asking for something. So the priest takes the occasion to talk about becoming a Christian and being registered, and the Igorot, who isn't slow with his promises, assures him and says yes or no as the priest wants, and, having got what he was seeking, agrees to whatever the priest says as often as he says it.<sup>41</sup>

But as far as their own faith was concerned, even after missionaries were stationed among them in the last half of the nineteenth century, the Igorots maintained their dignified if stiff-necked obduracy. Ruperto Alarcón, O.P., reported in 1857, "When I was in Bunhian I wanted to catechize a boy of about twelve years of age who was seriously ill, and when, among other things, I told him he would go to heaven if he died, his mother, who heard it, turned to me angrily and told me that she didn't want her son to go to heaven; that I should see if I had medicine to give him to alleviate his illness and leave him in the world."<sup>42</sup> When Father Angel Pérez tried to persuade an old Spanish-speaking Igorot in Sumadel that it was unsanitary to bury the dead under the house, he retorted, "But have you not heard or do you not understand that if we bury our dead out on that mountainside, their souls will come back, take up their bodies, and go out at night to eat up our camotes?"<sup>43</sup> John Foreman wrote with obvious amusement during the Revolu-

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<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>41</sup> Pérez, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>42</sup> Alarcón, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>43</sup> Angel Pérez, *Igorots* (Manila, 1902), p. 167.

tion of the dismay of a priest who, after preaching a sermon on the life of St. Augustine to the inmates of a prison in Tuguegarao, got into an argument with an Igorot who insisted no colored man had ever become a white man's saint. The whole subject may be summarized by a late eighteenth-century Igorot apologia preserved in the Dominican Archives in Manila:

The fiestas of the Christians aren't worth anything because it's all just a lot of noise-making with bells and drums and muskets, and then everybody just goes home to his own house to eat what little he has. But the fiestas of our leaders are not like that; they are tasty and satisfying and don't have all that racket. They kill animals by the dozens and everybody drinks till he passes out, and so it goes for many days. Among you, anybody is mayor or headman, but our leaders are never changed. No matter how much they spend, they always have more.<sup>44</sup>

If such an attitude was incomprehensible to the well-meaning Spanish friars who had to confront it, it was not restricted to traditional religious values alone. From the voluminous unpublished manuscripts of that eighteenth-century Dominican authority on the Igorots, Fray Francisco Antolín, it appears they were able to maintain this same heady spirit of independence in their own way of life. The following is a fair sampling:

The sparse population of *Indios* is usually attributed to smallpox, venereal disease and leprosy, or to wars, deforestation, tribute, division of land migrations, and other similar things. Yet the Igorots have practically none of these. They take sufficient care of the mountain passes to prevent the entrance of smallpox and other epidemics of the Christians. They don't navigate seas or rivers, nor do they have leave their land. They have nobody to order them to row, act as porters, or cut wood; they work, eat and drink as they wish and when they like. They have few long-range wars. And then, their people do not have those backward handicaps we find in other places. The very fact of having maintained themselves as an independent republic this long, exploiting their mines and placers, which is work that requires robustness and many hands, without the Christians and other pagans having been able to seize their mineral wealth, implies an abundance of people and population. If they were few and not disposed to cooperate among themselves, they would not have been able to resist becoming Christians and obedient vassals until now....

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<sup>44</sup> Scott, "Manuscript holdings of the Dominican Archives...", p. 257.

Although the agriculture of the pagan Filipinos is most primitive, they do not have those duties, sometimes enforced, which the Christians have, like government service, running messages, making roads, attending church, and various personal tasks incompatible with working and cultivating their fields. . . . Those who live by working the gold, copper and iron in the manner stated, care little about making fields. And why should they wear themselves out in agriculture when the gold, knives and pots they make suffice for everything? . . . But from this it is not to be taken that their land is completely barren and miserable, for it abounds in precious metals and what else we don't even know is to be found there.

The fact is that the Igorots are contented with it, and that it costs the missionaries much battling, strife and diligence to get them out of their lands and make them live among Christians. They give many reasons for not coming down. They say that the towns of the Christians are very hot, that there is much smallpox and many epidemics, that there are crimes, robberies and conflicts between people, and that there are many to give orders and make the poor people work. Much less are the tribute, monopoly, and government officials hidden from them. And even though they also have to be subject to their relationships or the pressures and whims of their leaders up there, these are lighter and they can evade them. In short, they do not envy the products and conveniences of the Christians, and only seek free trade in blankets, G-strings and animals for their gold, and with this alone they keep themselves perfectly happy in their mountains.<sup>45</sup>

Father Antolín might well have quoted his Augustinian colleagues in the Ilocos to illustrate this Igorot scorn of lowland community life. Manuel Carrillo, for instance, reported how six Igorot chieftains just returned from having been baptized in Tondo in 1755 were unable to persuade their townmates that Manila was superior to their own village. Pedro Vivar who visited the Trinidad Valley that same year heard his Igorot guides tell his lowland companions, "Now, you Ilocanos, look at this town better than yours!"<sup>46</sup> Even the sight of Spain itself failed to shake this Igorot attitude when it was finally shown them: one of them on his way to be exhibited at the *Exposición de Filipinas* in 1887 looked out the train window

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<sup>45</sup> Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 1.

<sup>46</sup> Pérez, *Relaciones agustinianas* . . . , p. 142.

at the barren landscape between Barcelona and Madrid and remarked, "There must be plenty of hunger here because there's nothing but stones."<sup>47</sup>

This independent attitude would not have been so objectionable had it been kept in aloof isolation on the heights of the Cordillera—"like the griffins of the Caucasus," as one writer put it, "who do no harm to anybody because nobody goes there"—, but the fact was they came and went as they pleased.<sup>48</sup> It was galling enough that they raided subject communities and carried off lowland heads ("oh inhuman cruelty!") or even whole lowlanders as slaves or objects of ransom, but what was worse was that these depredations did not interrupt 320 years of lowland commercial cooperation with them. In Pangasinan and Ilocos they traded gold, copper utensils (and counterfeit coins), wax and rattan for rice, hogs and cattle in sufficient quantity to build up whole herds for which they hired the poorer of their neighbors to pasture, while the Ifugaos made their purchases with rice, crude iron tools made from broken cauldrons of ultimate lowland provenance, or official coin of the realm. Lowland merchants travelled around buying up carnelian beads to sell them at a peso apiece; Igorot G-strings were woven on Ilocano looms in the eighteenth century as in the twentieth; Igorot miners could refresh themselves with lowland *basi* and molasses cakes; and a slave trade in both directions continued up into the American regime. Moreover, Spaniards themselves were involved in this business: Spanish merchants in 1855 reported sending ₱117,000 worth of Igorot copper to Manila annually, and the Governor of Pangasinan ruined the effectiveness of a 1773 punitive expedition by his clandestine involvement with Igorot debtors.

This untaxed traffic was especially objectionable in the case of the lucrative gold trade in which the Igorots never lost

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<sup>47</sup> Taga-ilog [Antonio Luna], "Impresiones Madrileñas de un Pilipino," *La Solidaridad*, Vol. 1, No. 18 (Oct. 31, 1899), p. 210.

<sup>48</sup> Francisco Vicente *et al.*, Nov. 21, 1619, quoted in Antolin, *op. cit.*, Part 2.

their monopoly of the richest mines in the archipelago. The *conquistadores* heard about the mines of the Ilocos before they ever set foot on Luzon, and a succession of Hapsburg and Bourbon monarchs addressed Royal Orders to Philippine governors and archbishops on matters of piety, patriotism and politics whose basic message was "Get that gold!"<sup>49</sup> Spain's ill-advised entry into the Thirty Years War and repeated recommendations from missionary authorities—Dominican Procurator Juan de Leyba personally carried ore samples to the King—resulted in the abortive expeditions of 1620-1625, but the best-informed friar arguments went unheeded in later years, even during the economic innovations of the late eighteenth century when lowland mines were explored. Nor did the copper-mining *Sociedad Minero-metalúrgica Cantabro-filipina de Mancayan* exploit the associated gold deposits before going bankrupt in 1875. Yet this was the trade that sustained such traditional highland-lowland cooperation as Yldefonso de Aragón reported in 1818 "Rare is the town [in Pangasinan] from which some travellers do not set out for the capital every year with gold from the Agno River and the Igorots."<sup>50</sup>

It was eventually the insult to His Majesty's purse rather than to his pride which led to the so-called conquest—or at

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<sup>49</sup> E.g., Philip III to the Archbishop of Manila, Dec. 19, 1618 (Antolín, *op. cit.*, Part 2): "With your experience in the Islands, you well know the importance of maintaining them, not only for the cause of the Christian faith, which is the principal reason, but also for the condition of the Royal Estate, which you know, and the great amount I have already spent on them from my Royal Patrimony...and [so], because it is expedient above all that there be the necessary treasure or money for it, it is deemed that the only and chief solution must be to exploit those mines of the Igorots."

His Majesty's governors in the field were more straight-forward: when Diego Salcedo dispatched the 1663 expedition, "he ordered them that, even if they should come across the gold mines, they should make no show of esteeming them, nor look for them, because it should not seem that they had any other aim than to reduce their souls to God, saving for later the exploitation of the mines."—*Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Descripción geográfica y topográfica de la Isla de Luzón o Nueva Castilla* (Manila, 1819), *cuaderno* 5, p. 10.

least devastation—of Igorot territory. The tobacco monopoly of 1780 which made the Philippines a paying proposition for the first time in 200 years was an immediate object of sabotage by Igorots who not only raised the plant themselves but transported it from Cagayan across the ranges of northern Luzon to sell in the Ilocos. At first, this Igorot trade was winked at under a hopeful policy of attraction and the illusion that it involved only negligible profits, but an 1836 directive noted about the Ilocos provinces and Pangasinan that "although the latter has obtained a great increase in tobacco taxes, in the first two with their much greater population, hardly a third of this amount is collected."<sup>51</sup> Statistics such as these sent Galvey through Benguet, Lepanto, Bontoc and Ifugao in 1829-1839 to burn so many fields and houses—and introduce smallpox—events from which the Agno valley took almost a century to recover. (Galvey himself later deplored the fact that there were only 100 houses left of the 500 he had found in the Trinidad Valley on his first visit, and said he would do everything possible to make it flourish again; four years later there were only nine left.) Still the government was unable to control this traffic. It consequently instituted the farce which Sinibaldo de Mas described in 1842 as follows:

The result of all this was that in most of the towns the leaders made an agreement with the officer or local sergeant and were put in charge of controlling the smuggling in consideration for buying a certain amount from the government store (which would then be distributed among the population) on the condition that no search would be made of the houses. . . . Later, the system was adopted of making collections in the mountains, that is to say, of permitting the Igorots to plant tobacco on the condition of selling it to the government just like the Christians. But experience has shown the uselessness of this arrangement because the pagans carry ten bundles to the government and then sell a hundred as contraband, the price they give the lowlanders always being more advantageous than the Monopoly's.<sup>52</sup>

Galvey's decimation of Benguet, however, did make its miserable survivors the first "tribe" of Igorots to be listed as

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<sup>51</sup> Pedro Antonio Salazar, Dec. 20, 1836, National Archives, "Comandancias," *expediente* L:2:45.

<sup>52</sup> *Op. cit.*, *Contribuciones*, p. 14.

Spanish subjects. Neighboring Lepanto was constituted a *comandancia politico-militar* soon afterwards, followed by Bontoc in 1859, though not until the days of energetic Governor-General Valeriano Weyler were troops permanently quartered in Ifugao or Kalinga. By that time, the repeating rifle had enabled the Spaniards to penetrate the Cordillera deep enough and long enough to give the Igorots a sample of what they had been missing for 300 years. Otto Scheerer, who lived in Benguet under Spanish rule in the 1890's, wrote of the Igorot *polista*, "He was continuously exposed at the sound of this word . . . to be torn, night or day, willy or nilly, from his home, wife and family, fields and animals, if need be by the argument of a whip, saber, or revolver, to do base service, in company with scores of others, in whatever form it suited the convenience of the powerful ones."<sup>53</sup>

The last official census figures of the Spanish regime claim 120,444 pagans in the whole archipelago recognizing vassalage to the King of Spain in 1898. On the Cordillera, at least, this increased vassalage was presumably a new response to the greatly increased Spanish presence in terms of military personnel and missionary priests supported by even larger numbers of lowland school teachers and members of the *Guardia Civil*. But so was another response less in keeping with the Spanish goal of *reducción*: having reached the inner limits of their mountain fastness, the Igorots began running away to the lowlands. The *Comandante* of Amburayan complained in 1894 that 21,500 of the 1890 population of 30,000 had fled the district to evade forced labor. Yet, judging from such chance references as are made to, e.g., a detachment of 40 men wiped out on the march, two garrisons massacred one Sunday morning during mass, and the number of Spanish heads shown German scientist Alexander Schadenberg—or, for that matter, the Spanish jawbones still heirloom gongs in more remote parts of the mountain provinces

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<sup>53</sup> "The Igorots of Benguet," *Taft Commission Report* (Washington, D.C., 1900), p. 155.

even today—, the Igorots seem still to have been able to show this last generation of Spanish *conquistadores* expressing Spanish aims on the Cordillera the same basic response as their ancestors had made 320 years before.