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Class Structure in the Unhispanized Philippines

WILLIAM HENRY SCOTT

The term "hispanization" was used by historian John Leddy Phelan to refer to the process by which profound changes were made in the socioeconomic life styles of the Filipino people during the Spanish occupation of their archipelago. The term has been rejected by some on the not unreasonable grounds that the end products of this process were neither Spaniards nor hispanic but remained uniquely and distinctly Filipino. Be that as it may, the term is a useful one for the social scientist if for no other reason than that it distinguishes a condition which did not exist before the Spaniards arrived and never existed in areas where they did not govern. The indigenous Filipino cultures in these latter areas did not, of course, remain static during the three centuries of Spanish domination elsewhere, nor were they completely isolated from or unaffected by what was happening to their neighbors. Yet they were never absorbed into that Christianized, tribute-paying society which resulted from whatever hispanization did take place, and as such, may meaningfully be called "unhispanized." It is class structure in such of these unhispanized areas as survived into the twentieth century which is the subject of the study whose summary conclusions are presented here.

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude a grant from the Social Science Research Council, New York, which made possible the research on which this paper is based, as well as a companion piece, "Filipino Class Structure in the 16th Century" (Third World Studies, Paper 13, Diliman 1978). The research project itself had the interest and encouragement of Fr. Frank Lynch from its inception, and an earlier version of the present paper, in fact, was scheduled for discussion with him the day after his sudden death. It is therefore some slight solace to be able to contribute to this memorial volume in his honor a small token of my respect and affection for the man as scholar, priest and friend, and to acknowledge my debt to him for many favors granted both in the academic world and elsewhere.

The sources for the study are of three kinds. First are a dozen full-fledged ethnographic studies of unhispanized cultures in the mountains of Mindanao and northern Luzon between 1905 and 1940, which may be considered primary sources, as well as several minor ones, and another dozen produced since World War II in Mindoro, Palawan, Basilan, and Jolo, as well as Luzon and Mindanao. Secondary sources are shorter studies, articles, or notices between 1880 and 1975 which contain data valuable for one of two different purposes: either to substitute for more serious studies where these are lacking, or to correct and amplify material in the first category. The third are my own studies, empirical observations, and familiarity with field research since 1954 on the Cordillera Central of northern Luzon, and interviews in the southern Philippines during 1977–1978 with field workers and social scientists who were themselves members of cultures being investigated. In large part, the methodology employed made use of these three categories in sequence — that is, the basic research was done in the primary sources, extended or refined by study of the secondary sources, and then assessed and organized by recourse to the third.

Even a cursory glance at this literature makes it obvious that all Filipinos living in the unhispanized Philippines do not share one and the same social structure, and probably never did. Some are fishermen, some are farmers, and others are hunters and gatherers of forest products. Some live in mountainside swiddens, some on houseboats, and others in coastal ports so commercially developed they collect harbor fees. Some are economically self-sufficient, while others live in symbiotic relationship with neighboring societies that produce different foodstuffs. These ecological factors alone would preclude any single class structure for all. Food-gatherers wandering through the woods in bands of ten or twenty persons are not likely to develop any significant social stratification, nor, on the other hand, are terrace-builders who can monopolize food production likely to remain egalitarian. Complete perusal of the same literature, moreover, indicates that there are not as many kinds of social structures as there are ethnolinguistically distinct societies. It is therefore neither necessary nor desirable to describe each one of them in turn, but rather by types or categories, each type representing a particular class structure. The criterion for making these divisions will be their

own perception of social classes as reflected in their languages, classifying them according to the functions of the upper or dominating class, where such a class is distinguished. There is historic precedent for classifying societies according to their forms of government, and it is appropriate to do so in the present case since all the unhispanized societies themselves define the dominating class — if any — more sharply than any other classes which may exist or be thought to exist.

Four types will be distinguished, and they will be described in what anthropologists call the ethnographic present. That is, they will be described, insofar as practicable, as they existed in their functional heyday at the close of the Spanish regime, but in the present tense. This procedure not only avoids the stylistic monstrosities of contending present, past, present perfect, and pluperfect tenses, but makes possible the recognition of class structures or behavior patterns which may have outlived their functions or even survived into the present decade in modern guise. The four categories are as follows:

1. Classless societies, societies with no terms which distinguish one social class from another;
2. Warrior societies, societies with a recognized class distinguished by prowess in battle;
3. Petty plutocracies, societies with a recognized class characterized by inherited real property; and
4. Principalities, societies with a recognized ruling class with inherited rights to assume political office, or exercise central authority.

TYPE 1: CLASSLESS SOCIETIES

Societies in the first category are characterized as “classless” because they distinguish no class or group which exerts authority or advantage over other classes or groups by virtue of ascribed or acclaimed status. Typical are the Hanunoo of whom Harold C. Conklin has written that their society is “bilaterally structured, loosely stratified, and predominantly egalitarian . . . [with] no formally recognized or titled leaders even of a jural sort, no chiefs, no headmen, and no servants” (*Hanunoo Agriculture in the Philippines* [Rome: United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 1957], p. 11), or the Ilongots of whose social structure Renato

Rosaldo could write a whole dissertation without even mentioning the subject of chiefs or leaders. In addition to other groups of Mangyans in the mountains of Mindoro and the Ilongots of Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya and Isabela, this category includes the Tiruray of Cotabato, the Sulod of Panay, the Bataks of Palawan, and the Negrito or darker-skinned peoples of Luzon, Negros, Panay, and Mindanao who are called Agta, Aeta, and Ati in some places, Dumagat along the eastern and southeastern coasts of Luzon, Magahat in Negros Oriental, and Mamanua in the interior highlands of Mindanao. Also to be included in this category are non-Negroid mountaineers called Bukidnon in Negros about whom data are insufficient to make a description, the Katalangan "Kalingas" of Isabela whose traditional social structure has been eclipsed by that of their Ibanag-Ilocano neighbors, and, presumably, the Ikalahan of Nueva Vizcaya who are reported to have a completely egalitarian society despite the presence of terms for rich men and servants or slaves. All of these societies either farm swiddens or hunt and gather forest products for their sustenance — or, in the case of some of the Dumagats, live off fish and turtles. They normally function in groups of around fifty members on the average: the Magahats have been reported to have groups as small as three persons, the Hanunoo and Sulod as living typically in five or six household settlements, the Baler Negritos as moving about in bands of ten families or so, and both the Bataks and Ilongots as living in groups of from five to fifteen households.

Like all societies, these have three minimal needs for leadership in decision-making situations — two in the ordinary course of events and a third when occasion arises. The first is the settlement of personal disputes and the prevention or punishment of crimes to maintain the internal security and unity of the group, and the second is the organization of economic activities calling for a larger labor force than can be mustered by one family. The third is dealing with outside groups when contacts require it.

Juridical decisions are made either by the eldest male in the group, or an old man whose reputation for wisdom attracts disputants to his authority. He is generally a specialist in customary law, but this knowledge is not esoteric or limited to him: decisions are made publicly, in conjunction with other wise elders, or actually in an informal council. The object of the adjudication is to prevent rupture within the society, and successful settlement requires not

only the satisfaction of the plaintiff's grievance but also the condemned's acceptance of the decision, inasmuch as the judges have no police powers. Penalties for theft and breaches of faith — especially of marriage contracts — are restitution or indemnification in kind, but murder or sexual offence may lead to individual retaliation by force, and incest is usually considered a crime against the whole community and so requires commensurate penalization. Sanctions are either supernatural or public pressure, with an extreme recalcitrant occasionally withdrawing from the group to seek his living elsewhere.

Group activities such as hunting expeditions or the building of fishtrap dams — or raiding parties among those societies which mount them (for example, Ilongots do, Mangyans do not) — are under the direction of the one or group who organizes them, although there may be some carryover in leadership from one of the "chiefs" or elders mentioned above if they happen to be qualified for this particular role. With this latter exception, such group leaders do not retain any authority once the expedition is disbanded. But these group activities require considerable leadership while they last, especially if they call for the complete mobilization of the male population. Ilongot hunting expeditions with dogs or nets require coordinated division of labor, and fish dams constructed by the Taubuid Mangyans of Occidental Mindoro involve series of wood-framed earthworks 2 meters high in conjunction with 150-meter channels to redirect the streams.

None of these societies have traditional means for dealing with aliens at a political level, although the formalization of chieftaincy has been a frequent response to contact with more powerful groups. The Batangan Mangyan *ngulo* "headman" often deals with representatives of the Manila-based government in this capacity, and is nowadays expected to be brave, successful in farming, and adept in sorcery, as well as wise. Their Mangyan neighbors of Bacu and Naujan call such a leader *amo* or *puno*, and give him a special location near the door in the communal dwelling which he shares with in-laws, and the Palawan Bataks early in this century actually recognized a non-Batak as *agalen*, or protector and go-between. But the more common historic response to this situation has been withdrawal either peacefully or with a vigorous enough response to cost the aggressor some loss of life for his encroachment. Violence against outsiders by those societies with more warlike

traditions, however — such as the Ilongots who take heads to attain full manhood, or Negrito groups who kill to fulfill mourning rites — calls forth only temporary leadership and is conceived of as individual rather than communal action.

None of these societies have any concept of the ownership of real estate. The land itself is the property of supernatural personalities whose permission must be ritually secured for safe and fruitful use, and, similarly, wild forest products or game are either the possessions of, or under the protection of, spirits whose prerogatives must be recognized by ritual or even token payments in kind. The products of the land, however, are owned by those who grow them, and may be alienated or loaned. Fish and game taken in group enterprises are divided equally among the participants and their dependents, or according to an agreed schedule which recognizes division of labor, risk, or leadership. Though all these societies are supported by subsistence agriculture or no agriculture at all, there is considerable variation in their economic standards. At the one extreme, forest-dwelling Negritos own no more possessions than can be carried on their persons when following game or searching for new foodstuffs, while, at the other, swidden farming Ilongots and Hanunoo Mangyans practice such integrated agricultural techniques that they produce sufficient surplus for the accumulation of imported trade items like Chinese porcelains and brass gongs which serve as heirloom wealth rather than as practical utensils. Such wealth may lead, in turn, to such advantages as better marriage partners — i.e., more productive ones — and among the Tiruray is exchanged in palavering sessions which provide the arena for displaying that society's most esteemed public skill. Yet it has not given rise to any significant descent lines. Nor has another incipient potential for descent specialization among the Batangan Mangyans, the inheritance of skills in sorcery, produced any class of petty aristocracy. The same may be said of prominent leaders among the Sulod who have not produced an aristocracy despite the deference shown their kind in special burial rites. This overall lack of social stratification, taken together with a political development so stunted it knows no techniques for pursuing or resisting territorial aggrandizement, suggests that these societies developed in an environment of unlimited resources in land.

TYPE 2: WARRIOR SOCIETIES

Societies in the second category are characterized by a distinct warrior class, in which membership is won by personal achievement, entails privilege, duty and prescribed norms of conduct, and is requisite for community leadership. These “braves” are men who have won a reputation for ferocity in battle – or, more accurately, for the number of lives they have taken in battle or elsewhere – and are recognizable by distinctive costume or tattoos. The Manobo of Agusan and Cotabato, the Mandaya, Bagobo and Tagakaolo of Davao, and the Bilaan of the Davao-Cotabato border region call them *bagani* or *magani*, while the Isnegs and Kalingas or northern Luzon call them *mengal* or *maingel*. Some of these groups’ neighbors appear to have belonged to this category, too, before external military force “tamed” their warriors and replaced them with political appointees who could be held responsible for the collection of tribute or taxes and the control of resistance to imposed authority. Typical are the Subanon whose *timuway* elders have been cast in this role at various times by Boholano, Moro, Spanish, and American overlords during the past four centuries as their warrior chiefs disappeared, or the Bukidnon of the province of that name who are still undergoing such a process. The Kulaman of South Cotabato nowadays recognize not only civil leaders called *datus* but chief *datus* and even a sultan with a *rajah-muda* heir to the succession. So, too, the Bilaan now consider their *fulong* leaders *datus*, and a *bong fulong*, a presiding *datu*. And among the Tinguians of Abra adjoining the Kalingas and Isnegs, the only political title recognized in 1900 after three centuries of sporadic colonial jurisdiction was a village headman called *lakay* – who, however, was typically elected by a group of prominent men who were themselves *maingel* braves.

The major occasion for exercising military skill among these societies is during raids called *mangayaw* into unallied territory, but individual attacks are made by stealth or as opportunity presents itself, including suicidal one-man forays. Captives or heads may be taken in these raids, or occasionally booty, but not territory. Individual incentive for organizing, leading or participating in such raids is desire to avenge an affront to personal or family honor, to fulfill mourning requirements or placate blood-thirsting deities or spirits threatening death through illness, to

relieve the pain of intense bereavement, or simply to achieve personal prominence or mercenary reward. In many of these societies, such behavior is undergirded by a specific metaphysical basis. The Bagobo pantheon includes a sky deity called Mandarangan who requires human blood and wreaks vengeance through natural catastrophes like drought if neglected, and the bagani constitute an exclusive and qualified priesthood for his service. Full-fledged Mandaya and Manobo warriors go into action under spirit possession by their individual warrior deities and behave with berserking frenzy at the moment of kill, while Tinguian braves in the grip of battle used to lap up the blood dripping from severed heads held aloft. And in northern Kalinga, the *sangasang* shrine on the village outskirts is the haunt of guardian spirits who need to be fed periodically with human heads.

Since all unallied persons are potential victims for warrior chiefs, public and personal safety requires considerable vigilance, and travel for economic pursuits or actual trade is done under military escort. To facilitate the importation of such necessities as salt or luxuries as brass, trading partnerships or peace pacts are established to guarantee safe conduct, especially of aliens from nonwarrior societies, with individual braves ritually undertaking such responsibility. In Kalinga this system has developed into a network of bilateral non-aggression pacts called *bodong* between any one village and all others, each held by a pair of pact-holders who personally guarantee the reception, security, and fair treatment of their partners' people — or revenge of their deaths.

Warrior chiefs carry weight in group decisions but membership in their class does not guarantee a position of community leadership. Real leadership requires the additional qualifications of skill in arbitrating disputes and sufficient wealth to feast visitors and succor dependents in time of need. There are terms to distinguish wise legalists or respected family founders — like Bagobo *pandi* and *matanom* or Kalinga *mangitudtuchu* — but no title for a village headman or clan chief, even in the case of uncontested individual dominance. Nor do these chiefs, individually or collectively, exercise any more influence beyond their own communities than a reputation for ferocity in battle. The baganis recognize several grades of achievement among themselves with distinctive costume variations, and a top-grade warrior chief attracts to himself a following of lesser chiefs, as well as a kind of cadet corps; and

among the Mandaya, these constitute a brotherhood competent to accept or reject aspirants technically eligible for membership, and collectively make political decisions for the community. In Mindanao, the typical settlement pattern is a cluster of from three to six houses, sometimes stockaded or built in trees for defense, around the larger house of a chief to whom lesser braves have attached themselves. No such formal attachments are found in northern Luzon, but the presence of warrior chiefs is considered essential to the safety of any kin settlement. In Kalinga, the dominant leader in such a group will be the full-fledged leader, or *pangat*, rather than simply the *maingel* brave.

Legal cases are argued before a judge or judges acceptable to both litigants, or their assembled relatives as a jury, in public drinkfests which constitute the major — and in some cases the only — occasion for community self-identification, and their cost is ultimately borne by the loser. The family of each litigant musters the most eloquent advocates available to it and backs them with an intimidating array of braves. Decisions are made by the fine adjustment of general principles of custom law to the comparative social standing of the contending parties, such status arising from their total warrior strength and heirloom wealth. Penalties are fines, wergeld, or death, and are exacted if necessary by braves acting out of kin loyalty, appointment by the “court,” or for hire. The immediate object of the settlement is to prevent either party from restoring to the *lex talionis* for satisfaction.

All societies with warrior chiefs live by swidden farming, although the Kalingas have adopted terraced pond-fields in the recent past. Braves clear their own fields like everybody else — for which reason mangayaw raids tend to be seasonal — except among the Mandaya where baganis live exclusively off the tribute of their dependents and so qualify as a sort of “parasite class.” Agricultural surplus is produced by increasing labor force through polygyny, progeny, sons-in-law, dependents by blood or debt, or slaves. The heirloom wealth necessary for high social status consists of imports like porcelain, brassware and beads, or local manufactures like weapons and goldwork. It is accumulated mainly through brideprice, wergeld and legal fees, and is thus more likely to be the result of personal power than the cause. However, such substance enables the rising bagani to select low-status victims whose wergeld he can afford, or the Kalinga *maingel* to let his

son practice by wounding such a person in his own community, and thus favors the rise of an aristocracy.

In Mindanao, slaves are taken in mangayaw raids, women and children for labor, men for sale to external slave markets, and the handicapped for sacrificial victims, and they constitute a monetary unit of exchange in calculating wergeld or brideprice. The warrior societies of northern Luzon, on the other hand, have no living memory of slave-raiding, although Spanish records indicate that Isnegs formerly did. What may be a vestige is the Kalinga *bobbo-nan*, "those you can order around," or *pojong*, an individual who may be an incompetent introduced into a household through misfortune, suasion or force, but who may also be a competent adult who volunteers for such attachment because of insufficient family connections for personal safety or economic security.

The introduction of terraced wet-rice technology among both the Tinguians and the Kalingas has contributed to the eclipse of the warrior chiefs, and in southern Kalinga has produced a propertied class called by the Cordillera and Ilocano terms for the "wealthy" — *kadangyan* and *baknang*, respectively. Moreover, in the Tanudan valley of Kalinga, specialized grades are developing within this class based on the possession of both heirloom wealth and terraced fields.

TYPE 3: PETTY PLUTOCRACIES

Societies in the third category are called "plutocracies" because they are dominated socially and politically by a recognized class of rich men who attain membership through birthright, property, and the performance of specified ceremonies; and "petty" because their authority is localized, being extended by neither absentee landlordism nor territorial subjugation. These societies are found only on the Cordillera Central of northern Luzon, and the wealthy class is called *kadangyan* in the Ifugao, Bontoc, and Kankanay languages, and *baknang* in Ibaloy. Qualifications are both ascribed and acquired — inherited wealth from either parent in the form of real property, and a public prestige feast, or graded series of feasts, in which the butchering of animals feeds and indebts the whole community. The *kadangyan* is entitled to distinctive patterns in dress and required to marry and bury in prescribed extravagant fashion, and marries within his class. To exercise leadership and

maintain status, the kadangyan must revalidate his membership with periodic prestige feasts, and public prominence requires the display of heirloom wealth (gongs, beads, and porcelain) and the tattoos of a headtaking veteran. Community decisions are made by kadangyan peers acting either collectively in council or competitively as individuals. Qualifying property must be inherited terraced rice fields for kadangyan status, though agricultural land may be less important for baknang status in the Benguet gold fields than access to mineral rights or acquired wealth like cattle.

It might be mentioned that the Kalinga neighbors of the Bontocs and Ifugaos also farm irrigated rice terraces and reckon real property as a qualification for leadership and prestige, but have no ritually sanctioned kadangyan class. Moreover, inherited property is not enough: to be really respected, a Kalinga must add to his inheritance by his own efforts.

Real estate may be increased by construction of new terraces, foreclosure of mortgages, indemnification for torts or breach of contract, or, occasionally, outright purchase. Acquired land, however, does not qualify as a basis for kadangyan status until passed from one generation to another. Fields are held in usufruct by individuals descended from the original builder, and require periodic chicken sacrifices which establish a metaphysical sanction against alienation outside the descent line. Fields are frequently mortgaged, and occasionally sold, to meet such crisis expenses as crop failure, illness, accident, or funerals, and in Ifugao and Benguet, at least, profits from such transactions provide the capital for a usury with high interest rates and inheritable debts which produce dependence or bondage. Animals provided for community sacrifice in times of public need, moreover, are everywhere repaid by communal labor whose value exceeds the price of the animal.

These petty plutocracies occupy the most precipitous terrain farmed in the archipelago, and the availability of water sets limits to the number of terraced fields that can be built. The produce of such fields must be supplemented by root crops grown in swiddens, which do not constitute a basis for kadangyan heritage. Swidden land left fallow may theoretically be reopened by any descendant of the first person to clear it, though the unwieldy size of bilateral kin groups sometimes leads to restricting or rotating it to one particular family. In practice, such land is used by any person who wishes to work it unless one of the claimants invokes prior right.

Forests and woodlands are public property, though restricted to certain communities. Rice is the preferred staple of diet, and a fair index of economic and social standing is the comparative percentage of rice and root crops consumed, those at the top of scale leaving granaries full of rice to their heirs, those at the bottom tasting it only during ritual or prestige feasts. Kadangyans thus enjoy a better diet, but they have more fields to work and livestock to tend and so do not constitute a leisured class.

Small landholders who have not attained kadangyan status but might reasonably entertain such hopes are called by terms conveniently translated as "poor" — e.g., Ibaloy *abitog*, Kankanay *kodo*, or Bontoc *kokitak* — but the fact that they live under constant threat of economic reversal is reflected in the Ifugao terms *namatuk* or *mabitol*, "those who may hunger." They might also be described as economic competitors whose progress can be measured by the number and quality of *rites de passage*, healing sacrifices, and welfare feasts they have performed. Those who are literally propertyless, and therefore doomed to non-competition, are called *nawatwat* in Ifugao, the "disinherited" or "passed by." The catastrophic nature of such penury is expressed in almost moral terms in Bontoc *lawalawa* (from *lawa*, "bad") — perhaps "cursed" or "despicable." Such persons may be debt peons but there is no class of chattel slaves except in Benguet where purchased or captured slaves — *baga-en* — used to be employed for mine labor. External economic contacts have also given rise to new terms, such as the Ilocano *baknang* for salaried or stockholding *nouveau riche* of non-kadangyan lineage, or northern Kankanay *komidwa*, literally, "second-class" property holders.

These petty plutocracies display considerable descent line specialization, only some of which is attributable to migrations or intermarriage. Not only do all kadangyans inherit specific privileges and ritual requirements as a class, but among them those who complete more or less of a lifetime cycle of graded ceremonies found lineages of greater or less prestige. Individuals of some descent lines may be required to perform sacrifices in a special manner — for example, by butchering a larger number of animals — while some fields or sacred sites receive sacrifices which can only be offered by heirs of a particular lineage. And there are community agricultural rites which require priests or priestesses descended from a successful predecessor of their kind. There are

thus alternate styles of performing given wedding or funeral rites, and for selecting burial sites, which reflect status.

Terraced rice fields are small, scattered, and difficult of access, so efficient use requires pooled labor with gangs based on consanguinity or residence working each family's holdings in turn. Up to a certain limit, no adjustment is made for overall size, so larger landholders may receive a disproportionate share of the total community labor. The basic principle in water rights is that older fields take precedence over newer, and new fields should not be constructed higher than old ones on the same water source. In Bontoc, control of water may be exercised by irrigation societies which in some places construct canals and flumes, dam and divert streams, and occasionally drill tunnels, but in Ifugao a group of farmers hire a kind of sheriff for this duty. All agricultural activities are scheduled to a mandatory ritual calendar, with some fields enjoying special rights or precedence. In Ifugao, the right to plant and harvest before others is vested in a kind of village representative – the *tumona*, “one who goes first,” or the *manungaw* ritual rice chief who declares the dates of the cycle. Either of these therefore enjoys enough manipulative authority to qualify more nearly as a political officer than any other role recognized among Cordillera cultures.

These terrace-based societies support populations distributed in communities of 800 to 2,000 persons, but settlement patterns differ greatly. In Ifugao, five to ten houses are a typical concentration of adjoining houseyards, though they are usually within sight of several other such clusters and may be within earshot of 100 more distant neighbors. In Bontoc, on the other hand, communities of similar size are so compact that most houseyards are contiguous, and so urban they are divided into political wards of from ten to fifteen households with ritual and judicial ward centers called *ator* (or *dap-ay* in Kankany). Benguet settlement patterns fall between these two extremes, tending to be more atomized the farther they are from river banks. None of these settlements or house clusters, however, have any designated chief or headman.

Communal decisions are made, directly or ultimately, by the cumulative power of the plutocrats, but the methods vary as much as the settlement patterns do. In Ifugao they are made in debates which pit individual personalities against one another, but in Bontoc and Benguet in councils of old men called *amam-a* or

dallakay. Such Bontoc councils are held in the various ward centers where, although powerful personalities exert more influence than others, a consciously egalitarian concept moves peers to curb the self-interest of the more powerful among them. In Benguet, such gatherings – called *tongtong* – are invoked only for specific cases and are not only dominated by the leading plutocrats but restricted to them. So, too, in setting disputes and trying crimes, Ifugao and Bontoc procedures differ: Ifugao litigants depend on virtuoso go-betweens called *munkalon*, a role of high social esteem, while Bontoc cases are heard in ator assemblies of elders where personal or kin interests are theoretically subordinated to the common weal. Responsibility for the exaction of legal penalties in Ifugao lies with the victor's kin, but police power is exerted in Bontoc by group pressure and threat of withholding ward cooperation. Ator wards may themselves perform some of the same functions as individuals – e.g., bring suit against one another, hold peaceacts with another community, and act as war-making units for mangayaw headtaking revenge. Moreover, the Bontoc ator system appears to set standards of village solidarity and limits to individual leadership which are unique among the unhispanized societies examined in this paper.

TYPE 4: PRINCIPALITIES

Societies in the fourth category are dominated by a recognized aristocracy with birthright claim to allegiance from followers, which produces local overlords with individual political titles who, in turn, recognize the birthright claim of one among them to allegiance from all the others of their class. They thus constitute, in theory or in fact, principalities with more or less centralized political organizations – or even royal states, considering the fact that their rulers must be direct descendants of other such rulers – and their sovereignty has frequently received international recognition in the past. The central authority in each is competent to create titled offices and appoint supervisory subordinates, and the aristocracy which supports it occupies the upper levels of a social continuum of client-patron relationships which descends to disfranchised debtors and unenfranchised slaves, as well as tribute-paying subjects of varying status in other language groups. All societies in this category profess Islam – for which reason they

were called *moros* in Spanish – and are found only in the Sulu Archipelago, the flood plain of the Pulangi River valley, the Lanao lake region between Illana and Iligan Bays, and a few outlying islands like Cagayan de Sulu.

The aristocracy is called the datu class, and its members are presumably the descendants of the first settlers on the land or, in the case of later arrivals, of those who were datos at the time of migration or conquest. In any given locality, one among them, usually the senior, is the political head of a community composed of his immediate family and relatives, dependents, and slaves. Such an office of datuship, as distinct from mere membership in the class, imparts authority but not power. The datu's power stems from the willingness of his followers to render him respect and material and moral support, to accept and implement his decisions, and to obey and enforce his orders, and is limited by the consensus of his peers. Followers give their support in response to his ability and willingness to use his power on their behalf, to make material gifts or loans in time of crisis, and to provide legal or police protection and support against opponents. The datu's most frequent service is juridical – to resolve petty differences without violence, to render amicable-settlement decisions without recourse to formal courts that administer Islamic or customary law, or to augment his followers' military capacity to exact satisfaction from offenders in other communities. Failure to discharge such duties may result in the quiet withdrawal of cooperation and support, so that autocratic behavior on the part of any datu is the result rather than the cause of subservience on the part of others.

The community's land is inherited and held in usufruct by individuals, but the datu has ultimate right of disposition and may invoke it in case of disputes or significant demographic or ecological change. The land itself may be encumbered but not alienated – that is, may not be removed from the community's use – and the practice of some datos in the twentieth century to sell parcels outright, in good faith or in bad, has occasioned considerable bloodshed. The datu receives more or less material support from his community – a portion of crops, payments for tenancy or share-cropping, labor service, or most importantly, unscheduled contributions for prestige feasts, the costs of hospitality required for public functions, or an enterprise which affects the whole community. The fact that land use payments tend to be fixed

rather than proportional to productivity illustrates the concept that control is exercised over persons not real estate. The datu, in turn, is expected to succor his followers in time of financial emergency, and to provide both material and military aid in time of danger. If the produce of his community is limited, his economic role is one of redistributing wealth rather than accumulating it, but if he has access to greater surplus, he and his family are freed from productive labor, and he can devote his full energies to business, adjudicating, and politicking, and use his capital to participate in maritime trade as merchant, raider, entrepreneur, or investor.

The political role of a datu may extend beyond his own community, in which case his power stems from client-patron relations with other datu, and his authority from an individual political title assumed during an inaugural prestige feast. Ideally, such titles should be inherited and have been bestowed originally by a superior in the political hierarchy, preferably the paramount ruler of a royal state, but in practice they are often created on the initiative of a datu who can muster the necessary support to make the title functional. The word *datu* itself may be used as such a title, but generally titles are of extra-Philippine linguistic origin. They may be merely ceremonial or actually reflect an historic office such as *Rajah Muda* ("young ruler" or heir apparent), *Kapitan Laut* ("sea lord" or admiral), or *Panglima* ("one of the five," a sort of chief minister with viceregal authority). Most prestigious among them are the native term *datu*, *rajah* (Hindu), and *sultan* (Arabic), and this latter is invariably held by the royal incumbent of those principalities with most centralized governments — e.g., the Sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao. But all such titled overlords exert their authority over their supporting lesser lords rather than over the populace which may technically be subject to them. So, too, their claim to territory occupied by their supporting datu, as distinguished from alien or unoccupied land, is made effective by these datu.

Supernatural sanction is given the royalty of these states by the traditional Islamic concept that a ruler of Muslims must be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad — a *sharif*, that is. The requisite Arab genes were introduced by two fifteenth century sharifs who married one or more of the daughters of local datu, their offspring thereby inheriting rights to the land occupied by

their maternal grandfather's followers. In the comparatively centralized Sultanate of Sulu, this royal line went largely uncontested except for intradynastic competition, but in less centralized Maguindanao, cooperation was often begrudging on the part of other specialized descent lines — those originating from the sharif's companions or peers, for example, or his first official appointees, and even a lineage of local rulers with claims to descent from a third sharif otherwise unknown. Moreover, the practice of polygyny and the inheritance patterns of a bilateral kinship system have produced whole societies in which even humble citizens can claim technical descent from a sharif. Thus among the Maranao, a loose confederation of principalities sharing a common language and culture boasts such a high proportion of datus around Lake Lanao that their overlapping and interlocking client-patron relationships have effectively forestalled the emergence of a centralized state.

A reigning sultan has *de jure* right to collect taxes, tariffs, and a variety of fees, dispose of property and delegate authority, and appoint a considerable roster of judges, ministers, and administrative assistants. He holds court, renders justice in response to appeals, and is advised — and sometimes inhibited — by a state council. He maintains a personal bodyguard and the loyalty of a corps of datu warriors, but does not enjoy the monopoly on the means of violence which is characteristic of the modern nation-state. On the contrary, military power is widely diffused, and the skills and attitudes essential to mercantile or piratical expeditions by sea, and mangayaw slave raids, are still available for the settlement of disputes involving personal or family honor. Certain offences so strictly require physical retaliation that to submit them to legal arbitration or settlement by fine or wergeld is to advertize a socially debilitating lack of virility. In times of civil war involving armies, battles may actually be joined in response to sexual crimes committed by members of invading forces.

Enfranchised members of the community who are not datus are called *sakop*. Like datus, they have the right to use land, to make and unmake client-patron relations, and to enter into ritual brotherhoods or feuding alliances with their peers. Unlike datus, however, they cannot ordinarily hold titles. *Sakop* means "follower" or "vassal" in Maranao and Maguindanao, but the Tausugs of Sulu distinguish this datu-sakop dichotomy with the more prosaic expressions *bangsa mataas*, "high birthright," and *tau way bangsa*,

“people without birthright.” Performing the functions of vassal, of course, requires a certain economic viability, and those who lose it also lose status and may become temporarily or permanently disfranchised. A man in such straits may voluntarily enter into bondage — what the Maranao call *kakatamokan* — or be involuntarily condemned to debt peonage or indentured servitude by legal action, and become what the Maguindanao call *ulipon* and the Tausug *kiapangdihilan*. In addition to such enfranchised and disfranchised members of the community, there are two distinct sorts of un-enfranchised persons — captive or chattel slaves (*banyaga* or *bisaya*), and an outcaste non-Muslim boat people called *Badjaw* by outsiders, who act as fishermen-clients to Sulu patrons but retain a precarious freedom to shift allegiance simply by sailing away in the middle of the night. Membership in all these “classes” can be inherited.

These class rankings are important in calculating wergeld and brideprice, but are less useful for understanding the social structure of daily life because they disguise the dominating man-to-man relationships which determine an individual’s actual social condition. Unlike the *bagani* “killer,” *maingel* “brave,” or *kadangyan* “richman,” the class terms current in these principalities reveal interpersonal political relations. The *banyaga* is not a slave in the abstract: he is owned by a particular person; and the debt peon is not in debt in general; he is in debt to a particular creditor — a creditor, in fact, who is expected to protect him against other creditors. The *sakop* is the vassal not of the *datu* class but of his own *datu*, and *datu*s themselves — “rulers,” that is — do not rule geographic domains but bodies of individual followers. Even the chief *datu* of them all, the sultan, exerts his authority not over a realm but over his *datu* supporters, some of whom may in fact be neither Muslim nor even members of his society. Everybody, in short, is somebody’s else’s man, and the Maranao articulate the fact semantically by distinguishing the *pegawid* “supporters” from the *pegawidan* “supported.” The fact that these classes constitute a continuum is reflected in such a high degree of social mobility that the former slave population has been largely absorbed during the present century. The socially disapproved but not infrequent practice of procreating across class lines combines with bilateral descent claims to produce status refinement every time it occurs. For this reason the determination of brideprice

in the upper ranks of society is both complex and weighty; and because a man can easily slip from one status to another, he defends that status to the death and avenges any threat to it with violence.

CONCLUSION

Class structures in the unhispanized Philippines range from societies which distinguish no classes at all to those which distinguish either economic or political classes. This variety can conveniently be described in four general categories according to indigenous terminologies, enumerated in ascending order of class differentiation as follows: (1) those which distinguish no class differences at all, (2) those which distinguish a warrior elite, (3) those which distinguish the wealthy, and (4) those which distinguish a literal ruling class.

It is obvious that the two extremes of this sequence reflect economic or ecological variations as well as social or political specialization. Those Negritos who almost literally own nothing and scavenge for their daily food not surprisingly have neither economic classes nor political organization; and, no more surprisingly, the Sultanate of Sulu is dependent upon a class structure which makes possible the exploitation of that commerce whose profits maintain the structure. With these two extremes in mind, the four types of class structure may be reviewed.

CLASSLESS SOCIETIES

These societies produce little or no surplus from their environment. Some live by gathering forest products, some by hunting and gathering, some by exchanging game or forest products for foodstuffs; others live by combined hunting, gathering, and limited cultivation, and still others by such integrated swidden farming, hunting, fishing, and sale of forest products that they can afford manufactured imports like brassware and porcelain. Most do not make war — indeed, the Tiruray and Mangyan are among the few Filipino cultures with no weaponry, memories of military valor, or warrior traditions. Yet the Batak of Palawan once had such a reputation for bravery they were spared Moro slave raids, many Negrito groups commit homicide as a mourning rite, and the

Ilongot have remained the most notorious headtakers in the archipelago. Two economic comments may be made about these war-making groups – first, they do not share the same level of economic development (e.g., the Ilongots produce much more than Negritos, but about the same as Mangyans or Tiruray), and, second, they practice no coup-counting which might produce a warrior elite.

WARRIOR SOCIETIES

Although economic data are unavailable for assessing overall productivity, empirical observations suggest that warrior societies generally possess more imported trade items as heirloom wealth than any of the societies of type 1, and those in Mindanao have rich traditions of metallurgy and weaving unequaled in the classless societies. Their languages distinguish a class of warrior elite – not a warrior class among nonwarriors, but a class of superior warriors in a society where all males are expected to be warriors. How much economic advantage accrues to this class is not clear except in the case of the Mandaya whose *bagani* warrior chiefs are known to live off tribute from lesser warriors – or nonwarriors. Yet, like the Negrito food-gatherers or Mangyan agriculturalists of type 1 societies, these warriors do not own – that is, inherit, mortgage, exchange, alienate, or bequeath – real property. The criterion for placing the Ilongot in type 1 and the not dissimilar Isneg in type 2 is not economic development, but the existence among the latter of a class term, *maingel*, which distinguishes a category of men with shared status, privilege, and responsibility in the community.

PETTY PLUTOCRACIES

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that type 3 societies are former warrior societies whose intensive farming of irrigated terraces has produced a land-owning and -inheriting class which takes precedence over military veterans – and which must rank as one of the most sharply defined classes in ethnographic literature. The full-fledged kadangyan must not only be of kadangyan lienage but he acquires his personal rank in a ceremony as specific as ordination to the priesthood or receiving a doctorate. These societies

produce more food, support larger populations, and exhibit greater economic gaps than either the classless or warrior societies. Their landed elite exploit the labor of dependents and debtors, but are not a leisured class inasmuch as they work part of their own fields, often alongside actual debt peons. Despite a common class structure, type 3 societies differ considerably. The Ifugao upper class are kin-oriented, usurious, and competitive, while their Bontoc counterparts' individualism and self-aggrandizement are curbed by ideals and sanctions of village or ward solidarity. Benguet elite, on the other hand, are actual capitalists dealing in gold and cattle, are not dependent upon rich land, and have long since given up such warrior insignia as tattoos or human trophies. And if the assumption is correct that type 3 societies developed out of type 2, the Kalinga would illustrate a transitional stage — terrace-building warriors among whom a land-based kadangyan class is rapidly developing.

PRINCIPALITIES

The economic base of the type 4 societies is much broader than that of type 3, for, in addition to practicing sedentary agriculture, they have upper classes that engage in more or less maritime trade, and enjoy a certain amount of slave labor. Yet their elite are literally defined as a ruling class, for *datu* is the root of the verb, "to rule." Appropriately, all other classes are defined in political rather than economic terms, too — supporter, vassal, slave, etc. — in contrast to the nonelite of the petty plutocracies who are simply called "poor." Moreover, the principalities are constituted as states with centralized, or centralizing, governments. It is this class structure which provides the socioeconomic specialization necessary to exploit both domestic and foreign commerce. Or, to put it the other way around, it is this commerce which provides the profits by which the ruling class maintains the society's class structure. Thus, that principality with the most extensive international trade, the Sultanate of Sulu, is not only the most centralized state but its Taosug hegemony provides the only example in Philippine history of all members of one language group recognizing one ruler. Similarly, that society with the least extended commerce, the Maranao of Lake Lanao, have never achieved a centralized government, but rather produced a creative

array of political offices and competing titles. Such political class structures sharply set type 4 societies off from type 1, 2, and 3, not only in having central authorities and politically defined classes, but simply in having political offices in the first place. For neither the classless and warrior societies nor the petty plutocracies have any recognized political titles or offices at all. A Moro can speak of "my datu" but no Bontoc or Ifugao says "my kadangyan." When a Cordillera plutocrat gives his inaugural prestige feast, he becomes one more kadangyan, but when a Maranao mounts the same social display, he becomes the one and only *Sultan sa Lambayanagi* or *Datu sa Marawi*, etc.

It is to be noted, however, that all the warrior societies of Mindanao have developed or received centralized datu-like offices in the past century. These were usually imposed or inspired by Moro states for purposes of tribute or trade, a process which has left mixed memories in those societies which effectively internalized them. The *Ulahingan* epics of the Cotabato Manobo frequently celebrate some tribal flight from Moro tyranny, but modern savants recall their ancestors' vassal offices with pride and refer to tribute to some rajah as fond gifts. And the process continued into the twentieth century — and, indeed, is continuing still. The Suyan Bilaan above Sarangani Bay were "organized" in 1917 by a Bicolano adventurer with contacts in the local constabulary, and the Bukidnon, who distinguish "high datus" from ordinary ones, actually founded a "Bukidnon Tribe Datu Association" in 1960. But the production of such offices has not been the inevitable result of Moro influence or overlordship. The Tagbanua of Aborlan, Palawan, for example, have developed so distinctive a social structure it cannot be fitted into any of the four categories. This is a class-conscious system obsessed with the dominance of "high bloods" over "low bloods" and a full roster of Moro titles like *Laksamana*, *Panglima*, *Urang Kaya*, and even *Saribung-sawan* (i.e., *Sarip Kabungsuwan*) but with no political power — something presumably supplied from outside.

The warrior societies of northern Luzon, on the other hand, have produced no such datu-like leaders — perhaps for want of a Moro example. A few Kalinga *pangat* were set up early in this century by American governors as local deputies, but the institution was not absorbed into that warrior society's class structure — a fact made manifest today by the present government's inability

to locate indigenous loci of power that might be co-opted to advance national interests like dam-building in the Chico River valley. In Benguet at the turn of the century, however, a few *baknang* had become virtual manorial lords replete with *baga-en* slaves, *silbi* serfs, and *pastol* cowhands, and it was probably their availability as political leaders which moved the American occupation forces to establish the colony's first civil government in Benguet. Otherwise, the complete lack of political offices among type 3 societies must come as a disappointment to the social scientist since these societies are obviously more advanced than the swidden-farming warrior societies — in terms of economic development, the emergence of a landowning elite, and the construction of monolithic terrace systems. Perhaps the ability of these petty plutocrats to carve up whole mountainsides into terraces, plant them to rice in accordance with a strict communal calendar, and allocate and control water rights without the least tribal chief, *datu*, or central authority, may profitably serve as a warning against simplistic theories of the emergence of class structure and political organization.