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## The Genesis of Lowland Filipino Society in Mindoro

VOLKER SCHULT

Mindoro has a total area of 10,000 square kilometers and is the seventh largest island in the Philippines. It lies southwest of Luzon, separated from the province of Batangas by the Verde Island Passage. Mindoro was divided into two separate provinces in 1950. Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro are located within the administrative unit Region IV (Southern Tagalog). Fifteen municipalities comprise the province of Oriental Mindoro with Calapan as its provincial capital, and eleven municipalities compose the province of Occidental Mindoro with Mamburao as its capital. The two provinces together have a total of 669,369 inhabitants (Oriental Mindoro: 446,938; Occidental Mindoro: 222,431) according to the latest census figure of 1980. Around 8 to 10 percent of the population are estimated to be Mangyans, the original inhabitants of Mindoro.

The population is unevenly distributed. The Mangyans live in the mountainous interior. Most of the Christian lowland population dwell near the coast and on the fertile northeastern plain. According to the 1980 census Tagalog is the most widely used language in Oriental Mindoro in spite of the fact that at least thirty languages/dialects are reported as generally spoken. Eighty-six percent of all households speak Tagalog, followed by 5 percent Romblon, over 2 percent Ilocano, and almost 1 percent Hiligaynon (Ilongo)-speaking households. The northern municipalities (e.g. San Teodoro, Puerto Galera) of the province, which are situated near the province of Batangas, are dominated to

This article is based on the author's dissertation "Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft der Insel Mindoro im 20. Jahrhundert. Anpassungen und Verzögerungen im Entwicklungsprozeß einer philippinischen Insel." ("Economy and Society on the Island of Mindoro in the Twentieth Century Conformities and Delay in the Development Process of a Philippine Island")

a great extent by Tagalog-speaking households. In the southeastern municipalities (e.g. Mansalay, Roxas) the portion of Romblon-speaking people is relatively high.

Occidental Mindoro has also a long list of diverse languages and dialects but Tagalog remains the most commonly used by members of a majority of the households (67 percent) followed by Ilocano with almost 12 percent and Hiligaynon (Ilongo) nearly 9 percent. The pattern of distribution in Occidental Mindoro cannot be explained only in terms of geographical location. Again, the northern municipalities are dominated by Tagalogs (e.g. Lubang, Looc, Mamburao), who came from Batangas, Cavite and Central Luzon. In the south the portion of people coming from the Visayas and the Ilocos provinces is very high. This is related to the foundation of the San Jose sugar hacienda in 1910, until World War II one of the largest sugar haciendas in the Philippines. The demand for workers was enormous. They were hired in large numbers from Panay and Negros.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian Filipino lowland civilization of present day Mindoro was the result of a constant influx of migrants. Those migrants came from the Ilocos and Tagalog provinces as well as from the Visayas, predominantly from Panay. Attracted by vast tracts of uncultivated fertile land they poured into the sparsely populated lowland areas of the Mindoro frontier, introducing their own social customs, traditions and cultural achievements.

Thus the ethnolinguistically differentiated society of Mindoro came into being. The question is, what were the factors that led to the evolvement of the lowland community in Mindoro? First, it is necessary to give a brief historical sketch of Mindoro's history since Spanish times. The purpose is to point out why Mindoro suffered a disastrous setback in its development.

#### SPANISH COLONIALISM AND MORO RAIDS

In 1570 the Spaniards arrived in Mindoro. They found a rather rich, recently Islamized coastal population. The Spaniards were told of people roaming the forests and the hilly country of the interior. Those were groups of Mangyans, the present day cultural minority of the island. Mindoro was a trading center of the archipelago. Chinese ships

1. National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), *1980 Census of Population and Housing: Oriental Mindoro* (Manila, 1983); NEDA, *1980 Census of Population and Housing: Occidental Mindoro* (Manila, 1983).

and Arab traders arrived annually and local products such as beeswax or tortoise shells were exchanged for Chinese goods such as silk or porcelain.<sup>2</sup>

With the establishment of Spanish Manila as the new power center, Mindoro declined rapidly as an important transfer point. On the other hand, the Muslims' leading role as the principal maritime traders within the archipelago was seriously challenged by the Spaniards. The Muslims' answer was war.<sup>3</sup>

From 1602 on Moro raiders attacked the newly Christianized inhabitants of the coastal towns of Mindoro. In the eighteenth century Mindoro became the chief victim of the Moro attacks. Year by year the Moros devastated the towns. They controlled parts of the island for several months each year and used them as strong points from which they attacked other provinces and Spanish ships. The Moros erected fortifications and sold their captives as slaves to traders from Borneo. The years 1753 and 1754 were the most destructive in the history of Mindoro. Almost all towns and settlements were plundered and destroyed. Even the capital itself, Calapan, was not spared. The Spaniards and the Filipino natives were unable to defend the island and the Moros were the masters of Mindoro.<sup>4</sup>

The frequent Moro raids entailed the almost total depopulation of the island. The death toll of the Christian coastal town dwellers was enormous. Those who were not killed or captured and sold as slaves fled in terror to nearby Batangas. Mindoro became a wilderness. The decline in population is indicated by the following figures. The Christian population of Mindoro island in 1749 was 8,300, 2,700 in 1770 and 8,400 in 1851.<sup>5</sup> In 1770 only 2,700 Christians were living on an island of 10,000 square kilometers! That meant the almost complete

2. Anonymous (Hernan Riquel?), "Relation of the Voyage to Luzon", June (?) 1570, in *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898*, ed. E.H. Blair and J.A. Robertson Cleveland, 1903-1909, vol. 3, pp. 73-104; Anonymous, "Relation of the Conquest of the Island of Luzon," 20 April 1570, in *The Philippine Islands 1493-1898*, idem., pp. 141-72.

3. William H. Scott, "Crusade or Commerce? Spanish-Moro Relations in the 16th Century," *Cracks in the Parchment Curtain* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, Emended Edition, 1985), pp. 42-48.

4. An incomplete though impressive list of Moro attacks on Mindoro in Antoon Postma, "Mina de Oro: God's Gold Mine " *The Kingdom of the Word*, SVD Festschrift (1975), appendix 2, pp. 212-13; Antoon Postma, "Brief History of the Town and Parish of Calapan," Panaytayan, 1979 (Manuscript.); Vicente Barrantes, *Guerras Piráticas de Filipinas Contra Mindanaos Joloanos* (Madrid, 1878), pp. 45-53, 105-9, 145-46; José Montero y Vidal, *Historia De La Piratería Malayo-Mahometana En Mindanao, Joló Y Borneo* (Madrid, 1888), pp. 259, 304-10, 335, 353, 359.

5. P. Gregorio Fidel de Blas de la Asunción, *Labor Evangélica De Los Padres Agustinos Recoletos En Las Islas Filipinas* (Manila, 1882, Zaragoza, 1910), pp. 29-30.

disappearance of Mindoro's Christian lowland community. Not till the middle of the nineteenth century did the population match the numbers one century earlier. With the end of the Moro danger (the last raid into Mindoro was reported in 1871) the island recovered on a demographically and economically low level.<sup>6</sup>

An estimated 20,000 people were living on the large island in 1891. Few products in minor quantities (e.g. abaca, lumber, firewood) were exported to Batangas and Manila. No harbors and no roads existed on the whole island.<sup>7</sup> People began to migrate in greater numbers at the end of the nineteenth century. Among them were the Morente family, who came from nearby Marinduque, and the Abeledas, who migrated from Cavite via Lubang in the north to Mindoro Island.<sup>8</sup> Together with the Luna and Adriatico families, who came to Mindoro just a few decades earlier, they emerged as the society's upper social stratum. They dominated provincial politics which was divided into factions until the middle of the twentieth century, and even until the present. Concerning the evolvement of the present day lowland community in Mindoro, however, we have to focus on events which occurred in the first decades of this century.

#### THE SHAPING OF A LOWLAND COMMUNITY

A new chapter in Mindoro's history was opened with the coming of American troops in 1901. By brutal warfare (1901 and 1902 were the most destructive years since the Moro raids 150 years earlier) they conquered the island. Immediately after peace was restored the Americans started to develop Mindoro. Their intention was to repopu-

6. F. Gardner/I. Maliwanag, *Indic Writings of the Mindoro-Palawan Axis* (San Antonio, 1939), p. 8; Agustin de la Cavada, *Historia Geográfica, Geológica Y Estadística De Filipinas: Tomo 2: Visayas Y Mindanao* (Manila: Imp. de Ramirez y Girandier, 1876), pp. 35 ff.; P. Fidel de Blas, *Labor Evangelica*, pp. 29-30.

7. *Guía Oficial De Las Islas Filipinas Para 1891* (Manila, p. 170); P. Benito Ruiz, *Mindoro: Informe sobre los trabajos apostólicos realizados por nuestros P.P. Recoletos desde 1607 [sic!] hasta Mayo de 1898* (San Sebastian, 1899), Archivo Provincial de los PP. Agustinos Recoletos (APAR), Marcilla (Spain), Sec. 1a-Leg. 53-Nro. 4; P. Benito Ruiz, *Isla de Mindoro: Por qué la isla de Mindoro, siendo tan rica y tan feraz y estando tan cerca de Manila, no ha prosperado* (San Sebastian, 1901), APAR Sec. 1a-Leg. 53-Nro. 4.

8. Short descriptions of the families mentioned are in Macario Z. Landicho, *The Mindoro Yearbook* (Manila: Yearbook Publishers, 1952), pp. 568-72. In particular, the population of the northeastern part of Mindoro emerged from a limited stock of settlers from Lubang. The villages in the northeast are a pure stock of the Abeledas and Liboros of the past generations. They are also among the leading families of present day Occidental Mindoro. Settlers from other provinces are exceptions and because of its topographic condition (mountainous region, a small strip of agricultural area), the region is

late the island and to bring the vast tracts of idle land into cultivation. Migration was encouraged by the Public Land Law of 1904. People could apply for a homestead, i.e. they could file an application for the conveyance of a parcel of uncultivated public land. After a long bureaucratic procedure they would receive a legal land title. The homestead act, however, did not bring many more migrants to Mindoro and it did not mean a redistribution of land ownership. Not even 1,000 people applied for a homestead between 1904 and 1913. Around 10,000 new homesteaders, however, arrived in Mindoro up to 1920.<sup>9</sup> What had happened?

Three factors contributed to the rapid increase in population during the American colonial government in Mindoro. They were the U.S. tariff acts of 1909 and 1913, the establishment of the San Jose sugar hacienda in 1910, and the construction of the provincial road (since 1915).

The tariff acts of 1909 and 1913 established free trade between the Philippine colony and the U.S.A. The Philippine producers of crops such as copra, sugar, or abaca found a large and stable market in the United States. The farmers were paid high prices for their products. Subsequently, Mindoro's economy was transformed from a subsistence economy to a commercialized one. Copra became the province's undisputed leading cash/money crop. The American provincial governor Louis van Schaick reported in 1911:

People are abandoning the planting of more hemp and are devoting themselves to the planting of coconuts. Every one, from the poorest farmer up, is putting coconuts in the ground.<sup>10</sup>

The farmland devoted to coconut trees increased from 650 hectares in 1903 to 2,700 hectares in 1912, and to 18,000 hectares in 1939. The production of copra jumped from a meager few hundred kilograms

not conducive to new settlements. Big landowners denied opening the valley region between Abra de Ilog and Mamburao to new settlers because they used the land for extensive cattle ranching. For that reason they also hindered the construction of the road between the two towns (1931-1949), Landicho, *Mindoro Yearbook*, pp. 266, 273-74, 332; "Abra de Ilog," in *Historical Data Papers*, vol. 75 (Manila: The National Library, 1953); Remigio E. Agpalo, *The Political Elite and the People: A Study of Politics in Occidental Mindoro* (Manila: Regal Printing, 1972), pp. 35-41, 48-63.

9. *Report of the Philippine Commission (RPC)*, Part 2, 1907, p. 212, *RPC*, Part 1, 1908, p. 340; Part 2, pp. 171-72; *RPC*, 1915, p. 129; *The Actual Condition of the Province of Mindoro*, Calapan, 23 February 1920, The National Library, Manila, Manuel L. Quezon Papers VII-Box 96-Provincial and Municipal File: Mindoro 1912-1935; Landicho, *Mindoro Yearbook*, pp. 53, 248-50.

10. "Mindoro: Provincial Report 1911," *Manuscript Report of the Philippine Commission*, Vol. 2, Bureau of Insular Affairs Library, Vol. 964, National Archives, Washington.

in 1903, because only the nut itself was exported to Batangas, to 2,000 tons in 1912 and 9,000 tons in 1939. A new cash crop (sugar cane) was introduced in Mindoro and a thriving export economy came into being.<sup>11</sup>

That was an incentive to landowners to till more and more of their soil and to open up new land. Only 4 percent of Mindoro's area was agricultural land in 1903. This increased over 200 percent by 1918. Now landlords also became interested in bringing their vast fallow lands into production. Some 23 landlords owned more than 30,000 hectares (or 70 percent) of the farmland. Only 600 hectares, however, were cultivated in 1903.<sup>12</sup>

The securing of sufficient labor for plowing the land met with difficulties. The majority of the hacenderos were absentee landlords from the province of Batangas, owning landed estates in the north of Mindoro, in particular. They arranged for the transfer of families from Batangas to Mindoro where they had to settle on the landlord's hacienda and till his land. Those families were either landless families or obligated (e.g. indebted tenants) to their landlord. When asked to go to Mindoro they did, voluntarily though not enthusiastically. The barrio Palbuticaan, for example, was popularly named "Kay Tanauan" because the hacienda was owned by a resident of the town of Tanauan in the province of Batangas. People from that town in Batangas were sent to that barrio in Mindoro to cultivate the land.<sup>13</sup>

Another form of securing manpower was to hire seasonal farm workers from nearby provinces. In particular, during harvest time hundreds of people from Romblon, Marinduque, and Panay came to Mindoro. All of the farmers in Mindoro were badly in need of them. They frequently failed to harvest all of their crops due to limited laborers. Thus, during harvest time palay was left to rot in the fields. With such a situation, farmers attracted neighboring folk and harvesters from other provinces by offering working conditions on easy terms (e.g. free board and lodging during harvest time and fifty-fifty sharing).<sup>14</sup> As the prospects of owning a parcel of land in Mindoro were quite bright, many of those seasonal laborers did not return to their home provinces, but settled down on Mindoro's east coast. Quite often groups of twenty to thirty families left their home province to start

11. *Census of the Philippine Islands 1903*, Vol. IV, pp. 182 and passim; Landicho, pp. 227-233; Olimpio R. Navarro, *The Future of Mindoro* (Manila South High School, 1923/24), appendix.

12. *Census 1903*, vol. 4, pp. 192 and passim; *Census 1918*, vol. 3, pp. 65 and passim.

13. HDP, vol. 72, "Palbuticaan," vol. 73, "Baniilad."

14. HDP, vol. 73, "Batingan."

a new life in Mindoro. Because those families had blood relationships there, they decided to live in the same place. After settling permanently, the pioneering families summoned their relatives and friends. They formed the nucleus of the present population in the barrios.<sup>15</sup>

The most common way for landlords to recruit labor was to attract migrants by offering moderate and favorable conditions for tenancy. That was a constant feature in Mindoro until World War II. Around 1918, 80 percent of all farmers were owners of their farmlands and only 20 percent were tenants. The prevalent form of tenancy was non-rental, i.e. the migrant was bound to clear the land and was allowed to make use of that land without being obliged to pay any rent during the process of clearing. With the increase of migration in the 1920s and 1930s almost 30 percent of all farmers were tenants. The majority of them turned out to be sharecroppers. The conditions of share tenancy, however, were still rather moderate, i.e. a fifty-fifty ratio or the tenant was permitted to keep a higher portion of the harvest.<sup>16</sup>

With the deterioration of the social situation in particular in the Central Luzon provinces, caused by overpopulation, land scarcity, and a modern, commercial agriculture, migration rose to high levels in Mindoro. Thousands upon thousands of homesteaders from Central Luzon arrived in Mindoro annually. The population almost doubled from 1918 (70,000) to 1939 (130,000). Arable land existed in abundance and compared with other parts of the Philippines the situation of tenants was more or less endurable. By and large, traditional social ties (e.g., patron-client relations) and cultural values (e.g., *utang na loob*, *compadrazgo* system) were still intact.<sup>17</sup>

A second crucial factor in the shaping of a multifaceted community was the establishment of the San Jose Hacienda. In 1888 more than 20,000 hectares of public land in the southwestern part of Mindoro were conveyed to the Recollect missionaries. It was the largest landed property the religious orders ever possessed in the Philippines. For reasons of populating the unsettled land the Recollects led people from Zambales province, where they provided for the spiritual needs of the population, to transfer to San Jose. Together with many relatives, several families left for San Jose to work as ranchers on the monks' cattle ranch. In the course of time more migrants from Zambales

15. HDP, vol. 72, "Camantigue," vol. 73, "Langgang."

16. *Census 1903*, vol. 4, pp. 264-72; *Census 1918*, vol. 3, pp. 106-7; *Landicho, Mindoro Yearbook*, pp. 271-74.

17. Tables of the increase in population are given in: *1980 Census of Housing and Population: Oriental Mindoro*, p. 1 and ditto: *Occidental Mindoro*, p. 1.

arrived at the ranch and the small settlements became barrios. The barrio captains were chosen from among the Zambales migrants.<sup>18</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century the newly established American colonial government bought the haciendas of the religious orders. In 1910 the American government sold the San Jose Hacienda to American businessmen, who were closely related to the American Sugar Refining Company (the Sugar Trust). The cattle ranch was transformed into the largest and most modern sugar hacienda in the Philippines. As that part of the island was sparsely settled, it was necessary to bring all the labor needed to the plantation. That was very expensive. Agents spread all over the island looking for workers willing to move to San Jose. Before signing the contract, however, the agents had to give them a cash advance, guarantee a gratuitous passage, provide them with cheap housing facilities in San Jose and with free medical treatment at the hacienda's hospital. The wages (₱.80 to ₱1.00 per diem) were higher than on other sugar haciendas.<sup>19</sup> There were 3,000 to 4,000 permanent laborers working on the hacienda, and many more during harvest when additional seasonal workers were hired. The main bulk of the population came from the provinces of Aklan, Capiz, Antique, and Iloilo on Panay island, as well as from Negros. Nevertheless, the population fluctuation was large because the social and economic situation of the workers were not as satisfactory as promised by the management. The laborers had to work hard from morning till evening six days a week. The cost of living was high because all goods, which were imported from Manila, had to be bought at the hacienda-owned shops. And the death toll caused by malaria was high. About 90 percent of all the laborers left the hacienda within six months.<sup>20</sup> The majority of them went home, applied for a homestead or settled down in the surroundings, clearing the land.

After several years the sugar hacienda ran into severe financial difficulties. In fact, the enterprise was a failure. In particular, during

18. P. Valentín Marin y Morales, *Ensayo De Una Síntesis De Los Trabajos Realizados Por Las Corporaciones Religiosas Españolas*, Tomo II (Manila: Imprenta De Santo Tomás, 1901), pp. 248-49; Rudy A. Candelario, "History of Calintaan," *History of Occidental Mindoro and its Eleven Municipalities*, San Jose, 1982. (Manuscript.)

19. *Administration of Philippine Lands*, vols. 1-2, 61st Congress, 3rd Session, House of Representatives, Report No. 2289, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911.

20. Baptismal Records (Libros de Bautismos), Books I-VI, San Jose, 10 December 1916 to 23 May 1937, Parish of St. Joseph - Central; P. Julian Duval, *Recorridas En Mindoro De 1920*, Mangyan Research Center, Panaytayan; "Sanitary Survey of the San José Estate and Adjacent Properties on Mindoro Island, Philippine Islands," *The Philippine Journal of Science* 9 (1914): 137-97.

the Depression of the 1930s workers were encouraged to become farmers to supply the hacienda with agricultural products, especially with rice. In 1935 the Secretary of Agriculture issued an order to confiscate 18,000 hectares of the hacienda. The land involved was purchased on the installment plan from the government in 1910, but the owner (in 1929 ownership switched to the Archbishop of Manila) failed to cover obligations long overdue. The confiscated land was subdivided and sold to small farmers. Subsequently, new migrants, among them Ilocanos and Tagalogs as well as Visayans in search of land, were attracted and new barrios and municipalities came into existence.<sup>21</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century no roads existed in Mindoro. The only means of transportation was by boat. It took the Americans one-and-a-half decades before being able to start in earnest with road building on the island. Due to the antagonism between the American Secretary of the Interior in the Philippines, Dean C. Worcester, and the Representative of the Province of Mindoro in the Philippine Assembly, Macario Adriatico, insular funds for public works in Mindoro could not be released. Only after Worcester's and Adriatico's resignations in 1913 and 1914 respectively did the situation change. Preliminary work for the construction of the so-called Calapan South Road began in 1915.<sup>22</sup>

The intention was to build a road from the provincial capital of Calapan to the prosperous town of Pinamalayan, situated 70 kilometers south of Calapan on the east coast, and afterwards to Bongabon. The road was not built along the coastal area but through the virgin interior of the northeastern plain northwest of Lake Naujan. The engineers and workers had to cope with many difficulties. Climatic and topographic conditions rendered construction work difficult. Many swamps and rivers had to be crossed and bridges had to be erected. Even smaller rivers became big streams during the rainy season. Therefore the engineers were forced to build bigger and more expensive bridges. Much money had to be spent for permanent supervision and maintenance of the already completed sections of the road.

Again, a major problem was the securing of sufficient manpower. The Americans found it impossible to maintain permanent work gangs, because the native workers did not want to leave their home districts and refused to continue working in other districts. Further, many workers fell victim to malaria. All this caused many problems for the

21. Landicho, *Mindoro Yearbook*, pp. 235-36; "Lands in Mindoro to be Confiscated," *The Tribune*, 31 January 1935; "Cancel Mindoro Estate Contract," *The Tribune*, 1 February 1935.

22. *The Actual Condition of the Province of Mindoro*, Calapan, 23 February 1920, p. 2.

provincial government and delayed the completion of the project. Finally, with the opening of the road from Calapan to Pinamalayan in 1932 the first and until today the most important inland connection was finished. It had a great impact on almost all aspects of life on the island.<sup>23</sup>

For the first time the fertile northeastern plain was accessible to migrants. With the progress in the construction of the Calapan South Road, homesteaders from Batangas and the Tagalog Central Luzon provinces as well as Ilocanos poured into the inland. Along the road, new barrios came into existence. The few older settlements were either totally or partially displaced by those nearer to the road. Sometimes, the new barrio was located only a few hundred meters away from the old one. Then the prefix "new" was added to the name of that barrio, e.g. New Bansud, New Tiguisan. Another form of naming a new settlement was to contract the names of the pioneering families. For example, barrio Ordovilla was named after the Ordoñes and Villanueva families.<sup>24</sup> The provincial road was responsible not only for the rapid increase in population but also for economic growth. For the first time in Mindoro's history it was possible to transport crops in large quantities from the interior to the provincial capital of Calapan. From there they were exported to Manila. The communication between formerly separated barrios improved, too. The inhabitants came into contact and exchanged products. Even in smaller barrios markets came into existence.

#### CONCLUSION

The Filipino lowland civilization of Mindoro was shaped during the first half of the twentieth century. The constant influx of migrants formed this community. Although Tagalogs from nearby Batangas, Cavite, and the Central Luzon provinces dominated all over the island, large groups of Ilocanos in search of land poured in, too. They settled in the sparsely populated areas of the southwest near San Jose and in the hinterland of the municipalities on the east coast, which became more and more accessible after the completion of the provin-

23. *Annual Report of the Provincial Governor, Calapan, 1929*, pp. 24, 31-34; *Excerpt from the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Provincial Board of Mindoro, Calapan, 16 May 1930, Resolution No. 198*, both in: The National Library, Manila, Manuel L. Quezon Papers, Box No. 96; *RPC*, vol. 7, 1903, p. 233; Pacifico A. Alvano, *The Fifth District Souvenir*, vol. 1 (Manila: Favreal Publishing Co., 1934), p. 385.

24. *HDP*, vol. 72, "New Tiguisan," "Tiguisan," "Proper Bansud," "New Bansud," "Ordovilla."

cial road. Hundreds of men came as seasonal workers from overcrowded Marinduque and Romblon each year to Mindoro's east coast. Many of them settled in the municipalities in the southeast. Thousands of Visayans from Panay and Negros were recruited by the San Jose Hacienda management. Many of them did not return to their home provinces, but applied for a homestead.

One pattern of settlement was by ethnic groups and by clusters of blood related families. If the population of a barrio was an Ilocano-dominated one, it follows that their social customs (e.g., child birth, baptism, courtship), ideals and traditions dominated all the other ethnic groups. Nevertheless, the relationship between the several ethnic groups in a barrio or town was extremely peaceful. Different customs, traditions as well as intermarriage between the groups was tolerated.<sup>25</sup> Migrants, especially Ilocanos, were quite often an innovating factor in the development of the island.<sup>26</sup> After their arrival in barrio Paclasan (nowadays, Roxas) Ilocano migrants started to erect the first irrigation system in Mindoro in 1927.<sup>27</sup> Paclasan had been deficient in rice and corn. Because of this new irrigation system it was transformed into a surplus area and became known as the granary of southeast Mindoro.<sup>28</sup> In barrio Inclanay, municipality of Pinamalayan, Ilocano migrants introduced the use of the plow and draft animals in farming, and people from Batangas brought with them other forms of industries such as *sawali* and *takuyan* making.<sup>29</sup> After World War II tobacco became a new crop in San Jose because of its introduction by Ilocanos.<sup>30</sup> Migrants from Marinduque introduced their famous Mori-

25. HDP, vol. 72, "Sambat."

26. Ilocanos are regarded as very industrious. A Filipino teacher of the town of Sta. Cruz characterized them as follows: "The Ilocanos migrated to Sta. Cruz by families. They are capable of assimilating [to] any civilization and of adjusting themselves to any environment. They can work all day long in the field under the scorching heat of the sun and under the showering downpour of the rain. . . . Ilocanos enjoy a high reputation as hard workers. They are not as social as the Tagalogs." HDP, vol. 75, "Sta. Cruz."

27. After the suppression of the Basi Revolt in Ilocos in 1807 captured participants in the revolt were exiled to Mindoro for six years. They settled near Calapan and engaged in agriculture. The Ilocano exiles introduced progressive methods in rice cultivation in Mindoro. They erected irrigation systems and were able to harvest twice a year. However, after the termination of their exile all of them left Mindoro for their home province. As a result, the knowledge of irrigated rice cultivation was lost in Mindoro for more than one hundred years, Antoon Postma, "The Ilocano Exiles in Mindoro: 1808-1815," *The Ilocos Review* 16 (1984): 28-74.

28. HDP, vol. 73, "Roxas."

29. HDP, vol. 73, "Inclanay." *Sawali*: woven strips of split bamboo used for simple walls in native houses. *Takuyan*: a basket such as harvesters carry on their hip or back, Leo J. English, *Tagalog-English Dictionary* (Manila: Capitol Publishing House, 1986).

30. HDP, vol. 74, "San Jose."

ones Festival also in some east coast towns, e.g., in the municipality of Gloria. This is a traditional procession during Holy Week, which is performed on the island of Marinduque every year.<sup>31</sup>

After World War II the transportation and communication systems in the two provinces of Mindoro improved significantly, the number of elementary and secondary schools increased, and due to educational attainment the health of the people improved. The cash crop economy expanded also. Greater and greater numbers of migrants from overcrowded provinces poured into Mindoro and spread all over the island. Combined with the declining Philippine economy of the 1980s this caused new problems in Mindoro, such as squatter problems. Social tensions were aggravated in Mindoro, too, and the NPA began its operations on the island. Nevertheless, the decisive period in the evolvement of the Filipino society in Mindoro was in essence the first half of the twentieth century.

31. Lucia Feraro-Banta, *Scenic Spots of Oriental Mindoro* (Calapan: Divine Word College, 1982/83), pp. 168-69.