

La cual bendición y promesa también hay quien la extiende y entienda del reino temporal de nuestros católicos Reyes de España, como que por serlo y por el gran celo y cuidado que han puesto en que lo sean todos, y en particular estos remotos y olvidados infieles, les había de dar Dios el universal señorío de casi lo más del mundo; el cual también se significa en nombre de su mismo reino que antiguamente se dijo “Panía,” o “Tubulia,” que en griego y caldeo es lo mismo que “universal,” o en romance “todas las cosas. (Solórzano Pereyra 89)

Pero el lugar que más ha dado en que entender a los expositores sagrados es el de Isaías, en que profetiza: “Que irán Angeles veloces en barcos alados, y vasos de árboles sobre las aguas á una tierra, que está más allá de los ríos de Etiopia, á una gente arrancada, dilacerada, á un Pueblo terrible: después del qual no se halla otro; gente, que ha mucho que está esperando, y hollada, y cuya tierra han robado las aguas.” Palabras, que un moderno porfiadamente las ha querido aplicar y verificar en la conversión de nuestra España, y otros, más atinados, a la predicación de la India oriental, China y Japón por los portugueses. (Solórzano Pereyra 90).

The act of colonization can be interpreted as recreating a world in the image of the colonizer. If we accept this notion of colonization, then, Spanish colonialization was the act of recreating a world in the image of Spain; an act that was carried out by different agents with diverse aims and motivations over a period of several centuries. Bearing in mind the interpretive nature of colonization, and taking into account the various

indigenous and foreign cultures interacting with colonial reality, we should be ready to observe various forms of Spanish colonialism. We should also understand that the image of the colonizer was not immutable and that we are dealing with a moving target. Having stated the complex nature of colonialism, I must stress the limited character of my approach to studying Spanish Colonialism in the Philippines. I will focus mainly on the encounter between *Sangleys* (Chinese) and Spaniards as well as the encounter between Muslims and Spaniards in Southern Philippines because these meetings reflect the spiritual dimensions of Spain's imperial philosophy which was driven by a sense of destiny; a sense that the Spanish way of life, so strongly tied to Catholicism, was destined to be universal and that Spaniards were mandated by God, no less, to go to the ends of the earth to make disciples of men.

In this essay I assert that Spanish colonialism was motivated by a conception of Spanish Imperial identity that was closely linked to Catholicism. I will suggest that the Spanish treatment of the Chinese and native population was a reflection of the struggle to define and negotiate identities in the Philippines based on a balance of spiritual and temporal goals. By an examination of texts that portray Spanish policy and attitudes towards the Chinese and native populations I hope to cause the reader to think about the concerns and perceptions of the Spanish Imperial mind of the period and show the importance and implications of formulating colonial identity within the framework of religious idealism. I will also touch on how religion was used as a justification for colonization.

The essay will be developed along the lines of 1) the spiritual motives of colonization in the Philippines where I argue that Christianization acted as the main political and economic influence, 2) the *Sangleyes* and the old problem of *conversos* where I discuss how certain segments of the Spanish administration saw the Chinese as similar to Jewish *conversos*, 3) the encounter with Islam and how the Reconquest was used as a justification for colonization as well as structuring the conflict as performance , and 4) the competition with the Dutch and its spiritual implications.

Spiritual motives of colonization

The case of the Philippines is valuable as a study of Spanish colonialism because in those Islands

Christianization exerted an unusual influence over the political and economic developments of the colony. The Spanish were not unique among colonialists in their desire to exploit their conquered territories and peoples. But one should not overlook the fact that with the Spanish this desire was accompanied by a strong, if occasionally truculent, religious idealism...Christianization acted as a powerful instrument of societal control over the conquered people. While this spiritual ideal operated in all of the Spanish colonies, in the Philippines it was exaggerated because of the relative poorness of the archipelago's economy.

(Phelan 93)

The influence of Catholicism was also exaggerated in the Islands because of the lack of linguistical and blood ties to Spain. In the Philippines there were not as many Spaniards because as Phelan tells us

the Spaniards were never attracted to the Philippines in such numbers as they were to Mexico. There was of course the obstacle of distance, but there was also the absence of mining and hence the prospect of quick and spectacular wealth. (105)

In addition, cattle-farming was poor in the islands and this also diminished the number of Spaniards in the Islands.

By 1606, some twenty years after the first shipment of cattle, there were only twenty-four ranches in the archdiocese of Manila. ...The Philippines never were and never could be a cattle country,...The coarse grass covering most of the unwooded land in the archipelago always has been a deterrent to extensive cattle raising. Intestinal diseases, such as hoof and mouth disease, liver flukes, and generally hot and humid climate are other obstacles. (Phelan 111-112)

The poor prospects of mining and cattle raising greatly minimized contact between Spaniards and the local population. The majority of Spaniards lived in Manila because they had no motivation to leave the capital and the indigenous people resided in the countryside. The exploitation of the indigenous population took place indirectly and the native *caciques* or headmen continued the pre-Hispanic system of quota draft labor with the adaptation of rendering tribute to the Spaniards. The indirect exploitation of the indigenous population explains the lack of linguistic and blood ties to Spain. This

permitted a selective adaptation to Hispanic culture and the preservation of much of indigenous culture. Given the lack of linguistic and blood ties to Spain, the influence of Catholicism as a tool for hispanization was greatly exaggerated as we shall see in the creation of a Chinese-Filipino *mestizo* community.

Economically, the Philippines were a fiscal nightmare and “the colony annually produced a substantial deficit, which was in turn met by the treasury of the much richer viceroyalty of Mexico”(Phelan 93-94). This suggests that Spain remained in the colony for altruistic motives:

Although colonization had originally been inspired in part by grandiose commercial ambitions of exploiting the riches of the Orient, the hostility of the Dutch, the Japanese and the Chinese eventually made a mockery of those dreams. Nonetheless, Spain did remain in the financially insolvent colony, a fact which is largely attributable to pressure exerted by the Church and which indicates the importance of altruistic motives in the actions of the Spanish government. (Phelan 94)

When Philip II’s Council advised that he abandon the Philippines, he reminded them of their sacred duty to stay in the Islands. Juan Solárzano Pereyra found it worth recording in his *Política Indiana* his Monarch’s defence of the venture:

Y algunos hay que para más convencerlas ponderan el piadoso y religioso dicho de nuestro grande y prudente Rey, el señor don Felipe II, que aconsejándole algunos que desamparase las islas Filipinas porque le eran de más gasto que provecho, preguntó si había ya indios bautizados en ellas y algunas iglesias

fundadas, y como le dijese que sí, respondió que nunca Dios permitiese que él faltase a la obligación de amparar esto y llevarlo adelante cuanto en sí fuese aunque le gastasen en ello todo lo que le rendían los demás reinos.(106)

Even though we cannot be sure if Philip II spoke from his heart or because of pressure exerted by the Church, we do know that officially, the Spaniards stayed on in the Philippines for spiritual motives.

Sangleyes: the old problem of conversos

As I mentioned earlier, the act of colonization is an act of interpretation of an image. When the Spanish arrived in the New World they encountered previously unknown elements which they had to fit into their worldview. In negotiating the identities of peoples of the New World, the Spanish found themselves searching for precedents in their Iberian experience. Early records of encounters with the Chinese communities in the Philippines show that Spanish attitudes and policy toward the Chinese were conditioned by the “Iberian experience with the Moors and Jews, groups that were both economically necessary and culturally difficult to assimilate”(Wickberg 8). One of the earliest accounts of Spanish encounters with the Chinese can be found in Dr. Antonio de Morga’s *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* published in 1609 in Mexico City. Dr. Morga was a *Teniente General* and *Oidor* of the *Audiencia* of Manila during the years of 1595-1602 and his accounts on the Chinese were probably representative of a certain segment of the bureaucracy. I argue that Morga painted the Chinese as having the same flaws or *razas* as the Jews of Iberia. Several passages in his account of the Philippines question the benefit

of dealing with the Chinese and outline the dangers of a Chinese presence in the Philippines. One of these passages reads as follows:

...tripolóla de buenas bogas Chinas al sueldo, que por más acariciarlos, no los consentió aherrojar; y disimuló en que llevasen algunas armas...Los Chinos remeros, que avía tres días que estaban de acuerdo y concierto, de alçarce con la galera, quando tuviesen mejor ocasión, por escusarse de bogar en esta jornada, y por codicia del dinero, joyas y otras cosas de valor que yban embarcadas. Pareciéndoles no perder la que se les ofrecía, teniendo hecha prevención de candelas,...la pusieron por obra aquella misma noche, al quatro de la modorra, quando sintieron que los Españoles dormían: y a la señal que uno hizo...con sus catanas(Japanese swords) en las manos, arremetieron a un punto, a los que hazían la guardia...El gobernador, ...salió a priesa descuydado, y descubierta la cabeça por el escotillón de la cámara, aguardávanle allí algunos chinos, y con un catana le partieron la cabeça....”(Morga 84)

The inclusion of this account in *Sucesos* was probably Morga's way of warning against Chinese treachery and suggested that by being unguarded, Spaniards risked death like the trusting *gobernador*.

Accounts of Chinese in *Sucesos* sought to paint them as possessing natural flaws.

Morga accused the *Sangleys* as such:

Son jente mala y viciosa, y con su trato y comunicación, los naturales medran poco en su Cristianidad y costumbres; y por ser tantos y grandes comedores, encarecen los bastimientos y los consumen....hazen mil delitos y

maldades...y...venida de enemigos a las Islas, serán de mucho daño y perjuizio.(319)

One of Morga's descriptions of the *Sangleys*' is reminiscent of certain opinions and prejudices of that period in relation to Jews. The description reads:

...un capillejo o escofia encima...Son jente blancas, altos de cuerpo, poca barba, muy fornidos de miembros, y demuchas fuerças, grandes trabajadores, e ingeniosos en todas artes y oficios, flemáticos, jente de poco ánimo, traydores y crueles, quando ven la suya, y muy codiciosos; grandes comedores de todas carnes, pescados, y frutas, y poco bebedores, y aqueso caliente. (321)

Compare Morga's description of the Chinese with a "frequently quoted text, written by Andrés Bernáldez, the parish priest of the Sevillian village of Los Palacios" which Michael Alpert believes "epitomizes the opinions and prejudices of the age" concerning Jews:

[The Jews] were merchants, salesmen, tax farmers and collectors, shopkeepers, bailiffs of estates, barbers, tailors, shoemakers, tanners, weavers, dealers in spices, pedlars, silk merchants, blacksmiths, silversmiths and the like; none worked on the land or was a farmer or carpenter or stonemason, but all sought easy occupations and ways of earning a living with little effort. (21)

The Jews were artisans and traders of virtually all manner according to Bernáldez' description and this corresponds to the activities pursued by the Chinese in the Philippines for the *Parian* or the Chinese ghetto near Manila was a "thriving commercial center. Its narrow streets contained apothecaries, butcher shops, bakeries, food stands,

book binderies, tailor and cobbler shops...as well as artist studios, smithies, and tack shops”(Wilson 41). The Jewish-Chinese correspondence in roles would, in most likelihood, not have escaped the attention of the Spanish reader. Having associated the Chinese with the Jews through commercial activities, Morga, then, proceeded to accuse the Chinese of the same tendency, mentioned by Bernáldez, to seek “easy occupations and ways of earning a living with little effort.” Morga did this by attaching the label of “flemáticos” to the Chinese. Phlegm was one of four humors (blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile) that formed a theory concerning diseases which was linked to Hippocrates. This theory in short states that “Health prevails when the four humors are balanced and mixed. Sickness prevails when one of the humors is isolated and begins to flow, causing a twofold pain....” (Grmek 60). The term “phlegmatic” had more than a medical implication and was used to describe personal traits and business dealings during Morga’s time. In the *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, Covarrubias links phlegm with laziness and slow business dealings:

FLEMA. ...Este hace a los hombres tardos, perezosos y dormilones, y a los tales llamamos flemáticos. Proceder en un negocio con flema, es ir con él muy despacio....3.Desflemar, echar flemas y 4. decir mal de otro con passion, 5. y gastar la cólera quejándose y hablando. (552)

Morga’s discourse when viewed in the light of Covarrubias’ explanation suggests that he was trying to link the Chinese to the Jews by constructing a discourse of internal flaws. The Chinese were of “fornidos miembros” and so the problem was not so much external but internal. I believe that the application of the label “phlegmatic” in which it surfaces in

Morga's reference to the Chinese is not to be interpreted as a purely physical discourse but a physical discourse that comments on the internal and moral dispositions of the Chinese. I say this because the humoral theory was also articulated in a theory of the temperaments.

Each human body contains the four humors in different proportions. All combinations of these proportions can be roughly reduced to four basic types of mixtures, or temperaments, according to the predominance of one of the four humors. Hence, there is not one, but there are four types of healthy equilibrium, and all persons can thus be subdivided into four physiological groups, named according to humoral principles—sanguine (predominance of blood); choleric (predominance of yellow bile); melancholic (predominance of black bile); and phlegmatic (predominance of phlegm). (Ruane 5)

Morga was clearly trying to place the Chinese within a physiological group to justify his view on the treatment of the Chinese. This is an example of the internal implications of colonial physiological descriptions.

In addition to his own observations, Morga intensified his argument against the *Sangleys* by incorporating external accounts or witnesses. Morga incorporated the letters of Coronel Fernando de los Ríos who had been to China and the accounts of Blas Ruis de Hernán Gonçales who had been in Cambodia. Blas Ruis was quoted as saying that the *Sangleys* of being “infame...aprobios y ultrajes”(134). Ríos' letter was quoted as saying:

Dios nos la dé, y remedio por su misericordia, porque estos infieles, es la gente que más estragada tiene la luz natural, de quantos ay en el mundo; y así, para

tratar con ellos, es menester ángeles y no hombres. ...sólo digo, para que entienda en qué tierra estamos, que es el verdadero reyno del Demonio; y donde parece, que con todo gobierna, y así, cada Sangley parece que le trae revestido, pues no ay malicia, ni engaño que no intentan.(151)

In Morga's opinion, the Chinese were almost impossible to convert and posed a threat to the colonial order in the Philippines because of their inherent moral flaws.

One possible solution to the problem was the creation of a Chinese ghetto or *parian*. The fact that the Chinese were made to live in a ghetto called a *parian* not too far away from Manila tells us that in the minds of the Spanish bureaucrats, the Chinese were distinct from the *Indios* of the islands in *condición* or status. The *parian* was established in 1581 outside the Manila city walls,

distant enough for military security but near enough to supply the city's economic requirements. All Chinese except for converts, were expected to reside within its walls...and to submit to the authority of a Chinese *gobernadorcillo*—a 'petty governor'—who acted as intermediary with the Spanish government.(Dobbins 23)

Relations between Chinese and Spanish were often tense and lead to violence from both parties. The Spanish responded with "reprisals,...massacres, and ultimate Chinese expulsion. The major episodes took place in 1603, 1639, 1662 and 1686"(Dobbins 24). Morga himself claims to have deported more than 12 000 Chinese in 1596(Cummins). As Wickberg points out, the relationship between Chinese and Spanish was characterized by a pattern which was based on a "prevailing condition of economic interdependence

coupled with seemingly irreconcilable cultural differences”(9). Dobbins supports this argument by stating that “expulsion was always followed by gradual Chinese return, by renewed estimation of the number of ‘necessary’ Chinese, and by the continuing fear that the number might rise to an uncontrollable degree”(24). This shows that while the Spanish were willing to resort to the old solution of expulsion, they were not able to count on it as a permanent solution because unlike the situation in Spain, the almost total economic dependence on the Chinese did not permit them to shut out the Chinese.

As for Spanish attempts to convert the Chinese, Morga was of the opinion that even the precaution of a separate living area for Chinese *conversos* was not enough to keep them from exhibiting their moral flaws.

...tienen en un barrio aparte de los infieles, una poblazón, de Sangleyes baptizados,...pocos pruevan bien, por ser jente ruin, inquieta y de muchos vicios y malas costumbres, y que el averse hecho Cristianos, no a sido deseo ni motivo de su salvación, sino comodidades temporales que allí tienen....(Morga 321)

Thus we see that in Morga’s mind the authenticity of Chinese conversion to Catholicism was questioned, much as the authenticity of Jewish conversion was questioned in Spain. Morga was not alone in his criticism as other Spaniards cited the “wholesale apostasy reported on the junks returning to China” (Wilson 43). Wickberg writes that “by 1759 a royal official was suggesting that Catholic Chinese should be restricted to the Manila area, since so many Chinese were asking for baptism merely as a means of moving to the provinces, away from the close

surveillance of Manila officials”(16). An English visitor, Captain Alexander Hamilton also noted that

All Chinese who go there for commerce get a little brass image hung about their neck, with a string of beads in their hands, and learning to cross themselves, cry Jesu Sancta Malia (for they cannot pronounce Maria, because the letter R is excluded the Chinese alphabet); I say, when they have got all those forenamed qualifications, they are good Spanish Christians. And when they have feathered their nest by cheating the Spaniards, and taken their leave of Manila...at their passing by a mountain dedicated to the Virgin Mary, they throw their beads overboard, and thank the Virgin for her kindness to them. (qtd. Wickberg 16)

The clergy also had their suspicions about the authenticity of Chinese conversion. Fray San Antonio in *The Philippine Chronicles* writes of the Chinese: “there are many of them who have interbred with the Indian women in marriage. They make themselves Christian for this purpose...”(130) and Casimiro Díaz, an Augustinian writing in the 1690s “declared that visiting Catholic Chinese from Fukien would lose their faith if not kept away from local Chinese converts”(Wickberg 16). Based on such accounts we can say that from Morga’s time up till the 18th century, conversion was a source of concern for both the secular administration and the clergy because one of the purposes of conversion was to create a loyal base of subjects unified by the Catholic religion. The Chinese and the Jews were two groups with strong cultural identities and ancient sets of beliefs preserved in writing and as such their cultural identities would not conform easily to the Spanish-Catholic framework. Morga, finding it hard to mould the Chinese in the Spanish

image, described the Chinese in the light of the Iberian experience with Jewish *conversos*. I am not affirming that the Chinese *converso* experience was identical to that of the Jewish *converso* but seek to point out that the only major Spanish experience with Christian conversion in that time prior to the encounter with the Chinese was with the conversion of the Jews and Muslims and so it was highly probable that Morga viewed the situation in the Philippines through that Iberian experience.

Social mobility and mestizaje

Morga's opinion was not necessarily the official stand of the King's government in Spain. While the King's government in Spain was aware of the dangers of having too many Chinese in the Islands (Law 1, Title 16, Book 6) it maintained its Christian mission. Title 16 of Book 6 of the *Recopilación de leyes de los reynos de las Indias* specifies several laws which safeguarded the Chinese in the Philippines. Among the laws that safeguarded the Chinese in the Philippines were laws 4 (*Que á los Sangleyes no se impongan servicios personales, y sean bien tratados*) and 10(*Que no se haga en Filipinas agravio á los Sangleyes, particularmente en lo aquí contenido, y sean bien tratados*) of title 18, book 6. The fact that these laws specify that the Chinese were to be well treated (*bien tratados*) shows that there were obvious abuses; among them ceasing the best merchandise from Chinese ships and forced labor. These legal protections were given to the Chinese to the end of conversion to the Catholic Faith as stated in laws 4(*...que el buen tratamiento motive, y atrayga á otros á que se vengán á convertir á nuestra Santa Fe Católica*) and 10(*...para que llevando á sus tierras buenas nuevas de el*

trato,...se aficionen otros á venir, y por medio de esta comunicación reciban la Doctrina Christiana, y profesen nuestra Santa Fe Católica...) of title 18, book 6 of the *Recopilación*.

In addition to protection, Chinese were given incentive to convert. Law 8, title 18, book 6 stipulates that Chinese that converted would not have to pay tribute for ten years. Even though this was the only law that explicitly gave economic incentive for Chinese to convert to Catholicism, it points to the larger issue of social mobility based on a modification of beliefs (at least showing outward signs of change). The Spanish colonial world was a world based on a social hierarchy of *casta, raza and estado*. While it is not the aim of my paper to study the social hierarchy of Spanish colonial society in the Philippines, and indeed I will not be able to do so in such a limited number of pages, I find that it is important to at least mention that identities in the New World were “negotiated, not assigned by blood” (Hill 58). It is essential for the reader to bear in mind that

biology, or blood, occupied a different position—had a different function—in the social hierarchy of viceregal Spanish America (and the Philippines) than it occupies in modern societies with their norm of equality and their reality of racial inequality.(Hill 59)

In the case of the Chinese in the Philippines, social mobility was often tied to Christianization and the assimilation into a mestizo consciousness. Social mobility through conversion was common both in the Philippines as in Spanish America. Dobbins tells us that

Catholicism requires each person at baptism to have two sponsors, a godfather (*compadre*) and a godmother (*madrina*). What is interesting is that high-ranking officials in both the civil and military branches of the Spanish administration vied to become godfathers to the Chinese. ...These *compadrazgo* (co-parenthood) ties were extremely important economically. In contemporary Mexico they were an important feature of the credit system and research in the Philippines also assumes this to have been the case. The relationship stressed was that between godparents and parents rather than that between godparents and godchildren, so creating a functional relationship between equals in age which was readily visible. Further, in both the Americas and the Philippines the tendency was to expand the number of people involved, extending the relationship to relatives of the participants in order, so an ordinance of the 1590s proclaimed, “to have them ready for any emergency that may arise...exchanging with them favors and assistance in their affairs.”(30-31)

While the conversion to Catholicism for financial and social gains does not seem too far removed from the modern perception of changing appearances for gain, the process of becoming *mestizo* through Christianization suggests that the term *mestizo* was not strictly a biological group in practice, a radical departure from the modern concept of biological race. In the Philippines, the term *mestizo* applied mainly to children of Chinese and Filipina parentage even though there were other types of *mestizos* such as Japanese *mestizos* and *criollos morenos*. Chinese converts married to Filipina converts were settled in Binondo in the care of Dominicans and Jesuits to create a mestizo community. This

might suggest that the Chinese converts came to be associated with *mestizos* as a group, if not legally, at least socially. The process of *mestizaje* was encouraged in the Philippines as part of a mission to create a community that would identify itself with

Catholicism, the Philippines and Spain: a community rising from Chinese soil and with every Chinese commercial talent, but tied through Spain to the world of Seville. The almost complete lack of Chinese women in Manila made intermarriage of the new Chinese converts with Catholic Filipinas both unavoidable and desirable. But the model the clergy aspired to was not assimilation to *indio* culture but towards a Hispanicized Filipino culture where Spain took the place previously held by China. (Dobbins 25)

The law provided for such a creation of identity in the Philippines:

Ley 8. Que los Chinos, que se casaren en Manila, se agreguen á un Pueblo.

En las Islas Filipinas se convierten á nuestra Santa Fe Católica muchos Sangeleyes, que se casan con Indias naturales de ellas, y viven en los contornos de la Ciudad, y si se les diese sitio en los valdíos donde agregarse, y hacer un Pueblo para labrar la tierra, y sembrar, en que son bien exercitados, serían muy útiles á la República, y no se ocuparian en revender, y atravesar los bastimientos, quedando mas domésticos, y sosegados, y la Ciudad mas segura, aunque se aumente el número: Ordenamos al Gobernador, y Capitan General, que así lo ponga en execucion, y procure conservarlos, y mirar por ellos, con el cuidado que convenga. (Title 18, Book 6)

The success of this experiment is debatable, but as Wickberg states

observers of the mestizos universally noted their combination of cultural attributes: a love of ostentation and a devotion to Catholicism...and to Spanish culture (the last characteristic being much more noticeable among the richest mestizos), combined with a financial acumen....In social terms, those whose behavior and attitudes corresponded to what has just been described, who defined themselves as mestizos, and whose social relations were primarily with others who so defined themselves, were mestizos, whatever the law might say.(33)

It is important to note that the creation of identity in the Philippines was a combination of legal and social definition; the former often giving incentive for association with a certain group by self or social definition to the end of a better status in society.

Muslims in the Philippines: Old enemies meet in the New World

One of the enduring images of Spanish identity is Reconquest. The drawn out struggle against Islam in Iberia was one of the factors that contributed to the identification of Spain with Catholicism. It must have seemed like a God given mission to the Spaniards when they traveled to what seemed to be the ends of the earth to meet an ancient foe: Islam.

Islam spread from Peninsular Malaya to Borneo and then to the Sulu Islands and finally to the coasts of Mindanao. In 1380, the Arab judge, Sharif Makdom landed on the island of Simunul and converted the natives of the island. After Sharif Makdom came the famous Raja Baginda of Sumatra with his armies. Raja Baginda subjugated the people of Sulu and the natives of Sulu converted to Islam. The son-in-law of Raja Baginda, Sharif

Abu Bakr(1450-1480), an erudite Muslim who inherited the dominion of Sulu, remodeled the government of the dominion as an Arab sultanate. Abu Bakr assumed the title of Sultan. The propagation of Islam to the various parts of the Philippines started in Sulu and Mindanao(the Sultan of Mindanao was a Malayan-Arab who arrived on that island in 1475) according to Gowing in his book *Mosque and Moro*. When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, Islam had spread as far North as Luzón. Morga describes the encounter with Spain's ancient enemy in the battle with Rajamora in the Bay of Manila and the entrance into the new land.

...le fue necesario venir a las manos con ellos: y los Españoles por fuerza de armas entraron la tierra...día de santa Potenciana, dies y nueve de Mayo, año de mil y quinientos y setenta y uno....(26-27)

In this passage, Morga appeals to the sense of Reconquest in the minds of his readers. The Spanish reader of the period could probably appreciate the obligation that the Spanish had to conquer the Islands in the framework of the Reconquest and victory must have seemed like divine providence. Morga expressed this sense of religious obligation in the passage below

Començaron a venir, a la isla de Luzón, pocos años antes que los Españoles la pacificasen; particularmente, a la poblazón de Manila y Tondo, algunos naturales, de la isla de Borneo, con sus contrataciones; y se casaven los de una isla con los de la otra. Estos son Mahometanos, e ya ivan introduciendo entre estos naturales su seta, dándoles cartillas, ceremonias y forma de guardarla, por algunos Gazires que consigo traían, y ya muchos, y los más principales,

començavan(aunque a remiendos) a ser moros, retajándose y poniéndose nombres de moros, que si la entrada de los Españoles tardara más, cundiera esta seta por toda la isla, y aun por las demás, y fuera mala de desarraigar dellas. La misericordia de Dios lo remedió con tiempo de manera, que por ser tan en los principios, se desterró destas islas, y se libraron della, en todo lo que los Españoles tienen pacífico, y está en el gobierno de las Filipinas, estando muy cundida y ampliada, en las demás islas, que están fuera deste gobierno, que ya los naturales de casi todas ellas, son moros Mahometanos, rejidos e industriados por sus Gaçizes, y otros morabitos, que les vienen a predicar y enseñar a menudo, por el estrecho de Maca y mar Rojo, por do navegan a estas islas.(289-290)

Colonization structured as Reconquest justified the enterprise in the Spanish minds of the period. It was not difficult to impose the image of the Reconquest on the colonization of the Philippines because of the presence of Islam in the Islands. Several Spanish warriors from the Battle of Lepanto were convinced that their conquest of the Islands was an extension of the Reconquest.

The Manila *oidor* Melchor Dávalos, admittedly something of an eccentric, had advocated the destruction of all Muslims in Asia, including those in the Philippines, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Malacca, and Siam, alleging that some of these had originally come from Spain as refugees from the old Andalusian Muslim Kingdom of Granada. Their numbers, he noted had of late been

increased by the survivors of the Battle of Lepanto where don John of Austria had defeated them. (Cummins 20)

Rooting out the Muslims from the Philippines was a matter of unfinished business for these warriors. A Spanish law in the *Recopilación* prohibited Moors from entering the New World (law 19, title 26, book 9) and a Moor in the Philippines deserved to be punished severely. Moors were under pain of slavery if captured by the Spanish in the Philippines as stated in law 12, title 2, book 6 of the *Recopilación*.

There was probably a sense that the natives were in nature not possessing the flaws of the Moor. After all, to admit that the natives were like the Moors in nature was to doom the mission of conversion to failure. The Spaniards took care not to implicate the natives of the Islands in the infamy of the Moors as is shown in law 12, title 2, book 6 of the *Recopilación*:

...que si los Mindanaos fueren puramente Gentiles, no sean dados por esclavos, y si fueren de nación, y naturaleza Moros, y vinieren á otras Islas á dogmatizar, ó enseñar su secta Mahometana, ó hacer guerra á los Españoles, ó Indios, que están sujetos á Nos, ó á nuestro Real servicio, en este caso puedan ser hechos esclavos; mas á los que fueren Indios, y hubieren recibido la secta no por lícitos, y buenos medios, que se conviertan á nuestra Santa Fe Católica.

In the Philippines, the Spanish would launch wave after wave of attack on the Muslim territories of the Southern Philippines but their efforts never quite succeeded because of the strong resistance of the Muslims and the need to constantly defend Manila from the threat of China and later the Protestant Dutch. The Muslims

remained staunch in their defense of their faith and until today, Mindanao is still a predominantly Muslim area.

Cesar Adib Majul states that “the motivating force behind these wars was religious difference” (18). Religious difference resulted from the incompatibility of the two religions. While the development of syncretic religions such as Santería in the Caribbean and Cao Dai in southern Vietnam attests to the adaptability of Catholic practices, Catholicism could not accommodate Islam as it had accommodated other regional beliefs because Islam necessitates the renunciation of other beliefs for the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. The exclusiveness of belief in Islam and the inability of Christianity to absorb Islamic beliefs meant that the Spanish-Moro conflict would be a war of religious difference: a question of right and wrong. The Spaniards would cast the Moro as morally flawed to accentuate Spanish virtue. Exaggeration of virtue and flaw reminds one of a kind of performance called the morality play.

During the celebration of a Spanish victory in 1637, Spanish Jesuits presented a morality play, which became the model for all the so-called *moro-moro* plays. Defeat of the Muslims was enacted in these plays, and the drama often concluded with the conversion of a Muslim chief, or his daughter falling in love with a brave and handsome Spanish officer. Spaniards were portrayed as noble gentlemen exemplifying Christian virtues, whereas Moros were portrayed as ugly, slovenly, treacherous, untrustworthy, and fanatical. All major towns eventually included such plays in the festivities honoring their patron saints. *Moro-moro* plays became part of the cultural activities of the towns and served

as tools of propaganda by promoting a negative image of the Moros and of all Muslims. (Majul 18)

Moro-moro plays were the physical manifestation of a struggle for the hearts and minds of the people and framed the conflict as a performance. Framing the conflict as performance was consistent with the purposes of evangelization because at the end of the performance, the natives were only actors in a play and not possessed of the infamy of the Moors. The natives “moorishness” was described by Morga as consisting of a name, and recently learnt ceremonies (289-290). Such supposed superficiality would enable the natives to cast off their Moorish ways like a costume. Ironically, Catholicism could also be cast off in a similar manner.

Defenders of the Faith

If the Reconquest of the Philippines was symbolic of the fight against an ancient foe, the Dutch represented the new threat: the Protestant Faith.

When Morga described his battle with the Dutchman Van Noort, he utilized the image of Defender of the Faith against the Protestants to lend the battle a climate of spiritual urgency. He said:

Ya hazen los Holandeses el viaje más corto y seguro, de ida y buelta, por el de la India, sin tocar en los puertos ni costas della, hasta entrar por las islas de las Javas, mayor y menor, y la Sumatra, Amboino y las Malucas; que como le tienen tan conocido, y experiencia de las grandes ganancias que dél se les

siguen, serán malos de echar del Oriente, donde tantos daños an hecho, en lo espiritual y temporal. (237)

His reference to the spiritual damage done in the East could be interpreted as a petition to the Pope to permit the Spanish to use a shorter route to reach the Philippines. Pope Alexander VI, in the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) divided the world into two parts. Africa and India belonged to Portugal and that is why the Spanish could not use the shorter African route to get to the Philippines while the Dutch used it at will. This gave the Dutch an advantage in trade and war.

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To make sense of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines, one must understand colonialism as an interpretive act on the part of the colonizer and the colonized. Social realities were often formed by the interpretation of certain images and the Spaniards sought precedents in negotiating identities in the Philippines. Given the lack of material motivation and the presence of the Chinese, Muslims and Protestants in the Philippines, we are left to consider the possibility of Christianization as the driving force of Spanish colonialism in those Islands. When we consider this possibility, Spanish colonialism at the ends of the earth seems to have been an extension of an image of the mystical empire.

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