

‘SHE SERVES THE LORD’

FEMININE POWER AND CATHOLIC APPROPRIATION IN THE EARLY
SPANISH PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines sixteenth and seventeenth century Catholic missionaries in the Philippine Islands appropriating feminine power and social power wielded by indigenous feminine figures to expand Catholic influence and authority. During initial contact, missionaries encountered an island chain dominated by indigenous animism that was headed by the *maganito*, the animist leaders who were typically female. To supplant this, they used indigenous women and the *bayog*, *maganitos* who were assigned the male sex at birth but took on a feminine persona, to act as a spiritual leader and appropriated their social and feminine power to build up the Catholic church and to diminish the influence of animist traditions. The study looks at the role these feminine figures, women and the *bayog*, played in the Christianization process and the influence they had in their communities.

The powers these feminine figures wielded included their status as spiritual figures in their societies, their ability to own and control wealth, their role as owners of slaves, their leverage in marital and sexual relationships, and their influence as upper-class members of society. Through these figures, missionaries converted many indigenous people and encouraged them to remain loyal to the Catholic faith and the Church. While missionaries utilized these feminine figures, these women and *bayogs* exhibited their own agency and power, playing an essential role in the Christianization process in the Philippines.

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Introduction

The European colonization of what is now known today as the Philippine Islands was an extensive and complicated process that required a myriad of methods and decades of effort. Led by the Spanish crown in the sixteenth century, colonization effort incorporated both conquest and Christianization. Conquest was the means to bring indigenous people under the jurisdiction of the Spanish crown, whereas Christianization entailed the conversion of the indigenous people to the Catholic faith. This Christianization, or acceptance and conversion to the Catholic religion, demanded loyalty to Christian authority figures, particularly the Catholic clergy and missionary orders. The universal Catholic Church during this period granted the Spanish crown the “right” to colonize the Philippine Islands on the conditions of proselytization, just as they did with their recently acquired American colonial possessions.¹ This colonization and Christianization process was unified under the institution of the *Patronato Real*, a system that gave the Spanish crown power to oversee Christianization efforts and made the clergy official parts of the government, therefore unifying the Church and State.² Thus, as the indigenous (Philippine) peoples accepted Catholicism, they accepted the rule of the Catholic monarch of Spain, as well. From the voyages of Ferdinand Magellan in 1521 and Miguel López de Legazpi in 1565, Spain worked to bring the entire Philippine archipelago under Spanish control just as they did with their colonies in the Americas.

Spanish colonizing efforts in the Philippines however encountered challenges and opportunities with indigenous feminine power held by women and feminine figures. These women and feminine figures possessed social and spiritual power inherited from animist and

¹ Luis H. Francia, *A History of the Philippines: From Indios Bravos to Filipinos* (New York: Overlook Press, 2010), 63-64.

² *Ibid.*, 63.

cultural practices in their communities, and this power was recognized and utilized by Spanish missionaries as well as used as leverage by these feminine figures to preserve their central place in the new, emerging colonial order. Who these women and feminine figures were and what roles they played in the colonizing process are the main issues that I will be exploring in this thesis.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines, gender was viewed through a spectrum and was not necessarily associated with sex assigned at birth.³ For this purpose, the term “feminine” is used here instead of “woman” or “female” to describe aspects of society that were gendered. Roles and obligations that feminine figures were expected to perform is also referred to as “feminine.” Thus, the use of “feminine figures” incorporates women as well as the *bayog*, a person who was assigned the male sex at birth but who took on a feminine persona and occupied a feminine position in society. Feminine power was an influence only women or other feminine figures could wield, and it influenced the way in which local cultures operated. Along with women, the *bayog* held feminine power in indigenous society and both the Church and missionary orders used this knowledge about female power to advance their efforts at Catholic conversion.

This power was embodied in the feminine roles associated with indigenous animism, gendered roles in a marriage or other sexual relationships, and the social status, wealth, and familial ties of feminine figures. While not all aspects of this feminine power conflicted with Catholic principles that basically subordinated women to men, indigenous animist religious leaders challenged the patriarchal dominance of the Catholic Church. These conflicts therefore created several obstacles to Catholic missionaries in their proselytizing efforts, because they

³ Barbara Watson Andaya, *The Flaming Womb: Repositioning Women in Early Modern Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 72-73.

sought to implement a male-dominated religion in the place of the feminine-dominated animist traditions. Despite these obstacles, there is sufficient evidence that shows that the Catholic clergy manipulated and used this indigenous feminine power to their advantage. The Catholic clergy and missionaries found many women of influence and utilized their feminine and social power to convince others to accept Catholic authority. This thesis argues that the Catholic clergy appropriated indigenous feminine power and the social and cultural power of feminine figures in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines to expand the Catholic sphere of influence in the archipelago.

One of the key conflicts the Catholic clergy faced with indigenous cultures in the Philippines was feminine-led animism and Islamic influence. During the early colonization processes of the Philippine archipelago, the Spanish encountered several indigenous peoples who adopted aspects of the Islamic faith through the Southeast Asian maritime network.⁴ Through the process of the *Reconquista*, the Spanish had spent the previous centuries eradicating the Islamic Emirate of Granada from the Iberian Peninsula as well as suppressing Jews and Muslims within the Castilian and Aragon kingdoms because they were seen as threats to the state and society. The goal of this suppression was to create a uniformity of religious thought and to strengthen the power of the Catholic Church. Many Jews and Muslims converted to Christianity during this period, and the Inquisition was established as a method to control and suppress these converts.⁵ Their encounter with Islamic adherents in the Philippines reignited old feelings of the

⁴ Anthony Reid, *A History of Southeast Asia: Critical Crossroads* (West Sussex, UK: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 2015), 112. Francia, *History*, 46.

⁵ William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: The Development of Anti-Spanish Sentiment, 1558-1660* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1971), 34.

Reconquista and the Spanish became determined to combat the Islamic presence in the islands through *Hispanization* with its main goal of Christianizing the population.⁶

Once established in the Philippines, however, the Spanish discovered that Islam was not as prevalent nor widespread in the islands as they had initially thought.⁷ When they intensified their colonization efforts, the Spanish encountered Islamized settlements in Manila, Palawan, Mindoro, and Mindanao, but found that Islam was not well entrenched in these areas.⁸ The Spanish and Catholic missionaries nevertheless persevered in preventing the spread of Islam and to expand Spanish rule in their Christianizing efforts through the institution of the *Patronato Real*. In the end, what comprised a bigger challenge in the colonizing process for the missionaries was not Islam but the indigenous animist beliefs and practices in the Philippines, especially the women and feminine figures who typically officiated at these animist ceremonies in the sixteenth century Philippines.

In the Visayas, these individuals were commonly called the *babaylan* or *baylan*, a word used in reference to spiritual leaders. Because these spiritual leaders were referred by different terms in other parts of the Philippines, I have chosen to use *maganito* in the thesis.⁹ The *maganitos* were the shamans or practitioners of animist beliefs and practices that existed in the Philippines before Spanish colonization and persisted during colonization. Indigenous feminine figures took on this distinctly feminine role, that were usually associated with supernatural powers. The *maganito* could not only communicate with unseen spirits which influenced the

⁶ Carolyn Brewer, *Shamanism, Catholicism and Gender Relations in Colonial Philippines, 1521-1685* (Hants, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 101.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

⁸ Francia, *History*, 45-46, 58-59.

⁹ The *maganito* went by several different names throughout the islands depending on linguistic groups, such as the *babaylan*, but the term *maganito* and similar variations appear to be a more universal of a term in Spanish colonial sources. Because of this universality and its indigenous origins, the term *maganito* will be used as a general term to describe all the animist shaman missionaries came into contact with in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. See Brewer, *Shamanism*, 84-85.

physical world and the lives of those who lived in it, but also possessed healing powers. Clearly, *maganitos* occupied positions of high status and influence in the indigenous societies before and even after European contact.¹⁰ Such status and power, which were mostly held by women, seemed in direct conflict with Catholic assumptions about male superiority and leadership. Since men were deemed as the leaders of the Church and its followers, Catholic missionaries thus faced the challenge of not only replacing indigenous animism with Catholicism, but also transferring spiritual and religious power from indigenous feminine figures to male Europeans.

In describing the gendered nature of the *maganitos* and the feminine power they wielded, I refrain from limiting the term to just females or women, as the *bayog*, a sixteenth-century Tagalog term used for animist leaders who were assigned the male sex at birth, wielded this indigenous feminine power as well. These *bayogs* or other types of “male” *maganitos* went by a variety of names, depending on geographic location, language, and their prescribed roles in animism.¹¹ Carolyn Brewer states the role of the *maganito* was conventionally feminine in precolonial and early colonial Philippine society, thus, in order for those assigned the male sex at birth, like the *bayog*, to take on this central role in animism, they would have to replicate a feminine persona to some degree, whether by donning women’s clothing during animist rituals or adopting a feminine persona to a partial or complete degree.¹²

The introduction of a patriarchal religion such as Catholicism to a region where women and *bayogs* typically led the spiritual affairs of their societies created several conflicts, especially

¹⁰ Brewer, *Shamanism*, xvii-xviii, 83-84, 111-121.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹² Brewer goes into detail about the complex nature of these types of *maganitos*, and to what extent Catholics and Spanish colonizers recorded their replication of the feminine. It varied based on location, exposure to Christianity and Islam, and the century. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, the roles of the *maganitos* and gender relationships began to transform, allowing masculine figures to occupy these realms of influence. See Brewer, *Shamanism*, xv-xvi, xxv, 127-137.

when clergy sought for a monopoly over spiritual power and *maganitos* continued to practice animism. Nevertheless, the Catholic clergy in their proselytizing efforts successfully appropriated aspects of this indigenous feminine power and the influence of women to Christianize the indigenous Philippine people. It is important to remember that conversion and proselytization did not end when an indigenous person accepted baptism. Missionaries used several techniques and sacraments, including confraternities, confessionals, and masses to further educate baptized individuals to adopt Catholic precepts. The confraternities were schools established by Catholic orders while confessions and masses were also vital methods of catechism where ordained clergy educated the newly baptized members to the faith.¹³ From the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Catholic missionaries appropriated indigenous feminine and social power for their conversion and catechism efforts.¹⁴ Missionaries constantly had to utilize these powers and influences because of the threat animism posed to the newly established religion.

Conflicts between Catholicism and animism still occurred even until the end of the seventeenth century. One example of this conflict and this appropriation is shown in a seventeenth-century Dominican account that describes the mixed reaction to the coming of Catholicism in a Luzon village. It shows how one *maganito* named Caquenga led a rebellion

¹³ Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 84-86, 107, 186.

¹⁴ The late seventeenth century is chosen as a cut-off point because the sources being used in the thesis see the declining number of converts adopting Catholicism as the islands become more Christianized. Less first-generation Catholics can be found in the sources as the Catholic faith gains more of a solid foundation in the islands and people are then born into the Church instead of baptized in their later years. The thesis analyzes the conversion process of indigenous Philippine people first encountering Catholicism and not the indoctrination of people born into the Catholic church after several decades or centuries of Christianization.

against her village when missionaries came and how the missionaries appropriated another indigenous woman named Balinan to counteract the influence of the *maganito*.¹⁵

Caquenga and Balinan

In 1607, at the request of the village leader, Dominican missionaries established an official presence in the village of Nalfotan in the Cagayan River Valley. Nalfotan was the principal village of the *Malagueg* people, located in modern-day Rizal, Cagayan. Upon the arrival of the missionaries, a *maganito* in Nalfotan, named Caquenga, led a rebellion and convinced a significant number of people to flee into the nearby mountains, arguing that the new Catholic presence would threaten their way of life in the village. As a woman of influence in Nalfotan, and a spiritual leader, Caquenga mobilized these people and encouraged them to rebel with her. According to the account, these rebels “slaughtered the chickens and swine they bred, tore down their houses, and cut down their palm groves, which was their principal crop... and fled to the mountains.”¹⁶ After reaching the mountains, they joined another group of indigenous people from a nearby village, former enemies who plotted to attack Nalfotan.

Naturally this exodus of Caquenga and her followers worried the missionaries who already began their Christianizing efforts in the villages. After negotiating with leaders of the two villages, the two groups made peace with each other and with the missionaries.

Consequently, Caquenga lost her leadership position through enslavement after the mountain village leader claimed that she was once a slave of his mother. However, her enslavement did not

¹⁵ Diego Aduarte, *Historia de la Provincia del Sancto Rosario de la Ordende Predicadores en Philipinas, Iapon y China...* (Manila: Colegio de Sacto Thomas), 1640, 1:348-352, accessed from Biblioteca Virtual de Patrimonio Bibliografico, <http://bvpb.mcu.es/es/consulta/registro.cmd?id=399061> accessed May 2, 2017. Translations are my own.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:349.

end her influence. After the leaders of the two villages made peace, Caquenga's followers returned to Nalfotan, and then set fire to the church, and desecrated the sacred relics. The Dominican account states that they "tore the ornaments of the mass into pieces to wear as headcloths, or as ribbons. They tore the leaves out of the missal, and drank from the chalice, like a people without God, governed by the devil."¹⁷ One insurgent, in an act of mocking the Christian God, threw arrows at an image of the Virgin Mary. This did not rest well with the Dominicans and colonial officials, who quickly quelled the rebellion and executed the defiler of the sacred image as a warning to all others who wished to insult the Catholic faith. But even after the execution of this insurgent and the enslavement of Caquenga, the rebellion did not cease. Her influence continued to grow as her followers traveled to nearby villages and ignited more rebellions. The Dominicans attributed this unrest to Caquenga, calling her "a sorceress priestess of [the devil]."¹⁸

The missionaries were fortunate, however, because another influential woman of Nalfotan chose to adopt Christianity and strictly follow its precepts. This woman, with the baptized name of Doña Luysa Balinan, was a member of the elite class, called the *principalia*. She was the wealthy sister of the Nalfotan village leader who had petitioned the Catholic missionaries to establish themselves in the village. The Dominican missionary account states that she kept the Catholic standards honorably, gave all she had to the Catholic Church, and influenced the people of her village. Balinan was applauded for her faithfulness to the religion, as "she... abides in holy customs and in laudable acts of all the virtues... is consistently in the church, [and] very frequent in her confessions and communions."¹⁹ The Dominicans further

¹⁷ Ibid., 1:350.

¹⁸ Ibid., 1:349.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1:351.

praised her for offering her land in a season of famine to help grow food to feed the hungry, for her knowledge of Catholic doctrine, her willingness to teach this doctrine to others, and for reporting rebellions or the continuation of pre-Christian spiritual practices to the Catholic clergy. In reporting these animist practices, Balinan risked being poisoned by those she revealed to the clergy, but despite this, she reported the practices, anyways. The account concludes, “such is the spirit and vigor in which she serves the Lord and brings about good to those around her.”²⁰ With Balinan’s influence, together with the teaching of Catholic doctrine, and action against animist practices, Nalfotan supposedly saw 4,670 baptisms by the year 1626.²¹

This account comes from *Historia de la Provincia del Sancto Rosario de la Orden de Predicadores* (History of the Province of the Holy Rosary of the Order of Preachers) written by Fray Diego Aduarte. Published in 1640, it is a history of the Dominican Order’s efforts to Christianize the indigenous people of the Philippine Islands during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²² This account is, of course, subject to its own flaws and biases since it was written for the purpose of promoting the efforts of the Dominican Order of Catholicism. The number of baptisms as indicated above, for example, could very well be exaggerated with no means for corroboration. Aduarte also praises Balinan repeatedly for her adoption of Catholicism while attacking Caquenga, calling her a *hechicera*, or sorceress. It should be assumed that the main purpose of these accounts was to indicate the success and effectiveness of particular religious orders in their mission of proselytization. However, this account still reveals much about the Philippine women and the kind of influence they wielded in their societies. It also shows how

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Such a high number of baptisms is an apparent bias in the source meant to exaggerate the “success” of the Dominican’s missionary efforts.

²² The whole account can be found in Aduarte, *Historia*, 1:348-352.

Catholic missionaries responded to these influences of women and what potential these women had in spreading the Catholic faith throughout the islands.

The story of Caquenga and Balinan is a story of feminine power. It shows two women in different realms of influence leading and influencing people of their respective villages to follow them. In Caquenga's case, she was powerful in her role as *maganito* and capitalized on a collective fear of what the Dominicans would do to their society in order to incite action. Through the power she wielded, she mobilized a number of people, united two groups that were formally enemies, and left a legacy that continued to spawn rebellions throughout the region. Balinan, on the other hand, wielded a different kind of power. As a member of the *principalia*, she was considerably wealthy and used that position to benefit the Catholic church during its infancy in Nalfotan. Like many other indigenous women of the Philippines during her time, she was influential because of her wealth and social status.²³ When she willingly accepted the new Catholic teachings rather than rebel like Caquenga did, she influenced those around her to also embrace the new religion. She followed the teachings of Catholicism, which demanded strict loyalty to the faith and assistance in expanding the church, both monetarily and by helping people convert to the faith. She did this through her generous donations, proselytizing efforts, and vigilant reporting of the continuation of animist practices. Her devout lifestyle and loyalty to the Dominicans also set an example to the people of Nalfotan and the surrounding area that an indigenous Philippine woman could live a Catholic lifestyle and maintain monetary success and community influence. The Dominicans needed this kind of role model after Caquenga's rebellion. Demonstrating their own cunning and skills, the missionaries used one powerful

²³ William Henry Scott, *Barangay: Sixteenth-Century Philippine Culture and Society* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1994), 140-144, 219-222. J. Neil C. Garcia, *Philippine Gay Culture: Binabae to Bakla, Silahis to MSM* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 157-159.

woman's influence to compete with another, and, in effect succeeded in winning the hearts and commitment of the people in the Catholic faith.

The account shows indigenous agency as well. It begins with the chief of Nalfotan, Balinan's brother, who petitioned the Dominicans to come to their village, showing a keen awareness of the Dominican presence in the region. He would have also known about missionaries and colonial officials violently subduing indigenous populations and quelling rebellions.²⁴ Instead of fighting against the missionaries and these officials, the chief amicably approached the Dominican friars in an attempt not only to maintain peace but also to preserve his own societal privilege, position, and wealth. Balinan, through her submission to Dominican proselytization efforts, seemed to have followed suit with her brother. Caquenga also appeared to have known about the power and influence of the Dominicans. As a former slave of the mountain village leader's mother, and a well-travelled woman, Caquenga was aware of events occurring not only in Nalfotan, but also the surrounding areas. Her fear of the coming of the Dominicans suggests that the missionaries fought against and suppressed animist practices in nearby villages.

These women are just two examples of several indigenous feminine figures in the early colonial Philippines who exercised the social power they wielded to influence others around them. Balinan is also just one example of how Catholic missionaries used her as a model to encourage others to accept Catholic authority. In Balinan's case, Dominicans appropriated her through her wealth and societal position, encouraging her to teach, donate, and report. In referencing Balinan, Aduarte recounts that "she serves the Lord." Through her choosing to obediently follow the Dominicans, Balinan became a tool at their disposal in their proselytizing

²⁴ Francia, *History*, 57-64.

efforts. When they claim that “she serves the Lord,” they really mean that she served the clergy. Other missionaries found different influential feminine figures who “[served] the Lord” as well and used their feminine power to expand Catholic influence. These officials found diverse ways to manipulate and appropriate the power of indigenous feminine figures to gain a stronger foothold in the archipelago during the colonization process. This power was composed of the various modes of societal influence indigenous feminine figures wielded, including roles as spiritual figures in indigenous animism, reproductive roles as mothers and sexual partners, and societal roles as members of the elite classes and owners of wealth.

The Philippines in a Global Context

The proselytization efforts of the missionary orders in the Philippine Islands and the utilization and appropriation of the social and feminine powers of indigenous feminine figures is better understood when put in a global context. Many scholars have researched the link between Christianity, proselytization, and globalization, and argue that these processes, particularly, were global endeavors. The Philippines, located close to China, became a critical point of connection of Spain’s colonial possessions between Asia and the Americas. Spanish and Chinese merchants as well as Catholic missionaries established the country, and in particular, the city of Manila, for global trade and connection between the continents.

Luke Clossey’s article “Merchants, Migrants, Missionaries, and Globalization in the Early-Modern Pacific” addresses how the founding of Manila began the processes of globalization through American interests in Japan and China.²⁵ He looks closely at the role the missionaries in America played in their desire to evangelize East Asia. In his monograph

²⁵ Luke Clossey, “Merchants, Migrants, Missionaries, and Globalization in the Early-Modern Pacific” in *Journal of Global History* 1, no. 1 (2006): 41-58.

Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions, Clossey explores the work of the Jesuit order in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries in Germany, Mexico, and the Far East, most notably China, Japan, and the Philippines. He delves deeper into the role Jesuits' role as missionaries and their early efforts at globalization, analyzing how the Jesuits' construction and participation in Christianity transformed it into a global and universal religion.²⁶ Such construction fortified the Jesuits' own claims to the authority of their order and religion. Their viewpoint of universal authority and their need to take the order across the world further enhanced their globalist ideas. They therefore relied heavily on Spanish oceanic trade to bring missionaries, books, letters, and commodities to their outposts in Asia and the Americas.

Clossey's works situate the Philippines in a global context, where Manila played an important role during the globalization and colonization processes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The colonial capital also connected Asian markets to American and European markets and became a tool used by the Jesuits to transfer their needed equipment to between the continents. Alexandre Coello de la Rosa's analysis on the Jesuits in the Marianas also adds details to the Philippine's role in proselytization efforts in Asia.²⁷ During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Manila was the center of the proselytizing efforts in Asia and Oceania, but as Coello de la Rosa explains, such efforts were marked with failures and challenges, culminating with their own withdrawal from China and Japan. But what his work did illuminate is how important Manila and the Philippines were in the global process of Christianization initiated by the missionary orders.

²⁶ Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

²⁷ Alexandre Coello de la Rosa, *Jesuits at the Margins: Missions and Missionaries in the Marianas* (New York : Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016).

However, the process of Christianization on a global scale is not only controlled by the missionaries as the converts themselves play an important role in transforming the religion according to their own understandings. Richard Fox Young and Jonathan S. Seitz's *Asia in the making of Christianity* draws upon the insights of multiple scholars on the translation, appropriations, and indigenous agency of Christianity in East and South Asia.²⁸ The work looks through the perspective of the converts and their role in accepting Christianity and making it Asian. John Charles *Allies at Odds* examines the conflict between priests in colonial Peru and their indigenous assistants and how these assistants, in the end, negotiated legal systems and influenced ecclesiastical policies.²⁹ Thomas Banchoff and José Casanova's edited collection, *The Jesuits and Globalization*, also looks at the dynamic nature of Jesuits and their efforts at globalizing Christianity.³⁰ The main goal is to examine globalization through the prism of the Jesuits and the Jesuits through the prism of globalization. This work spans several centuries, and acknowledges the major challenges the Jesuits faced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in their proselytizing efforts in Asia, especially among East Asian societies, religions, and cultures. By examining how Jesuits worked with indigenous societies in East Asia and how conflicts arose between missionaries on how to proselytize, and how the religions adapted to their cultural surroundings, this compilation highlights the complexities of proselytization that helps us understand similar processes in the Philippines. All these works also show how indigenous people syncretized Catholicism according to their own understandings and had influence over how the religion was received in their cultures. The dynamics of syncretization of Catholicism

²⁸ Richard Fox Young and Jonathan S. Seitz, *Asia in the making of Christianity: Conversion, Agency, and Indigeneity, 1600s to the Present* (Boston: Brill, 2013).

²⁹ John Charles, *Allies at Odds: The Andean Church and its Indigenous Agents, 1583-1671* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010).

³⁰ Thomas Banchoff and José Casanova, ed., *Historical Legacies and Contemporary Challenges* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2016).

will also be addressed in this thesis and, in particular, how feminine figures influenced the adoption of the religion in the islands.

Another important work that looks at the global nature of Christianity and empire is Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra's *How to Write the History of the New World*. This work analyzes the historiography of the New World and the development of concepts that the New World was "effeminate" and incapable of advanced civilization.³¹ While Enlightenment ideas from the eighteenth century exposed flaws with this concept, "philosophical travelers" and their enlightened brethren in northern Europe began dominating the New World history, claiming that their training and knowledge enabled them to truly grasp the mysteries of the American continent. Since the scope of this thesis focuses on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Cañizares-Esguerra's argument suggests that the missionaries working with the indigenous people of the Philippines also viewed them as a people incapable of intellect and societal advancement, giving the missionaries the intellectual upper-hand in their perceived superiority in Christianizing the indigenous people.

Two other works show the dynamic nature of globalized religion. Elaine A. Peña explores the influence the Virgin of Guadalupe has had in the past five hundred years in North America.³² Her work focuses on pilgrimages to sacred sites and studies the religious, political, and social influences these pilgrimages have had, especially towards women. Her study shows how the global attempts to Christianize the world became localized through stories like the Virgin of Guadalupe. However, these localized accounts then spread and influenced other parts of the world, like pilgrimages in Chicago. Thus, localized syncretizations can have widespread

³¹ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

³² Elaine A. Peña, *Performing Piety: Making Space Sacred with the Virgin of Guadalupe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

influences into other geographical regions. Stephanie Kirk and Sara Rivett's *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas* looks at the diverse and complex ways European empires in the Americas reshaped Western Christianity, using religious transformation as a theme and stepping away from the monolithic model of Anglo-Protestantism versus Iberian-Catholicism religious conflict.³³ Their argument shows the complex nature of Christianization and empire and how the relationship between empire and sect is not as closely knit as generalizations assume. All these works that shed light on the complex processes inherent in Christianization, in all its localized and global implications, contribute to our own understanding of the workings of proselytization in the Philippines.

Another important theme that this thesis explores is that of colonization. As stated earlier, the conquest and Christianization of the Philippines was a product of colonization under what became the Spanish Empire. The field specializing in the topics of Spanish conquest and colonization, particularly in Latin America, is a robust one with constant engagement between seminal and more recent and dynamic historical research. One of the more pertinent monographs on the topic of Spanish conquest is Matthew Restall's *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*. Restall's work breaks down seven major myths associated with the Spanish conquest that are continued to be perpetuated in the modern world.³⁴ The first myth addressed is that of "exceptional men," or the idea that outstanding individuals with much courage, namely Columbus, Cortés, and Pizarro, accomplished the so-called discovery and conquest of New World empires. Restall shows that the techniques used by these men and others were standard practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth century for Castilians and their neighbors. The second

³³ Stephanie Kirk and Sara Rivett, ed., *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc., 2014).

³⁴ Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

analyzes the myth of the king's army and the belief that the soldiers of the conquest were all Spanish and the event was administered by the Spanish King. Restall argues that conquistadors identified with a variety of kingdoms and that many received rewards for their services from various sources. Chapter three looks at the myth that all conquistadors were white and only small numbers of men accomplished the conquests. However, many people of African and Moorish descent assisted in the conquest, with the help of indigenous allies undertaking several military operations.

The fourth chapter looks at the myth of completion and the idea that Spain held total control over their colonial claims in the Americas. This was obviously not the case. Many groups of indigenous communities still existed independently from the colonial governments after the conquest, and the idea of unified colonial claims is challenged by the unification struggle the Mexican government had after its nineteenth century independence. The fifth myth examines the stories of communication and miscommunication between conquistadors and the indigenous people. Restall argues that conquistadors struggled to understand indigenous languages at the beginning of contact, while the indigenous peoples actually understood how Spaniards worked early on. The sixth myth addresses native desolation and a commonly accepted belief that indigenous groups ceased to exist as ethnicities as they resigned to a new European order. On the contrary, many people actually believed they created a partnership with the Spaniards. The final myth analyzed concerns the cultural and technological superiority of the Spaniards, particularly with their firearms, that explain their dominance over the indigenous peoples. Restall refutes this showing how firearms were in small supply and the indigenous people were not daunted by them for long. Instead, factors such as disease, different groups creating alliances with the Spaniards,

and the incessant fighting that affected their land and families, contributed more to their compromised standing with the Spaniards.

Ultimately Restall's work addresses major concerns and beliefs about the process of conquest and the complexities that existed among all groups involved. Though popular history today paints conquest as conflict that was quickly resolved between Spanish men and indigenous warriors that led to an overall Spanish consolidation of power in the Americas, Restall's study shows that the process was slower and more diverse, whereby absolute control was never obtained. His arguments are also pertinent to the colonial endeavors of the Spanish in the Philippines. Like the Spanish Americas, the Philippines was never entirely under Spanish control.³⁵ Many indigenous people also saw their interactions with the missionaries as partnerships rather than pure submission, as demonstrated by the situation involving Balinan and her brother. Just as the conquest of Latin America is prone to its oversimplifications, so is the conquest and colonization of the Philippines. My thesis also shows the complexities of the exchange between colonizer and colonized, arguing that the principles and actions of one group shape those of the other, and that the agency of indigenous peoples is a constant even in periods of clear domination by the Spanish and the Catholic clergy.

Another influential monograph on colonization is James Lockhart's *Nahuas and Spaniards*, where he draws on the post-conquest Nahua world to analyze the changes that took place in sixteenth century Mexico through the anthropological lens of the Nahuas.³⁶ This work looks at themes of both colonization and religion, but focuses on the role the Nahuas played from their own perspective. This understanding of Nahua motives and actions regarding conquest and

³⁵ Francia, *History*, 48, 82-95.

³⁶ James Lockhart, *Nahuas and Spaniards: Postconquest Central Mexican History and Philology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

colonization is important in comprehending how indigenous Philippine peoples responded to Christianization efforts. Despite their differences, they shared many experiences especially in terms of the tactics pursued by the colonizers and missionaries during the sixteenth century and the way indigenous peoples adapted to these new challenges.

Gender in the colonial setting of Spanish America is another important theme that provides important insight to colonization and Christianization, and one that this thesis explores in-depth. The collection of essays edited by Asunción Lavrin, *Latin American Women*, responds to the social history changes of the seventies by uncovering the lives of women in Latin America.³⁷ Lavrin's article "In search of the colonial woman in Mexico" works to uncover information regarding women as independent persons negotiating various institutions in society, such as the legal system, and the Church. showing that they were active participants in society, not passive. She explains that women experienced a realm of liberties, including the ability to own and control property, act as heiresses, and participate in church affairs.³⁸ Her compilation of *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* seeks to understand the complexity of people's private and sexual lives in Latin America, drawing on church confessional manuals, court documents, and the diaries of bishops. Lavrin herself explores the gap between the Church's teachings on sexuality and the actual sexual behavior of the population, arguing that in colonial Mexico, a high degree of social tolerance existed that counteracted the strict teachings of the Church.

³⁷ Asunción Lavrin, ed., *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978).

³⁸ Asunción Lavrin, "In search of the colonial woman in Mexico: the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" in *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives* ed. by Asunción Lavrin (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), 23-59.

Heath Dillard's work *Daughters of the Reconquest* covers the earlier periods of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries in the establishment of gendered land ownership in Iberia and its impact in the repopulation of conquered territories.³⁹ His main argument is that the presence of women in these towns guaranteed stability and performance, thus, every effort was made to attract women as wives in the conquered territories. Their lives through betrothal, marriage, childbirth, and widowhood are reflected in the charters and influenced legal principles to continue to attract migrants from the north to colonize new-claimed territories further south.

Other works include Uta Ranke-Heinemann's *Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven*, which analyzes women and sexuality within the Catholic Church through a strong feminist lens.⁴⁰ Ranke-Heinemann is critical of the clergy throughout the history of the Church and their implementation of cultural practices that painted women as dangerous beings capable of seducing men and causing them to violate the commandments of the Church. Other works complement these works on gender and colonialism including Merry E. Wiesner's *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, which utilizes a variety of women's experiences to overcome generalizations in women's history in early modern Europe, and Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton's compilation *Moving Subjects*, which examines the role intimacy played in the colonial enterprise.⁴¹ Ballantyne and Antoinette's work shows that intimacy created, and was created through, a set of local and global practices and hierarchies essential to empire.

The work of Dillard, Lavrin, Ranke-Heinemann, Ballantyne, and Antoinette show the important role gender played in colonial societies, starting as early as the twelfth century and

³⁹ Heath Dillard, *Daughters of the Reconquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

⁴⁰ Uta Ranke-Heinemann, *Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven: Women, Sexuality and the Catholic Church* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1990).

⁴¹ Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, second ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette M. Burton, *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

continuing forward to the nineteenth century. As Joan Scott states, “gender – or rather genders – remain a very useful category of historical analysis.”⁴² Scott’s statement holds true for colonial histories. An understanding of gender, including the roles of men and women, was essential in colonial endeavors, including in efforts to expand political control, influence empires, and the lives of individuals. All of these works support my overall argument that Catholic missionaries appropriating indigenous women in the Philippines is not a foreign concept, but part of the colonization process itself.

Sexuality, especially ideas of homosexuality and sodomy, are also important points of discussion. This becomes especially pertinent when discussing marital relationships and the complex nature of the *bayog*. Pete Sigal’s compilation *Infamous Desire* looks at male homosexuality in colonial Latin America, a field that needs further exploration.⁴³ The work seeks to integrate an analysis of male “homosexualities” in Latin America and to understand the debates surrounding them, uncovering the many nuances of the field and the need for additional research. Federico Garza Carvajal’s *Butterflies Will Burn* examines hundreds of sodomy trials in early modern Spain and Mexico.⁴⁴ He argues that sixteenth and seventeenth century discourses of manliness mirror the politics of empire and that sodomy conflicted with this understanding of manliness.

Marriage and sexuality were also addressed in the Council of Trent. The Protestant Reformation compelled the Catholic Church to discuss the reformers’ key criticisms against the Catholic Church, especially in regard to marriage and sexuality. James Brundage recounts that

⁴² Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis” *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (Dec. 1986), 1053-1075.

⁴³ Pete Sigal, ed., *Infamous Desire: Male Homosexuality in Colonial Latin America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

⁴⁴ Federico Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies Will Burn: Prosecuting Sodomites in Early Modern Spain and Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).

Protestant Reformers criticized the Catholic Church for performing secret marriages that were hidden from the public and for making marriage a sacrament. The Council responded by strengthening their position of the sacramental nature of marriage, but required that marriages be performed with witnesses and recorded in the parishes in which they occurred. The Council created complex rules for sexual intercourse within marriage. Protestants criticized the Church for teaching that only sexual intercourse performed for the purpose of reproduction was sinless. The Council responded with a variety of opinions, including what sexual positions or forms of foreplay were sinful, but came to no definite conclusions. Many interpretations of the Council of Trent, however, saw that sexuality in marriage should always end with climax being achieved vaginally. The Council also upheld the Church's medieval viewpoints on homosexuality by continuing to condemn it.⁴⁵

The Council of Trent also made significant changes on the topics of virginity and the Virgin Mary. Veneration of the Virgin Mary was strongly reaffirmed, as was the role of virginity among women. Ann Twinam argues that “the post-Trent church presented the Blessed Virgin as a role model” in promoting the importance of sexual abstinence among women. She adds that “a woman was to refrain permanently from intercourse if she remained single or was to maintain her virginity until she became a wife.”⁴⁶ Thus, after the Council of Trent, the Virgin became a standard reference for preaching to Catholic women that they needed to maintain virginity outside of marriage and remain faithful to their husbands within marriage. The Council of Trent concluded in 1563, two years before the formal colonization of the Philippine Islands. The impact of the Council would influence the Christianization process of the islands, including the

⁴⁵ James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 551-575.

⁴⁶ Ann Twinam, “Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America,” in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* ed. Asunción Lavrin (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska, 1989), 120.

need for converts to enter into a Catholic marriage sacrament before being baptized, a strong emphasis of female virginity, and implementations of the cult of the Virgin throughout the islands.

Southeast Asian and Philippine-related scholarship also adds insight into the complex gender and religious issues of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines. Barbara Watson Andaya in *The Flaming Womb* seeks to fill the dearth of resources available on women in early modern Southeast Asian history.⁴⁷ She addresses the clichéd understanding that Southeast Asian women held a relatively high status in the region. Pointing to the diversity of the region and the major changes that took place between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, Andaya demonstrates that the status of women in the region cannot be generalized as a whole. Instead, the status must be analyzed based on time, location, and cultural influences, especially in terms of religion. She analyzes several societal roles women held in the region, the impact they had on their societies, and the variations between the different sub-regions of Southeast Asia. She cautions scholars about the male origins of many Southeast Asian sources, and yet important details could be gleaned from scholars taking a creative approach.

John Leddy Phelan in his work *The Hispanization of the Philippines* looks into the colonization process of the Philippines and the cultural, economic, and political implications it had.⁴⁸ He defines “*Hispanization*” as the process where Hispanic culture, economics, and politics began to shape society in the Philippines. He also acknowledges the important role indigenous populations played in accepting this *Hispanization* and calls this process as “*Filippinization*,” where indigenous syncretism transformed Hispanic Catholicism into a more Filipino form.

⁴⁷ Andaya, *Flaming*.

⁴⁸ John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines: Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565-1700* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press), 1959.

J. Neil C. Garcia argues that Catholic missionaries violently implemented a gender system through the conversion of the *bayog*.⁴⁹ His study goes into great detail about the history of gender in precolonial Philippines and explores the complex ideas of sodomy, third gender, and gender-crossing in the precolonial and early colonial periods. His work aims to be a survey, exploring the many possibilities and discoveries related to the *bayog* and potential homosexual practices in the Philippines before the eighteenth century, but is incomplete due to lack of evidence and resources on the topic. Despite this, Garcia's insightful approach into discovering precolonial homosexuality and gender-crossing practices provides important groundwork for scholars to use to better understand the lack of evidence surrounding the *bayog*.

Focusing on the history of the Lumad peoples of Mindanao, Oona Paredes uncovers several sources on the intimate interactions between the Lumad people and the Recollect missionaries from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries.⁵⁰ Her study exposes the myth that the island of Mindanao never underwent a Christianization process until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by showing the significant social and political changes that transformed Lumad society as early as the sixteenth century. Her work is particularly interesting, given the context of authors like Restall and Wiesner, who similarly seek to refute oversimplified generalizations about gender and the singular process of colonization. Paredes reveals that such generalizations of the Philippines are more complex than popular histories present. This reformulation adds valuable insight to the Christianization process of the islands and acknowledges the complex relationships that existed between the clergy and the indigenous people.

⁴⁹ Garcia, *Philippine Gay*, 151-197.

⁵⁰ Oona Paredes, *A Mountain of Difference: The Lumad in Early Colonial Mindanao* (Ithica: Cornell University), 2013.

Indigenous Philippine Feminine Power and Catholicism

Many scholars have written about how among indigenous women, and ideas about gender and sexuality, shape the processes of Christianization and colonization in the early colonial Philippines. Perhaps one the most detailed and well-known works done on the topic is Carolyn Brewer's *Shamanism, Catholicism and Gender Relations in Colonial Philippines, 1521-1685*. Published in 2004, the book serves a threefold purpose: it exposes the way the Spanish portrayed indigenous women, focuses on the hegemonic processes the colonizing powers used to reconstruct gender relations, and highlights the resistance of women to the changes brought by colonization and Hispanic Catholicism.⁵¹

On the topic of the clash of Hispanic Catholic and Prehispanic Philippine gender norms, Brewer's work is groundbreaking. It challenged the conventional historical and historiographical understanding that the conversion of the indigenous Philippine people was a "voluntary" process of "enculturation" that ultimately benefited and advanced Philippine society.⁵² Instead, her work gives scholars a glimpse at the violence of the debasement of indigenous women and how Catholic clergy actively demonized and silenced these indigenous women, forcing them to either flee Spanish rule or submit to it.⁵³ She argues that Catholicism did not elevate women, but denigrated them, forcing them to lose agency over their bodies and sexuality, only to be subjugated to a "'good' woman/'bad' woman binary predicated on Catholic myth and tradition."⁵⁴ But these efforts were not always successful, as Brewer highlights the forms of resistance by many powerful indigenous feminine figures against their European colonizers, stating that "this book could never have been written" "without the resistance of strong, resolute

⁵¹ Brewer, *Shamanism*, xxiii.

⁵² *Ibid.*, xv.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 189-194.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 190.

and determined women.”⁵⁵ She skillfully connects all these themes together by analyzing the different methods used by Catholic colonizers to redefine gender roles in the archipelago and the response to these on the part of the of the indigenous people.

However, Brewer’s monograph does not represent women like Balinan who willingly submitted to the system and worked closely with the Catholic clergy since her work focuses almost entirely on the suppression of indigenous women and their rebellion against Spanish and Catholic authority. Even in addressing the role of the ‘good’ woman in the ‘good’ woman/’bad’ woman binary, she talks about an ideal but does not give any specific examples and instead emphasizes the role of the ‘bad’ woman in society and how indigenous women were demoralized through the construction of the ‘good’ woman/’bad’ woman binary. She does not give space nor voice to the willful converts to Christianity in order to fully grasp the violent suppression of women in the islands.

Luciano P. R. Santiago in his work *To Love and to Suffer* looks at the role and development of religious congregations in the Christianization of Philippine women. His work is expansive, covering the whole Spanish period of the Philippines (from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries) and gives plenty of examples of women using their agency to follow Catholic clergy and submit to Spanish authority from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. He looks into the development of convents, missionary work, and the creation of pilgrimage sites to explore how women accepted and devoted themselves to Catholicism, through their work in all these sites.⁵⁶ However, in an attempt to push an argument that Christianization was ultimately good for the women of the archipelago, he undermines the conflicts between Catholic and

⁵⁵ Ibid., 191.

⁵⁶ Luciano P. R. Santiago, *To Love and to Suffer: The Development of the Religious Congregations for Women in the Spanish Philippines, 1565-1898* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2005).

indigenous feminine power. He touches on the precolonial and early colonial Philippine woman, admitting to Catholic suppression and violence towards women during the conversion process, but is quick in arguing that the Christianization of the Prehispanic woman was a beneficial process that ended brutal practices.⁵⁷

His scholarship, at times, is debatable and not strongly supported. One specific example of a brutal practice he describes is the process of female circumcision. He claims that certain animist priestesses had to undergo a circumcision before officiating ceremonies, and yet he fails to adequately support this theory. One early Catholic ethnographer called these priestesses the “sonat.” Santiago argues that sonat is derived from the Old Tagalog word “sunat,” meaning circumcision. However, this is the only evidence he makes in regard to the required circumcision of the sonat, not taking into account the potential gendered nature of the word “sonat” in that it could have applied only to men, nor does he analyze the difference between male and female circumcision. Instead, he uses the example of the “sonat” to show how practices under indigenous animism abused women and that the brutal practice of female circumcision was irradiated with the coming of the Spanish and the suppression of animist traditions.⁵⁸

Santiago makes the unsupported claim that “the male-dominated Malay communities had entrusted such an important social function, as the priesthood, to women indicated that they associated it not so much with power as the gentle grace and care universally associated with womanhood.”⁵⁹ This quotation is problematic in the sense that it assumes power can only be derived from men and that womanhood is universally associated with the gentle kind, somehow presuming that women are the weaker sex.

⁵⁷ Santiago, *Love*, 5-22.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7-10.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

Using these two examples of male dominance and female circumcision, both insufficiently proven, Santiago fails to sufficiently support his argument that the Christianization of the archipelago mostly benefited the indigenous populations. Despite these issues, his work provides a good narrative in the creation of nuns in the Philippines and the role Catholicism played in shaping the lives of pious indigenous women during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries Philippines.

The works of Brewer and Santiago offer contrasting narratives. Brewer takes a more liberal approach, showing the colonization and Christianization of the Philippines as a violent process towards women. Santiago, on the other hand, follows conservative elements and argues how Christianization benefitted women. This thesis seeks to bring the two arguments together in showing how indigenous feminine figures deployed their own agency to accept or reject Catholicism. It aims to show how some indigenous women benefitted from the process and how others were oppressed by it. Moreover, it shows how missionaries in their zealous efforts at Christianization suppressed some feminine figures and promoted others.

Appropriating Indigenous Feminine Power

Scholars of early colonial Philippines generally show that the pre-existing power held by feminine figures proved to be a challenge and an opportunity to the proselytization efforts of Catholic missionaries. Caquenga's revolt is one example of these conflicts between Catholic proselytization efforts and indigenous animism. But by the utilization of willing women like Balinan, Dominicans and other missionaries overcame these challenges to conversion by displaying these women as models to other indigenous people. Through these women's public examples of accepting Catholicism, their subsequent teaching of Catholicism, and their efforts to

encourage others to live various Catholic principles, the Catholic clergy appropriated their agency and status in their communities to expand the Church's control throughout the islands. Catholic missionaries and clergy actually appropriated the feminine power held by the feminine figures to expand the influence of the Catholic Church. This thesis will show how Catholic officials accomplished these efforts this in four chapters.

The first chapter will analyze how Catholic officials appropriated wealthy and socially influential indigenous Philippine women. It will look at women belonging to the *principalia* class, like Balinan, who were wealthy and/or a part of the elite classes and their contributions to the growth of Catholicism. It will also analyze the ways in which Catholic officials used them and their societal influences to establish and strengthen the church in the archipelago.

The second chapter will look into the role Philippine women had in Catholic sanctioned miracles and visions. It will analyze how Catholic officials responded to such miracles and visions and propagated favorable stories to expand Catholic authority. It will also investigate the conflicts between animist-based healings propagated by the *maganitos* and Catholic-based healings promoted by Catholic clergy.

The third chapter will analyze Catholic utilization of indigenous wives in terms of the expansion of the Catholic Church. It will show how many times Catholic missionaries in numerous occasions targeted wives for the purpose of converting their husbands. This chapter will also look into the sexual influence indigenous women had on their husbands.

The final chapter will divert from women to focus on the the *bayog* because of the *bayog's* unique position as a feminine figure viewed as a male by Catholic missionaries. It will evaluate the methods missionaries used to convert *bayogs* to Catholicism, their motives behind converting the *bayogs* in utilizing them for their roles as spiritual leaders, and the manipulation

of their feminine power to convince many other indigenous peoples to convert to Catholicism. It will give particular attention to the complexities of gender in a sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippine context and in the Spanish/Castilian context of empire building, how missionaries viewed the *bayogs*, and what their writings about the bayog reveal about these feminine figures.

This thesis, like most other studies of Christianization of the Philippines, will work through Catholic sources written in the Spanish language. The sources come from Augustinian, Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan, and Recollect missionaries. Because of the authors, these sources are subject to biases and prone to exaggerations, particularly in describing the conversion of people or using numbers to describe the growth of the missions. These exaggerations are especially apparent when they are meant to promote colonization or the works of a particular Catholic order. The audiences for these reports are most probably other clerical members of their orders whose support was sought to justify or promote the order's proselytizing efforts in the Philippines. These sources are records of contact zones, as Mary Louise Pratt states, a contact zone is where different cultures meet, crash, and grapple with each other's differences. These sources approach these contact zones through the lens of the Catholic missionaries and how they seek to produce or represent the rest of the world through their writing to their audience.⁶⁰ Ann Laura Stoler also argues that "colonial documents mark the distance between recognized and subjugated knowledge, between intelligible accounts and those with knowledge that could not be bent into prevailing frames."⁶¹ Thus, the accounts written are placed within a frame that fits the particular order and their goals of self-promotion in other parts of the world.

⁶⁰ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 4-5.

⁶¹ Ann Laura Stoler, "Epistemic Politics: Ontologies of Colonial Common Sense," *The Philosophical Forum*, 39 (2008): 355.

Despite these biases, the individual agency of the women and *bayogs* involved in these accounts could still be discerned. Historian William Henry Scott has argued that, even with these biases, indigenous reactions to colonization can be ascertained through the sources, or what he called looking through the cracks of the Spanish parchment curtain.⁶² It is also important to note that the sources analyzed in this thesis are limited. Due to lack of funds, all of these sources have been accessed either from the Hamilton Library at University of Hawai`i at Manoa or through various online resources, including Spanish archives. This will limit the amount of evidence that this thesis can interpret; but, referring back to Scott's earlier point, the available sources still contain a wealth of information and hundreds of untold stories. While accessing international archives would significantly deepen the potential analyses of these accounts, plenty of information can be gleaned from the accessed sources.

Since Spanish material provides the main primary sources analyzed, Spanish terminology will carry through and be used throughout the paper. Frequently these sources use terms like *pueblo* to describe a settlement. While many histories prefer the indigenous term *barangay* to describe these settlements, this thesis will use "village" to describe them since *barangay* only applied to Mindanao, Visayan, and Tagalog settlements.⁶³ The missionaries also used the terms *principal* or *mayor* to describe village leaders. *Datu* is a common word used to describe them, but like *barangay*, is limited to specific geographic regions.⁶⁴ The term "chief" will be used instead since *datu* cannot be fully applied to all of the accounts.

The terms *maganito* and *bayog* differ from this rule. Spanish sources used several words for the *maganito*, including their various indigenous terms like *catalona*, *babaylan*, and *baylan*

⁶² William Henry Scott, *Cracks in the Parchment Curtain and Other Essays in Philippine History*, emended ed. (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1985), 1.

⁶³ Francia, *History*, 32. Scott, *Barangay*, 219, 220, 267.

⁶⁴ Francia, *Hsitory*, 32. Scott, 127, 221, 267.

as well as Spanish terms like *sacerdotisas*, *anitera*, or *hechicera*.⁶⁵ Because of this wide variation of this concept, the term *maganito* is preferred because of its indigenous origins and wide-spread use throughout the islands. *Bayog*, on the other hand, is typically referred to as *sacerdote* in the sources, but this complicates things because of the feminine role they played in society and also the usage of *sacerdote* to refer to Catholic priests. Other indigenous terms existed, such as *bayog*, *bayoc*, and *bayoguin*.⁶⁶ Because this thesis interacts mostly with Tagalog *bayogs*, the term *bayog* is favored and used to preserve an element of gender fluidity.

The thesis will also contribute to the type of research undertaken by Heath Dillard and Ballantyne and Burton, to show that the Christianization of the Philippines was a gendered process. Catholic missionaries relied on indigenous feminine figures to convert other members of society, and utilized and appropriated the social and feminine power of these feminine figures to gain more influence in societies across the islands. They relied on these feminine figures to establish a Catholic patriarchy and depended on indigenous knowledge to further expand their influence in the region. This process of appropriating indigenous feminine and social power was, in the end, an essential part of the process of colonization methods that depended upon and was shaped by women in various contexts and historical periods.

⁶⁵ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 84-86, 90-91.

⁶⁶ Brewer, *Shamanism*, xiii, 128.

Chapter 1

Wealth, Influence, and Women: Appropriating the Women of the *Principalia*

During Christianization efforts in the Philippine Islands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, missionaries understood the necessity of relying upon indigenous people to expand their empire. They also knew that utilizing the *principales* of indigenous societies and the wealthy was an effective way of mobilizing other members of their societies, including different members of the *principalia* and people of separate classes.⁶⁷ These *principales*, as the Spanish sources describe them, were the traditional ruling members of communities and their families. The idea was that once the *principales* accepted Spanish rule and Christianity, many other members of their societies would follow because of the social power these people wielded in their societies. The *principales* owned property, controlled many people including slaves, and had wealth in their societies.⁶⁸ The *principales* were also the ruling classes and controlled the political affairs of their settlements.⁶⁹ Catholic missionaries knew of patterns where people chose to follow the *principales* of their societies, and began to manipulate it. In influencing and working with the *principales* of the Philippines, Catholic missionaries learned quickly that women were an integral part of the *principales*. They, too, had wealth, owned slaves, and controlled people. The clergy needed to work with these powerful indigenous women. Missionaries discovered that mobilizing and Christianizing the *principales* and wealthy indigenous Philippine women was a powerful tool for converting indigenous populations that could not be accomplished by converting men alone.

⁶⁷ Restall, *Seven*, 18-26.

⁶⁸ Scott, *Barangay*, 129.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 130.

This chapter shows that Catholic missionaries appropriated the *principales* and wealthy indigenous Philippine women to strengthen the presence of the Catholic Church in the archipelago by analyzing three cases of women of the *principalia* and their Christianization. It also shows that missionaries recognized and appropriated these women's power to diminish the social influence of animism in the islands.

Recognizing powerful indigenous people, negotiating with them, and employing their influence to expand Spanish control was nothing new to Spanish colonial endeavors. Spanish conquistadors relied on an alliance with Tlaxcala in order to battle the Aztecs. In leading Spanish conquistadors, Hernán Cortés, after suffering heavy losses from battling with the people of Tlaxcala, made peace with their leader, Xicotencatl, and their allies. The people of Tlaxcala wanted peace in hopes that the Spanish could help him fight the Aztec empire, who waged war with the various polities annually. With this peace treaty, the Spanish, the people of Tlaxcala, and their allies overthrew the Aztec empire in 1521.⁷⁰

In describing Cortés' alliances with the indigenous people of Mexico, Matthew Restall states that this was a common practice that had roots to the initial Spanish colonization of the Caribbean. Indigenous populations always outnumbered Spaniards, something that the Spaniards utilized in their conquest procedures. They also provided goods, resources, information about the region, and knowledge about other groups of people. Utilizing indigenous populations in the colonization process allowed Spaniards to adapt a divide-and-conquer strategy to gain control.⁷¹

Cortés justified the conquest of Mexico by continually referencing to it as the will of the Christian God and a means to submit the indigenous people to the Christian faith. Because of this

⁷⁰ Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *History of the Conquest of New Spain*, ed. David Carrasco (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 87-91, 207-210. Serge Gruzinski, *The Eagle and the Dragon: Globalization and European Dreams of Conquest in China and America in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 83-86, 101-103.

⁷¹ Restall, *Seven*, 19, 24-45.

religious rhetoric, some indigenous groups saw a need to accept Spanish authority after the fall of the Aztec empire. Augustinian and Dominican friars, though not officially part of Cortés' conquest, took advantage of the situation and began establishing schools to teach Spanish and Christianity to the elites. The elites entered these schools to preserve their privileges as the higher classes of their societies.⁷² The missionaries then relied on these indigenous people who learned Spanish to act as translators as they worked to Christianize the masses of the indigenous societies. They even used these translators to help them conceptualize Christian ideas and concepts into indigenous languages.⁷³ These indigenous students became important tools in the translation process, especially in assisting these priests acting as linguists who were trying to grapple with not only translating words, but concepts, culture, and theology.⁷⁴

Ferdinand Magellan also worked with indigenous leaders when he arrived in the Visayas. He and his crew first established a relationship with the chief of Limasawa, an island south of Samar. This chief, named Rajah Siaiu, then guided Magellan's fleet to Cebu, where a Catholic priest baptized the Cebuano leader, Rajah Humabon, and his wife, later christened Juana, and convinced both to submit to Spanish sovereignty and convert to Christianity. Humabon then asked Magellan to go to Mactan and convince their chief, Lapu Lapu, to submit to Spanish rule and Christianity. Humabon and Lapu Lapu were rivals, and Humabon saw his encounter with Magellan as an opportunity to gain control over Lapu Lapu and his people. Magellan and his fleet traveled to Mactan assuming they would easily subdue Lapu Lapu and his people. A

⁷² Roberto A. Valdeón, *Translation and the Spanish Empire in the Americas* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014), 123-126.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 126-128.

⁷⁴ Otto Zwartjes, *Portuguese Missionary Grammars in Asia, Africa and Brazil, 1550-1800* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011), 28-34.

skirmish broke out between the Spanish and the Mactan village, and Magellan was killed during the battle.⁷⁵

These two examples show how Spanish officials and Catholic missionaries manipulated the ruling classes to gain political control over various indigenous people. They used strategic tactics to win the support of some people and to increase their numbers and fight against others. This manipulation of elite indigenous people continued throughout the colonization process as colonizers and missionaries worked with the ruling class to consolidate control.

John Leddy Phelan also observed Spanish utilization of indigenous Philippine ruling classes. In an effort to better manage the newly conquered islands, and adapting a pre-existing procedure that the Spanish used in the Americas, the Spanish crown divided conquered lands into *encomiendas* that men loyal to the Spanish crown could inherit. These *encomenderos*, or leaders of the *encomiendas*, gained services from the indigenous people and land from their *encomiendas* in exchange for offering protection to the people and for helping Christianize them. Phelan points out how these *encomiendas* incorporated indigenous villages. Often *encomenderos* chose the chiefs of these villages and their sons to collect taxes and labor from the indigenous people and were given an exemption from these taxes for their services. The system of relying on ruling classes and their sons to gather taxes lasted well into the eighteenth century.⁷⁶ Phelan's work shows that even outside of physical conquest, utilization of the ruling class to help Spanish colonization was common as early as the *Reconquista*, and was used to gain control from indigenous people, such as collecting taxes and extracting labor. In Mexico, James Lockhart shows the utilization of Nahua *altepetl*, or indigenous political units, and how these survived the

⁷⁵ Francia, *History*, 52-55.

⁷⁶ Phelan, *Hispanization*, 10, 100-101, 114-115, 122-123.

conquest and were adapted to the Spanish colonial government. They provided the basis for the many jurisdictional units in the colonial structure.⁷⁷

The above examples, however, tend to focus on utilizing indigenous men. But the Spanish did not only use indigenous men. During the conquests of Mexico, Cortés relied on an indigenous woman to act as an interpreter. Her baptized name was Doña Marina. According to Spanish accounts, she was born to Nahuatl-speaking rulers. When her father passed and her mother remarried, her parents gave her away. After passing through several hands, she found herself under the control of the Chontal Maya people of Tabasco, who gave her to Cortés. By this time, Cortés already had a Mayan interpreter, a Franciscan friar named Jerónimo de Aguilar. Aguilar survived a shipwreck where he lived with the Maya for eight years. Marina could speak Mayan and Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs, and spoke to Cortés through Aguilar.⁷⁸ She became pivotal to Cortés' efforts to conquer the Aztecs, acting as an interpreter between several Nahuatl people, including political leaders and diplomats, and the Spanish conquistadors. In one instance, she heard an Aztec attempt to attack a Spanish army. Marina alerted Cortés to the threat, and the Spanish avoided the ambush. She later helped Cortés communicate with Mayan leaders as he and his armies worked to consolidate power in Mexico and Central America.⁷⁹

One of Cortés' men, Bernal Diaz del Castillo, in writing about Marina said that she spoke highly of the Spanish and Christianity to one group of indigenous people. According to Diaz, she told the Spanish "that God had been very gracious to her in freeing her from the worship of idols and making her a Christian."⁸⁰ From this we can see that, at least in the eyes of Diaz, he saw a

⁷⁷ Lockhart, *Nahuas*, 2-22.

⁷⁸ Restall, *Seven*, 77-85.

⁷⁹ Frances Karttunen, *Between Worlds: Interpreters, Guides, and Survivors* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 4-21.

⁸⁰ Diaz, *Conquest of New Spain*, 56.

woman who was devoutly dedicated to Christianity and to Cortés' colonizing endeavors. This presence of indigenous feminine dedication to Christianity exists in other accounts as well, as will be shown with a few examples from the Philippines.

As with Doña Marina, Spanish conquistadors and Catholic missionaries found means of appropriating influential indigenous women in the Philippines. One important factor about wealth in the Philippines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the fact that it did not belong only to men. Both women and men inherited and controlled property. Women also owned and controlled property in Iberia during the middle ages and the early modern period, where a bride brought property into a marriage through an "endowment" that she benefitted from until her death. However, when she passed, her property would pass over to her husband's family.⁸¹ In contrast, if a woman in the Philippines died, her blood relatives, not her husband or his family, would inherit her property. Sons and daughters also inherited property from both of their parents equally in the Philippines.⁸²

One important difference, however, that existed between property in precolonial Philippines and sixteenth century Europe was land ownership. In Europe, land ownership was an important source of wealth that belonged only to the higher classes of society.⁸³ In precolonial Philippines, this was often not the case. Indigenous Philippine societies saw land as a communal asset shared by a village or settlement. In the Tagalog regions of Luzon, however, the *principales* had power to dispose untitled land of the village for their own profit.⁸⁴

Because of this, wealth in precolonial Philippine society was defined by the access one had to goods and the people they controlled. Spanish colonial official Antonio de Morga in his

⁸¹ Dillard, *Daughters*, 47-49.

⁸² Scott, *Barangay*, 140-144, 219-222.

⁸³ Wiesner, *Women*, 131-132.

⁸⁴ Scott, *Barangay*, 229-230.

1609 work *Sucesos de las islas Filipinas* (History of the Philippine Islands) recounted how the number of slaves a person owned determined his or her wealth. As he states, “these slaves are their greatest source of fortune and capital of the natives of these islands.”⁸⁵ He then describes how these slaves were very useful in working in the fields and that these slaves were traded and sold from village to village or from island to island.⁸⁶

The indigenous concept of slaves before and during Spanish colonization is complex. The sources use the Spanish term *enclavos*, or slaves, to describe these people. However, the system of slavery in the Philippines differed from the slavery that existed in early modern Europe and North America. According to Michael Salman, slavery was a form of bondage, “highly localized and dyadically organized [through] networks of kin, dependents, and allies.”⁸⁷ Slavery could either be voluntary or involuntary. One could willingly become a slave if he or she wished to go into debt or to be supported by someone during a difficult time, such as in time of famine. One also entered slavery unwillingly, either by inheriting debt through birth, punishment of a crime, or through capture during a slave raid. Slaves either owned their own house or lived in the house of their masters. The different elements that determined the bondage of a slave could change throughout their life, “giving a shifting and fluid character to the practice of bondage.”⁸⁸

This statement of slaves being a source of wealth in precolonial Philippine society is consistent with observed patterns in Southeast Asia during this time. Anthony Reid states, “What created wealth was no possession of land but control of people.”⁸⁹ The labor of people was

⁸⁵ Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, ed. José Rizal (Paris: Libreria de Garnier Hermanos, 1890), 300. Translations are my own.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Michael Salman, *The Embarrassment of Slavery: Controversies over Bondage and Nationalism in the American Colonial Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 8.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁸⁹ Reid, *History*, 21-22.

necessary to fight wars, to till the land for cultivation, and to increase the population through childbearing.⁹⁰ Thus it was one's access to people and labor that gave an individual wealth. In sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines, individuals commonly had access to people through slavery. And ownership of slaves was not consolidated in men alone. Women could own slaves as well. If the Catholic missionaries wanted to Christianize these slaves, they had to work through their owners, both male and female. Wealthy women could not be ignored during the colonization process, giving women social power in their societies. Another important factor that made a woman influential and powerful was her social status. The women of the *principalia* were typically either related to or married to the chiefs of various villages. Having this connection to other leaders put them in the public view, making them sufficiently powerful to influence the people of their villages, as well as their husbands, siblings, parents, and other family members.

Wealth was a very important measure of power in the Philippines at the coming of the Spanish. As Dillard points out, wealth in medieval Castile also belonged to women and could not be ignored by the men of their society. A woman's wealth shaped the marriages and families of the societies and had tremendous impacts on the social power men, women, and families wielded in the medieval period.⁹¹ The thought of clergy ignoring women in the Philippines who wielded a similar power of wealth did not make sense. Many of the clergy were familiar with the power women wielded with wealth from their exposure to Iberian and American culture and understood they could utilize this same power in the Philippines.

While wealth and societal position made indigenous women powerful, another factor that gave them power was the spiritual power embodied by the *maganito*. Spiritual authority in the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Dillard, *Daughters*, 1-12, 36-68.

animist Philippines was a feminine power. As explained in the introduction, the *maganito* was a feminine position of spiritual power reserved for women or the *bayog*. The *maganito* led the animist ceremonies and were the spiritual leaders of their societies.⁹²

Although indigenous Philippine people saw spiritual authority as a feminine power, the Spanish saw the roles of the *maganito* as the work of the devil. Brewer explains that, in the eyes of the Spanish, the *maganito* “posed both a physical barrier to the success of the missionaries’ work and a visible symbol of the Devil’s tyrannical dominion.”⁹³ Morga described the *maganito* as “witches who kept the other people deceived” and whom “the devil influenced.”⁹⁴ Thus, the *maganito*, because of her feminine nature and her spiritual influence, was branded as a witch and a servant of the devil because she did not conform to the Catholic teachings of the time and proved to be a stumbling block to Christianization efforts.

The Catholic clergy in the Philippines responded to the *maganito* by working to suppress them and their social power. Brewer documents the various methods the clergy used to suppress these feminine figures, from demonization to public humiliation,⁹⁵ highlighting how these feminine figures rebelled against the Catholics and resisted Spanish rule.⁹⁶ But as the Catholic missionaries began Christianizing wealthy and influential indigenous women throughout the islands, they began to see that these same women could counteract the influence of animism. The social power they held encouraged others to submit to Spanish rule, adopt the Catholic faith, and

⁹² Brewer, *Shamanism*, xv-xvi, xxv, 127-137.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁹⁴ Morga, *Sucesos*, 312.

⁹⁵ Chapters 5 and 6 of Brewer’s work highlight the attempts to eliminate the *maganito*. See Brewer, *Shamanism*, 83-125.

⁹⁶ Chapter 6, 8, and 9 of Brewer’s work highlight the resistance of women and *bayogs*. See Brewer, *Shamanism*, 101-125, 143-187.

follow the Catholic priests. These women proved to be instrumental in proselytization efforts, and the Catholic missionaries utilized them throughout the archipelago.

It must be noted that these women were not passive participants in the Christianization efforts. These women made conscious decisions to accept Christianity and to follow its teachings. Amy Turner Bushnell and Jack P. Greene argue that empires are negotiated and that deviating systems of colonial authority and inner imperial political economies gave colonized people leverage in the colonization process. Geographic location in relation to colonial centers also gave more negotiation power to indigenous peoples, especially those further away, or in the peripheries, of a colonial possession.⁹⁷ Bushnell also makes the argument that the Philippines, under the authority of New Spain, existed in the peripheries of the Spanish colonial system.⁹⁸ Thus we see that these women of the *principalia* were negotiators in the colonization process. Their acceptance of Catholicism, though appearing to be a total submission in the Catholic sources, was actually an act of negotiation. This is especially emphasized since the Philippines resided in the peripheries of the New Spain viceroyalty.

The following three accounts primarily show the Catholic utilization of indigenous women who wielded significant influence and wealth. These accounts show how the Catholics publicized women's conversion and Catholic piety, utilized them for their societal position and wealth, and built them up to counteract the influence of the *maganitos*.

⁹⁷ Amy Turner Bushnell and Jack P. Greene, "Peripheries, Centers, and the Construction of Early Modern American Empires: An Introduction," in *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*, ed. Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2002), 1-14.

⁹⁸ Amy Turner Bushnell, "Gates, Patterns, and Peripheries: The Field of Frontier Latin America," in *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*, ed. Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2002), 19.

The Captured Cebuano and Isabel

The first account comes from Juan de Medina's "*Historia de los sucesos de la Orden de N. Gran P. S. Agustin de estas Islas Filipinas*."⁹⁹ Medina originally wrote the account in 1630, but never officially published it. In 1893, the *Biblioteca Histórica Filipina* officially published it in a compilation of other historical documents. The document is a history of the Augustinians in the Philippine islands during the Christianization process in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first account covers the history of the official colonization of the island of Cebu and two particular women the Spaniards and Augustinians manipulated in their colonization and Christianization efforts.

In 1565, under the navigation skills of Father Andrés de Urdaneta, conquistadors working under the Spanish crown and Augustinian missionaries successfully returned to the Philippines in hopes of submitting the islands to the Spanish crown. Don Miguel López de Legazpi, who led this conquest, desired to land in Cebu where forty years earlier Magellan and his men Christianized the leaders of the island. Unfortunately, they found the indigenous Cebuanos hostile towards them. Cebu is in close proximity to the island of Mactan, the place where Magellan and his men ignited a violent skirmish that killed Magellan and angered several Cebuanos. The Cebuanos, still disturbed by this clash with Magellan, retaliated against Legazpi's coming. A few men from Legazpi's fleet attempted to work with Tupas, the "chief of that island," but failed.¹⁰⁰ According to Medina's account, Tupas stated that "those foreign nations had nothing to profit them but to take away their freedom, which they enjoyed as rulers of the land."¹⁰¹ He continues by saying that their *maganitos* "worked diligently so the Spaniards could

⁹⁹ Juan de Medina, "Historia de los sucesos de la Orden de N. Gran P. S. Agustin de estas Islas Filipinas" in *Biblioteca Histórica Filipina* (Manila: Tip-Litografía de Chofre y Comp., 1893), 4:35-61. Translations are my own.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 4:38.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

not set foot on the island.”¹⁰² After much difficulty, Spanish forces under Legazpi landed on Cebu on April 27th and began building a fort. Tupas, disgruntled by the settlement, began encouraging the Cebuanos to fight against the Spanish. The Cebuanos heeded these orders, attacking the Spaniards whenever they encountered them. The Spanish forces retaliated by raiding parts of the islands and capturing any Cebuanos they could find.

In William Henry Scott’s account of this colonization process of Cebu, which he calls the annexation of Cebu, the Spanish sent two warships off the coast of Cebu and deployed five boats full of soldiers to the coast. The men and warships open fired on a Cebuano settlement, and the Cebuanos fled to the mountains, burning their settlement down so the Spanish could not occupy it. This fleeing was a technique common to coastal peoples in the archipelago who frequently faced sea raiders. The Spanish erected a fort and continued to face petty skirmishes with stray Cebuano warriors in hopes of getting Tupas and the Cebuanos to surrender.¹⁰³

During one of these skirmishes, the Spanish captured an unnamed woman of the *principalia* class. Medina states that she “promised to bring Tupas [to the Spanish] through her husband, who was a great chief of the island.”¹⁰⁴ Scott reveals that this woman was actually the sister-in-law of Tupas.¹⁰⁵ Relying on that promise, the Spanish held her captive until her husband and Tupas arrived and negotiated with them. Her husband came with as many goods as he could bring to give to Legazpi in exchange for his wife. According to Medina’s account, Legazpi told the Cebuano “that his wife was not a captive, nor did [the Spanish] come in any way to capture the people, but rather to give liberty to those who were captives.”¹⁰⁶ The Cebuano couple wept at

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ William Henry Scott, *Looking for the Prehispanic Filipino and Other Essays in Philippine History* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1992), 47-53.

¹⁰⁴ Medina, “Historia,” 4:45.

¹⁰⁵ Scott, *Looking*, 49-50.

¹⁰⁶ Medina, “Historia,” 4:53.

this response and proclaimed that the Spanish were good men. Tupas then talked to the Spanish and agreed to bring his people and his slaves to them to serve the Spanish. Scott argued that once this woman of the *principalia* was captured, Tupas came and agreed to a formal treaty with the Spanish that was an unconditional surrender on the part of the Cebuanos.¹⁰⁷ The Augustinians, who were present during this scene, began working with the Cebuanos to teach them Catholicism.

After several months, the missionaries felt that they were ready to baptize the Cebuanos. They first began with the niece of Tupas, who, according to Medina, “pleaded dearly for baptism and for the Fathers to give it.”¹⁰⁸ With Legazpi consenting to be her godfather, a priest publicly baptized the woman, later named Isabel, with several of her fellow Cebuanos watching. As Medina relates, “the Religious baptized the infant son of this new Christian and the other people of her household, who, after seeing the good example of the noblewoman, followed her.”¹⁰⁹ He further relates how she easily learned the Catholic doctrine and then taught it later on. Several others were baptized, including a Muslim and, by 1568, Tupas himself.¹¹⁰ The niece of Tupas later married the caulker of the Spanish fleet.

In one of their first encounters with the islands after the ill-fated Magellan voyage, Spanish conquistadors and Catholic missionaries utilized women. In this account, the Spanish first manipulated the kidnapped sister-in-law of Tupas who promised to bring Tupas to the Spanish. This proved successful, especially when her husband and Tupas willingly went to the Spanish seeking her liberty and peace after the Spanish raids of Cebu. The fact, however, that

¹⁰⁷ Scott, *Looking*, 47-53.

¹⁰⁸ Medina, “Historia,” 4:56.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 4:57.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4:35-61.

these two high-ranking men went to rescue Tupas' sister-in-law during what they assumed to be a slave raid speaks to the influence she held in her society.

If slave raiding was a common threat the Cebuanos faced, kidnapping surely was also a frequent occurrence. To have two high figures from the Cebuano society, Tupas and his brother, approach an invader and give unconditional surrender to that power in exchange for the liberty of a captured woman suggests that the woman was socially powerful and valuable. Tupas' sister-in-law held enough social standing to motivate Tupas to surrender his sovereignty to the Spanish. It was through the capture of this woman and the social power she had that motivated Tupas to unconditionally surrender to the Spanish. Surely the continual warfare and the established presence of the Spanish motivated Tupas to make this surrender, but his sister-in-law's capture was the deciding factor. This shows what influence women of rank held in these societies and their potential to mobilize their societies in times of danger.

With Scott's revealing information in his study on the colonization of Cebu, her reasons for submitting to Spanish authority by promising them to contact Tupas becomes clear. From her point of view, the Spanish waged war on the Cebuanos. Her subsequent kidnapping, coupled with the kidnapping of others, was also typical of her culture. Slave-raiding warfare was common throughout Southeast Asia where sea faring people waged war on coastal settlements to capture more people. As stated earlier, wealth came through the access and control of human labor, not land.¹¹¹ Thus this captured woman submitted to Spanish authority because she thought she would be enslaved and taken away. Submitting to Spanish authority and promising to bring Tupas to them appears to be her attempt to preserve her own liberty. She assumed she would be set free once the Spanish contacted Tupas.

¹¹¹ Reid, *History*, 22-23.

It is also important to note that the first Cebuano the Augustinians baptized during this colonial endeavor was a woman and that they baptized her publicly before the people of the island. She was one of the *principalia*, the niece of Tupas, and influenced many others to accept the Catholic faith with her actions. She adhered faithfully to the Catholic doctrine and later taught it to others. Her actions motivated others to join, including Tupas. Her influence and power as a member of the *principalia* also led to the baptism of her family and the “otra gente de su casa” or “other people of her household.”¹¹² Based on her social status, these people of her household probably included slaves, further confirming the influence she had over people and on the island.

Medina’s account of Isabel is less direct in explaining her motives, though the Spanish raids and kidnappings could have been motivating factors. Faithfully adhering to the Augustinians, accepting their Catholicism, marrying a Spaniard, and teaching Catholicism to others could have been acts of devotion or acts of self-preservation. There could have been aspects of Catholicism she sincerely believed and chose to adopt, or she accepted the religion to preserve her status and influence in society. She knew what happened to Cebuanos, including Tupas’ sister-in-law, when they did not adhere to Spanish or Catholic authority. The Spanish fought those who resisted their authority, engaged in various skirmishes, and kidnapped many people. Submitting to the Catholics spared her from becoming a victim of these violent acts herself. Her marriage to a Spanish caulker also allowed her to enter into the new ruling class of the island: the Spanish.

Regardless of the reasons why these two women chose to submit to Spanish and Catholic authority, it is clear that the missionaries and the Spanish used them for their own interests. As

¹¹² Medina, “Historia,” 4:57.

women of influence in Cebu, they both proved useful in colonization efforts. The Spanish found Tupas' sister-in-law useful for the summoning of Tupas. Catholics appropriated Isabel and her status for the spreading of the Catholic faith. Because of their positions in society, the Spanish and Augustinians successfully used them to influence others and to expand their colonial and religious authority.

Another interesting note from Medina's account is the role of the *maganitos*. Medina casts the blame for hostility onto the *babaylans*, the *maganito* women of the islands. His account makes an overarching claim that the *babaylans* encouraged the Cebuanos to keep the Spanish off the island without giving any specific details as to what the *babaylans* did to achieve this. Underplaying the war efforts of the Spanish, stating the Spanish only raided the islands in retaliation, the first person targeted for baptism was a woman. The Augustinians exploited Isabel who came willingly and begged for baptism. A woman of social status and wealth became a symbol and a teacher of Catholicism.

Isabel's baptism was a public event where many Cebuanos witnessed a powerful woman openly submit to Catholic authority. The fact that the Religious used a woman, not a man, as their first public baptism demonstrates their desire to weaken the power of the *babaylans* on the island by creating a female model of ideal Catholic obedience to counter-act the influence of the *babaylans*. Those *babaylans* who "worked diligently so the Spaniards could not set foot on the island," according to Medina's account, lost societal influence over the people with the baptism of Isabel.¹¹³ As a woman of influence, she stood as a model to counteract the influence the *babaylans* held in their society. Her adoption of Christianity was, to the Augustinians, a sign of the weakening of the *babaylans* and the strengthening of the missionaries and the Spanish. She

¹¹³ Medina, "Historia," 4:38.

was a woman of influence, being the niece of Tupas, and a woman of wealth, having her family and household baptized with her. Thus, her social status and her wealth stood as two forms of power that the Catholics could use to fight against the spiritual feminine power the *babaylans* held. Furthermore, the Augustinians used her, because of her status, to teach the Catholic doctrine to the other Cebuanos. They used the power of a prominent woman to teach Catholicism to those in her realm of influence to counteract the practices of the *babaylans*, weakening their influence and strengthening the authority of Catholicism.

These two women were influential in their societies. They were both from the *principalia* and worked with the Spanish and Augustinians to influence other *principales*. Being women of influence, they also became feminine symbols that counteracted the power of the *maganitos* that worked to keep the Spanish and Augustinians off of the island during the initial encounter. With their acceptance of Christianity, their societal position and gender counteracted the societal power of the *maganitos* that influenced the Cebuanos to resist them. Because of these two women and their influence as *principales*, they helped the Spanish subdue Tupas and other chiefs and enabled the Augustinians to baptize them.

This practice of missionaries utilizing powerful indigenous women was common in other parts of the islands. The Recollects encountered another powerful and wealthy indigenous woman in seventeenth century Mindanao and used her as a public symbol to begin the Catholic religion in her area.

Caliman

Luis de Jesus' *Historia General* is a compilation of several seventeenth century Augustinian Recollect accounts from the Iberian Peninsula, the Spanish Americas, and the

Philippine Islands. He dedicates a chapter to the conversion and Christian lifestyle of a wealthy woman in the Butuan region of Mindanao.¹¹⁴

Jesus' account introduces a beautiful and wealthy woman who "like another Magdalena, wounded with the arrows of the words of Christ" accepted the Catholic faith with the preaching of the missionaries in the area.¹¹⁵ Her name was Hermana Clara Caliman and she readily accepted the Catholic faith. According to the account, "the Lord bestowed upon her a great consciousness of her dishonest life, admonishing her that only in following Christ is there true joy."¹¹⁶ She "ran to the Waters of Baptism" after coming to this realization.¹¹⁷ The missionaries responded by baptizing her publicly to show the indigenous Butuan people the solemnity of the Catholic sacraments. The Recollects baptized her "with the admiration of many people who saw a rare example of penance before a continuous model of dishonesty and barbarity."¹¹⁸ Her acceptance was profound. She freed her slaves and "gave copious amounts to the Church for its adornment and ornaments."¹¹⁹ Jesus records that she "reads the votary books translated into her mother tongue."¹²⁰ With such devotion, one of the Recollects requested that she become a beata.¹²¹ As a beata, Caliman would be required to take simple vows, wear a habit, and dedicate herself to the contemplation of Catholic doctrine and serving in the name of the Church in the outside world.¹²² The Recollect priest went to his superior to request that Caliman become a

¹¹⁴ Luis de Jesus, *Historia General de los Religiosos Descalzos del Orden de los Hermitaños del Gran Padre,...* San Augustin (Madrid, 1681), 296-298. Translations are my own.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 296.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 296-297. Original Spanish is, "que veian un raro exemplo de penitencia, en la que antes un continuo modelo de deshonestidad, y deseopostura.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 296.

¹²⁰ Rafael gives more details about the translation of Catholic prayers, literature, and catechisms into indigenous languages, including using indigenous alphabets and teaching the Latin alphabet. See Rafael, *Contracting*, 23-54.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 297. See also Santiago, *Love and Suffer*, 27-28 for a more detailed description of the beata.

beata. The superior granted her the position after the priest's persuasive petition, showing how Caliman lived a virtuous and worthy life.

Caliman's acceptance of Catholicism, public baptism, and becoming a beata surprised the missionaries and the indigenous people. The missionaries did not expect someone to grasp to the doctrine so quickly. In describing the indigenous people, the account reads, "the infidels, admiring the great conversion of that woman, repented and prepared to receive the Faith of Christ."¹²³ After becoming a beata, Caliman continued in her good works. She fasted, confessed, forsook her fine clothing for a poor habit, prayed and meditated in the church daily, attended to the divine offices devoutly, among several other things. The Recollects spoke highly of her and her devotion. Jesus states that "she was continuously employed in merciful works, succored the needs of the poor, visited the sick, consoled them with pious words, [and] served them food from her own hands"¹²⁴ She assisted those who were dying and read to them prayers to "kindle their soul to the love of God and guilt of their sins, thus proving for those who died to ensure their salvation."¹²⁵ When those dying persons passed, she shrouded the bodies and prepared them for burial. Jesus states, "[Caliman] was a rare example of Virtue... she became so venerated that in her presence everyone was composed."¹²⁶ The Recollects exploited her for this characteristic by sending her to public events to make sure there were no disturbances.

Caliman's conversion was crucial to the Recollects in her area. She was a wealthy woman who gave much of her wealth to the Church and liberated her slaves. Though her exact role in her village or her relationship to indigenous political leaders is never specified, the fact that she had wealth and slaves shows that she was a woman of influence.

¹²³ Jesus, *Historia*, 297.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 298.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

Coming down ill towards the end of her life, Caliman called for the Recollects to receive her final sacraments. After receiving them, she cried for Jesus Christ to take her spirit, and passed away shortly in 1639. Jesus claims that she died setting an example for the priests and the indigenous on how to live a pious life. Like Isabel, the missionaries took advantage of her willingness to accept baptism and publicly baptized her. The reasons were similar: to not only show the indigenous people what baptism was, but to also show them that powerful women were accepting it. Her acceptance of baptism was also a sign of her acknowledgement of Catholic authority, something the Recollects publicly displayed in hopes that others would follow her example. The people eventually did follow her baptism, seeing her continual acts of loyalty to Catholicism after her baptism.

Her position as beata was public because of the deeds she performed to others. While the account does not specify that she taught the doctrine to others like Isabel did in Cebu or Balinan in the Cagayan River Valley, she did go about publicly helping the poor, serving the sick, and assisting the dead. She turned from a wealthy member of her society to a zealous sister who assisted those in need, fasted frequently, read books on Catholic doctrine, and visited the church daily. Her role as beata put her in an even more unique position. Visiting and caring for the sick and the dying seemed to replicate the role of the *maganito*. In precolonial society, the *maganito* was a medicinal person who communicated with spirits to heal the ill and often performed certain ceremonies for funerals.¹²⁷ She was given a spiritual role to assist the sick and the dead, as well as a public role, something she did leaving the convent and the church to perform out in the view of others. In this regard, as a devout, faithful, Catholic woman, she competed with the indigenous feminine power held by the *maganito*. She obtained that feminine power to some

¹²⁷ Scott, *Barangay*, 84-86, 185, 239-240, 252.

extent, being seen as a spiritual figure in her community, but exercised it in a way that was acceptable to her Catholic superiors. Her role as a spiritual figure in the community did not threaten the power or authority of the missionaries like the *maganitos* did. It was after she became a beata and presumably performed these tasks publicly that the people of her village submitted to and began seeking a Christian conversion. The Religious saw the feminine and social power she held through her wealth and her slaves. The missionaries used her willingness to adopt the Christian faith to become a public model to show that the Catholic faith could replace animism.

Tapihan

Another Catholic missionary recounts an influential and wealthy woman's conversion to Catholicism. Francisco Ignacio Alcina in his seventeenth century work, *Historia de las Islas e Indios de Bisayas*, documents his experiences in the Visayas and that of his fellow Jesuits as they established their presence in the archipelago.

Alcina gives a history of a woman in seventeenth-century Samar named Tapihan who proved useful in proselytizing efforts.¹²⁸ Tapihan, from modern-day Pambujan, Samar, was the wife of three different chiefs at different times, “a woman of nobility, the most prominent in the area.”¹²⁹ She was also a former *maganito*.¹³⁰ Alcina first encountered this woman in the 1640s, where “she was there with all her puissance: always many slaves and gold and lived, what is more, in a good and upright manner.”¹³¹ He encouraged her to join the confraternity, which she

¹²⁸ Francisco Ignacio Alcina, S.J., *Historia de las islas e indios de Bisayas... 1668* translated and edited by Cantius J. Kobak, and Lucio Gutierrez (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Press, 2005), 3:142-153. Translations are from Kobak.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3:142-143.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 3:152-153.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 3:144-145.

declined. After leaving shortly after this encounter, Alcina returned to Pambujan in the 1660s to find the woman married again to her third husband, a chief. This time she was in a poorer state, where her slaves either died or she gave to her children when they married. She had also gone blind, having some “watery humor in her eyes, leaving them both... as white as the shell of an egg without being able to see even faintly anything small or large.”¹³²

Alcina claims he found Tapihan in a humbled state, wishing she had listened to him and joined the confraternity. Taking advantage of this situation, Alcina encouraged her to make a life confession, which she did “with much attention and clarity.”¹³³ She joined the confraternity, making her vows “publicly and aloud before the entire town.”¹³⁴ After joining the confraternity, she attracted many men and women to the Church and its sacraments. As Alcina records, she preached to people who came to her, exhorting “them to make good confessions, believe faithfully in God and relates to them the mercies that God has done for her.”¹³⁵ “Since she knows their habits and hears of their affairs,” Alcina continues, “even their misdoings, which they are apt to hide from us [the clergy], she tells them what she knows and condemns their sins.”

Tapihan’s position in society was not the only thing that helped her preach the Catholic tenets. She also claimed to have experienced a miraculous healing. Her husband was very ill and could not provide, while being blind herself, she was poor and ate by means of begging. Her children were all married, living away from her. Alcina states that “one night, among others, she prayed to the Virgin with many tears to pity her and help her since she was now her handmaid and... could not expect sufficient help from people which only God and she could provide.”¹³⁶

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 3:146-147.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

Being in a dark place while praying, she began to notice that she could distinguish shapes and objects. After many days, she realized that she could see in darkness. Her sight did not come back during the day, but at night, she could see. And the darker the night, the better her eyesight.

After coming to this realization, she went to her husband's field and weeded and cleaned out the plot. When dawn came, her sight left her. After realizing this, she asked for abaca and used its fibers to weave cloth. For six years, Alcina observed that she went to her husband's fields to plant rice and maintain it, and she wove several blankets. Her blankets became famous throughout the town and nearby area for their high quality and the presumed miracle behind their weaving. "Although it may be that it is not a miracle, and I neither affirm or deny it," Alcina states in regard to Tapihan's vision at night, "it is certainly a remarkable affair."¹³⁷ This presumed miracle encouraged many in her village to follow Catholicism more diligently. Indeed, the confraternity Tapihan belonged to saw many more entrants into it because of this presumed healing. Even her husband, the chief, joined because of this. Alcina ends his account of Tapihan with this statement: "In her youth this noble woman had a reputation as a priestess [*maganito*], as were the superior ones in their superstitions. Hence, her example makes the greatest impression of all."¹³⁸

Tapihan, like the other women discussed, was a woman of standing in her society. She influenced many people around her and, at one time, was wealthy. She was married to three different chiefs, making her part of the *principales* class. Her former position as a *maganito* also gave her social power. While Alcina never goes into specific detail about how the Jesuits appropriated her role as a former *maganito*, it is clear that her spiritual position in her society influenced others to follow her. When she chose to join the confraternity publicly, others

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 3:150-151.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 3:152-153.

followed her example and joined as well. Though blind, many interpreted her weaving of the blankets as a miracle and a sign that the Christian God existed and worked through Tapihan. Tapihan wielded many forms of social power, and they were all important in motivating those of her town to commit more fully to Catholicism, confess their sins to the clergy, and to join the confraternity.

Appropriating the Wealthy and Influential Women

As discussed in the introductory chapter, the Dominicans relied on the woman Balinan after Caquenga the *maganito* rebelled against them and motivated several others to join her revolt. Balinan, the sister of the chief and a wealthy member of society, motivated the people of Nalfotan to accept baptism after years of observing the Catholic faith. Despite her conversion, she maintained her wealth, her status as a *principales*, and dedicated herself to teach the Catholic doctrine to the Cagayans. She became a public symbol of opposition to Caquenga. The Dominicans used her feminine influence to show the people that she could stay influential and wealthy even after accepting the Catholic faith. Many people saw this and her devotion, and thousands supposedly accepted baptism within the next twenty years.

Similar events occurred in the central and southern Philippines with the three examples shared previously. Catholic missionaries utilized Isabel because of her societal position, publicly baptized her, taught her the doctrine, and allowed her to teach it. The Religious also publicly baptized the wealthy Caliman, encouraged her to become a beata, and to donate her wealth, to liberate her slaves, and credited her example for the influx of indigenous people preparing for baptism. Lastly, Tapihan, the wife of three separate chiefs, publicly took her oaths to join the

confraternity and experienced a miraculous healing. These elements encouraged others to become more diligent in following Catholic teachings and to join the confraternity as well.

These accounts all have common elements. First, the public nature of the woman's acceptance of and devotion to Catholicism. The Catholic clergy found women who were influential, all of who occupied important roles in their society as members of the *principalia*. These positions gave them power over others. These women all followed Catholicism and demonstrated their devotion to other members of their society. Balinan, Isabel, and Tapihan also taught the religion. Caliman went about as a model to help the poor, the sick, and the dead. Their Catholic lives were public, and they influenced people around them with their examples and societal positions.

Second, these women were wealthy or occupied high positions in society. From the accounts, we know that Balinan and Caliman were wealthy at the time of conversion and during their tenure as faithful Catholic women. Tapihan was wealthy, but lost her wealth over time. However, she still maintained influence over her town as a woman of the *principalia*. Isabel was wealthy as well, being a member of the *principalia* and probably the owner of slaves. Wealth, as explained earlier, was a form of social power. Wealth belonged to high status women and gave them influence and power within their societies and families. Catholic missionaries could not ignore this fact and had to work with women to gain access to this influence.

Third, they were all women who had chosen Catholicism over animism. They stood as symbols in favor and support of Catholicism over that of animism, albeit the motivations of these women of standing to accept Catholicism could have been attempts to preserve their position in society. Balinan showed the people in Nalfotan that women could follow Catholicism and still be wealthy and influential, counteracting Caquenga's powerful rebellion. She also reported

animist ceremonies to the priests. Isabel accepted baptism and became a public symbol to oppose the influence of the *babaylans* of Cebu who fought hard to force the Spanish to leave the islands. Caliman became a “rare example” of penance and virtue to those around her who were unfamiliar with the Catholic teachings. Tapihan herself was a former *maganito*, but abandoned that position, at least to the knowledge of Alcina, to become a Catholic. She furthered her commitment to Catholicism when she joined the confraternity and asked for healing from the Virgin Mary as opposed from another *maganito*.

These women transformed their societies and influenced several others to accept and follow Catholicism. The Catholic clergy knew this and utilized this knowledge. They publicly displayed these women for all to see and told their stories to others. They had them teach the doctrine to the community, encouraged them to make additional vows and to serve publicly as *beatas* or as members of confraternities. They used them for their wealth to convert their slaves and servants. They appropriated their societal power of wealth to strengthen the influence of the Catholic church in their respective villages and settlements. The Catholics appropriated these women of influence to further colonize the Philippines through the means of Christianization.

Chapter 2

Miracles, Visions, Healings, and Catholic Authority

An important issue that the Catholic clergy in sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines could not overlook was the indigenous *maganito* role of medicinal healer and medium with the supernatural world. If the missionaries removed these medicinal and spiritual roles with no apparent replacement, the indigenous people would revert back to their animist traditions to find communication between the seen and unseen world and to seek healing from physical ailments and illnesses. The missionaries had to find means to replicate these indigenous spiritual aspects within a Catholic framework to encourage the people to accept Catholicism and reject animism. Fortunately for the clergy, these indigenous practices could be transformed into events that could promote and expand the Catholic church, as long as they were incorporated into an appropriate Catholic framework. Catholic framework is defined as the theological structure of Catholicism that is composed of central doctrines, including Catholic understanding of deity, the spiritual authority of the clergy, the importance of heeding the commandments of the Church, and the need to participate in the sacrament ceremonies.

As this chapter will show, Catholic clergy approved of and promoted indigenous accounts of healings, miracles, and visions as long as they were incorporated into the Catholic framework of the religion and did not threaten the authority of the existing Catholic clergy. In instances where these accounts did threaten the authority of the Catholic priesthood or did not fall in line with Catholic doctrine, the clergy attributed the supernatural event to the devil. These accounts are all amplified because of the involvement of indigenous women and the inherent feminine nature of the spiritual power of the *maganito*. The roles of spiritual mediums and healers originally belonged to the women *maganito* or their *bayog* counterparts. These accounts

show that the Catholic clergy did not entirely supplant the indigenous traditions of women working closely with deities and the supernatural, but appropriated them in a way where they could fall in line with Catholic dogma and promote the growth of the Church during initial colonization.

This process of accepting indigenous claims to visions is a form of syncretism. Jossianna Arroyo describes syncretism as “the creation of new cultural practices by the fusion of two or more religious or social influences.” She also states that all “cultures in Latin American are syncretic – a fusion of European and indigenous or African elements.” Arroyo claims that syncretism is also a form of “transculturation,” which she describes as the process of exchange in which linguistic, economic, racial, gendered, and cultural elements are shared between two societies. It is a two-way process layered in complex processes of power, loss, and production.¹³⁹ Syncretism was an important element in the exchange of religious ideas between Catholic missionaries and indigenous peoples in both Latin America and the Philippines. When missionaries relayed Catholic doctrines and theology to indigenous people, the people often accepted it based on their own understanding of the supernatural or the spiritual.¹⁴⁰ This chapter shows that Catholic missionaries accepted and propagated these received perceptions of Catholic doctrine, theology, and the supernatural, or syncretisms, if it continued to give the priests spiritual power.

One example of syncretism comes from indigenous adoption of Catholic saints in Mexico. Jacques Lafaye’s *Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe* argues that the pre-Columbian Mexican gods Quetzalcoatl and the mother goddess were transformed into quasi-Catholic figures.

¹³⁹ Jossianna Arroyo, “Transculturation, Syncretism, and Hybridity” in *Critical Terms in Caribbean and Latin American Thought: Historical and Institutional Trajectories*, ed. Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, Ben. Sifuentes-Jáuregui & Marisa Belausteguigoitia, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 133-44.

¹⁴⁰ Rafael, *Contracting*, 167-209.

Quetzalcoatl became associated with an apostle, usually St. Thomas, while the Mother Goddess Tonantzin became identified with the Virgin of Guadalupe of Extremadura in Spain. Through time, these images transformed, becoming more “Indian” in appearance, taking on indigenous physical features, while still being Christian in identity and association to the Church and Bible.¹⁴¹ The indigenous people of Mexico incorporated the Virgin and the apostles into their own framework of understanding the supernatural and highly venerated beings by combining the Catholic figures with indigenous deities.

Louise M. Burkhart’s *Before Guadalupe* discusses the syncretism of the Virgin of Guadalupe, as well. She states, “translated into Nahuatl in New Spain, European discourses are no longer European, and Mary is no longer quite the same Mary.” Continuing, she explains that the Virgin was translated and is “now directed to a Nahua audience, and no one who produced or used these materials considered Nahuas to be the same as Spaniards.”¹⁴² Here, Burkhart demonstrates that as the Virgin transferred to Nahua culture, the image of the Virgin adapted to Nahua understanding. Through transculturation, the Virgin becomes more Nahua and less Spanish.

This process of syncretism existed in the Philippines as well, which is why the missionaries utilized the indigenous women in the process of transculturation. Women and the *bayog* were the spiritual leaders of the indigenous societies. To better translate Catholic ideas and concepts into indigenous understanding, feminine figures had to participate. Thus, Catholic missionaries appropriated indigenous women’s experiences to help translate Catholic theology, doctrine, or dogma into indigenous interpretations, allowing communities to better understand

¹⁴¹ Jacques Lafaye, *Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe: The Formation of Mexican National Consciousness, 1531-1813*, trans. Benjamin Keen (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1976), x-xvi, 9-19, 303-314.

¹⁴² Louise M. Burkhart, *Before Guadalupe: The Virgin Mary in Early Colonial Nahuatl Literature* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 5.

Catholicism, and, most importantly, the perceived spiritual power the religion held and the superiority it had over animism.

William Henry Scott in his work *Barangay* shows how many of the indigenous societies of the precolonial sixteenth century Philippines relied on their *maganitos* to commune with supernatural spirits and forces.¹⁴³ This was done through elaborate ceremonies, either public or private, where the people summoned the *maganito* for a variety of reasons. In describing the *Catalona*, the *maganitos* of the Tagalog regions, Scott says, “as spirit mediums, they conducted seances during which they spoke with the voice of deities or spirits... to carry on a dialogue with the supernatural, or sent their own *kaluluwa* [soul] to seek literally lost souls.”¹⁴⁴ This scene was common throughout the archipelago. *Maganitos* held these “seances,” or *paganitos*, to use an indigenous term describing these ceremonies, to intervene with the unseen spiritual world in order to help the people of the physical world. *Maganitos* performed the *paganitos* to ask supernatural spirits to heal the sick, send rain, provide a bountiful harvest, assist the community in their warfare, and a variety of other reasons.

Women and their *bayog* counterparts were the spiritual mediums. Societal and cultural roles had given women and the *bayog* the responsibility to heal the sick and to have contact with the supernatural realm. Barbara Watson Andaya states that “of all the bodily fluids, menstrual blood had the capacity to work the greatest magic” in the Philippine animist traditions. Female fertility was seen as a powerful force with a potential of danger.¹⁴⁵ However, once a woman passed menopause and stopped emitting menstrual blood, her position on the male-female spectrum moved accordingly, becoming more “male-like.” Andaya states that being “female in

¹⁴³ Scott, *Barangay*, 83-87, 184-185, 239-242.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 239. Italics added.

¹⁴⁵ Andaya, *Flaming*, 71-72.

anatomy and life experiences, and yet biologically more ‘male-like,’ they embodied the coexistence of sexual opposites that underlay so much Austronesian symbolism” and gave them more spiritual power.¹⁴⁶ Thus women in sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines were seen as magical through their reproductive abilities and older women would incorporate both male and female attributes after menopause, giving them a symbolic societal position through the unification of sexual opposites. This unification of sexual opposites also gave older women more spiritual power, incorporating both the “male-like” and the “female-like.” A similar phenomenon existed with the *bayog*, which will be discussed more in the fourth chapter.

With the coming of Catholicism, these indigenous roles had to either be supplanted by the Catholic clergy or incorporated into Catholic practices and theology. Brewer goes into detail regarding the various methods used by Catholic clergy in the early colonial period to supplant indigenous healings and supernatural communions with fundamental Catholic teachings, prayers, miracles, and relying on the Catholic saints. She uses the example of turning over the role of midwifery from the *maganitos* to the Catholic clergy and the usage of the image of Saint Ignatius of Loyola in several child birthing instances. Missionaries saw St. Ignatius as the patron saint of childbirth because of the many miracles associated with him, especially the number of successful births that came when mothers prayed to him during child labor. Instead of calling on the *maganitos*, these indigenous women would call on the Catholic saint to help them deliver a child. With the opening of confraternities throughout the islands, the roles of the *maganito* further diminished as these women giving birth called upon the members of the confraternities to help them in their child labor.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 72.

¹⁴⁷ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 113-117.

Alfred W. McCoy's article "Baylan: Animist Religion and Philippine Peasant Ideology" describes the transformation and survival of Philippine animism during and after Spanish colonization and its integration into Hispanic and Catholic culture.¹⁴⁸ While his work spans the sixteenth to twentieth centuries, it reveals much about the adaptation of indigenous animism to Catholicism, including the incorporation of Catholic symbols, or ideas, prayers, and principles, in animist healing rituals that still exist today. He also mentions the Catholic interpretation of indigenous spiritual power being manipulated by the devil in an attempt to deceive the indigenous populations from learning the Catholic "truth." If Catholic clergy observed something supernatural that did not fit in their framework of theology and threatened their spiritual authority, they blamed it on the devil because the events encouraged people to turn away from Catholicism. One particularly interesting account McCoy shares is an event in the seventeenth century where a Franciscan priest attempts to harvest fruit from a tree in Zambales.¹⁴⁹ The indigenous Sambals see him about to do it and warn him that it is a forbidden tree consecrated to an indigenous spirit, which the Franciscans believed to be a devil. They warn that if he touches it, he will die immediately. The priest offers a prayer and harvests the fruit, and he survived. Through this Catholic ritual of prayer, he left the indigenous people in awe of his ability to overcome the perceived dangers of their world view. The Franciscan demonstrated through syncretism the spiritual superiority of Catholicism over the indigenous understanding of the supernatural.

Using this and other examples, McCoy then argues that this Franciscan priest and other missionaries like him used the Catholic idea of the *miraculous* to overpower, what McCoy calls,

¹⁴⁸ Alfred W. McCoy, "Baylan: Animist Religion and Philippine Peasant Ideology" in *Moral Order and the Question of Change: Essays on Southeast Asian Thought* ed. David K. Wyatt and Alexander Woodside (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asian Studies, 1982), (24): 338-395.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 356-357.

the Filipino animist idea of the *magical*. In essence, the missionaries used the “power of the Catholic symbols to overwhelm malign spirits – a technique strikingly similar to that used by the native *baylan*.”¹⁵⁰ These Catholic symbols included crosses, crucifixes, rosaries, images of the saints, and prayers. They all possessed spiritual power in Catholicism, and the clergy used them to show spiritual and religious superiority to the animist traditions.

McCoy and Brewer both show how the Catholic clergy used Catholic symbols and rituals to supplant indigenous beliefs and to promote a superiority of Catholic spirituality. Brewer shows how the clergy essentially replaced the indigenous system through widespread promotion of loyal Catholic converts and the utilization of Saint Ignatius. McCoy shows how Catholics used symbols to overpower the evil spirits and religion of the indigenous people. These techniques were powerful in promoting Catholicism and overpowering the influence of indigenous animism.

One of the more common doctrines spread throughout the Spanish colonies was the veneration of the Virgin Mary. As the Mother of God, the Virgin occupied a high status in the Catholic Church and this status was reiterated in the Council of Trent. The Council also set her as a model of the ideal woman: chaste and sexually in control.¹⁵¹ The Virgin was portrayed as sinless; a holy person being able to bear the Son of God. This sinless status made her clean, and hospitals and chapels used her as a symbol for healing and cleansing.¹⁵² With the example of the Virgin of Guadalupe, several stories exist about her being linked to healings throughout the Christianization process of the Nahua people.¹⁵³ The Nahua syncretized the Virgin in a way where penitential acts and verbalized petitions helped bring miracles and healings to them. This

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 358.

¹⁵¹ Twinam, “Honor,” 120.

¹⁵² Burkhart, *Before*, 9.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 9-10, 131-132.

expanded their worship of her to elaborate ceremonies and a myriad of prayers, both simple and complex, in their indigenous language.¹⁵⁴ The same idea of syncretism with the cult of the Virgin existed in the Philippines, as seen with Tapihan.

According to Alcina's account, Tapihan, after praying to the Virgin Mary for help in her difficult circumstance of blindness and an ill husband, claimed to have experienced a miracle. During the night, she was able to distinguish shapes and objects, allowing her to work on her husband's plot of land and to weave blankets. While Alcina explicitly states that he did not know whether or not the event was a miracle, he notes how it brought several people from the surrounding villages to join the confraternities and to be more diligent with their confessions.¹⁵⁵ This event recorded by Alcina shows that some indigenous communities adhered more diligently to Catholic precepts and teachings once they learned of the experiences and perceived miracles of other indigenous persons. The widespread promotion of Catholic-sanctioned miracles and healings to indigenous populations, like the dissemination of Tapihan's story to her village and the villages surrounding hers, encouraged people to strengthen their commitment to Catholicism, thus strengthening the power of the Church. Alcina's account also shows the syncretism of the cult of the Virgin. This healing, attributed to the Virgin Mary, was an indigenous translation of the power of the Virgin. She was able to heal Tapihan, though Alcina himself is unsure if the event was actually a miracle. Regardless of Alcina's opinion of the healing, the people interpreted it as a miraculous healing through their indigenous perspective and began participating more in the confraternities and the sacraments.

Alcina's account of Tapihan, of course, is not the only example of syncretism between Catholic ideas and indigenous culture. The following accounts also show indigenous women

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 149-150.

¹⁵⁵ Alcina, *Historia*, 3:144-153.

having miraculous experiences, all of which fit into a Catholic framework and, in many cases, helped promote the growth of the Church in the Philippine Islands. Indigenous women were also the recipients of these miracles, adding power and influence to their stories because of their perceived spiritual abilities through the indigenous understanding of gender and spirituality. Through these women's encounters with the Catholic divine, the indigenous feminine spiritual roles were transferred from the *maganitos* and animism to the Catholic priests and Catholicism.

Tangui

Luciano Santiago's *To Love and to Suffer* examines Augustinian accounts of the history of Our Lady of Caysasay, mentioning an event that took place in 1619 in Batangas where two women went out to fetch water from a spring.¹⁵⁶ Near the spring was a shrine of the Virgin that many claimed to be miraculous. As these two women went near the image, they saw a light shining from the image and they left the site in awe and fear because of what they perceived to be a miraculous manifestation. Pilgrims began flocking to the site in search of healing. One woman, named Juana Tangui, was brought there by her mistress to bathe. Tangui was a slave to the woman and suffered from a chronic inflammation of the eyes. While bathing, Santiago recounts that "[Tangui]'s sight was instantly restored as she made out a vivid light on the water. Several witnesses, mostly noblewomen, also saw 'a blaze of light emanating from a figure that appeared like a living person,' thus corroborating her claim."¹⁵⁷

As the Church began to investigate the claim of these visions, they questioned Tangui hoping to get more details. She said she saw the Virgin Mary and talked to her extensively. The Virgin asked her to join a nearby confraternity and to return once she received its distinctive

¹⁵⁶ Santiago, *Love and Suffer*, 33-35.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

sash. The confraternity, ran by the Augustinians, approved of Tangui's request, even though she was a slave. She returned to the site with others from the confraternity. The Virgin appeared to her again, although the others could not see her. Asking for a visible sign of the Virgin's presence, Tangui took her sash and rosary, along with the sashes and rosaries of those from the confraternity who followed her, and the Virgin blessed them. To commemorate these visions, the clergy had an arch erected with an image of the Virgin at the site of the spring.

While Santiago's work is subject to its biases in wanting to promote the Catholic Church, and show that the Christianization of the Philippine archipelago was ultimately beneficial to the Filipino people, this account still has value. It shows that indigenous Philippine women claimed to have visions, that these claims were accepted by Catholic authorities, and that their visions influenced the people around them, with pilgrims flocking to the site of the shining light seeking healing and the subsequent healing of Tangui. When she claimed to have seen the Virgin and was healed by her divine power, this authenticated the doctrine of the Catholic church through a physical manifestation of the healing ability of the Virgin Mary and her divine mercy on all those who call her. It also encouraged indigenous people to learn more about the Catholic Church and learn what they must do to be healed by the Virgin as Tangui was healed through her devotion.

These healings also gave power to the Catholic church as it supplanted indigenous animism. People no longer had to seek out a *maganito* to be healed of an infirmity when they could seek out the Virgin or go on a pilgrimage such as the one in Batangas. However, Catholicism did not completely replace animism. Animism still survived the Christianization of the islands and indigenous Philippine people continued to rely on the works of the *maganitos* and their animist successors in subsequent centuries. The understanding of the Virgin's healing power was translated into the Tagalog understanding of healing that came through the healing of

Tangui. The Tagalogs understood that the Virgin could heal them as well, and people began turning to Catholicism to seek healing.

Maguilabun

Tangui's healing is just one of many recorded accounts of an indigenous Philippine woman believed to be healed by the Virgin Mary. Aduarte describes the miraculous healing of a young boy because of the faithfulness of his aunt.¹⁵⁸ In 1623, the Dominicans put up an altar with an image of the Lady of the Rosary between the Cagayan settlements of Piat and Tuao in Northern Luzon. One woman, a Doña Ynes Maguilabun, one of the women of the *principalia* in Piat, took care of the altar with her slaves and frequented the site with a polished lamp that continuously burned in front of the image. Aduarte states that, "it did not take long for the Virgin to reward her for this devotion and particular service."¹⁵⁹ This woman brought her five-year-old nephew to the altar. This child suffered from a large abscess under his left arm "in a very bad place being so close to the heart."¹⁶⁰

After she took this child to the altar with the intent to ask the Virgin for a blessing, Maguilabun got carried away with other tasks, leaving her nephew alone. The story continues: "The boy went to the altar of our Lady and, to what he later said, asked for health. He then fell asleep on the base of the altar of the Virgin."¹⁶¹ Upon waking up, the abscess was gone. The Dominican at the site caught news of the event, who inquired about both the boy and Maguilabun, and deemed it a miracle, referencing that the image "had done other wonders."¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Aduarte, *Historia de la Provincia*, 1:307-310.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:308.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

News of the child's healing spread quickly, and so did its relation to the Lady of the Rosary:

The boy's infirmity was well known because he was a young member of the principle class [*principalia*]. The people then witnessed him healthy through such an effective cure that was so brief and without pain. They observed this miraculous instance which was the very work of the Mother of Mercy, who wished to perform many other deeds to these poor *indios* and wanted to increase their devotion greatly and comfort them with the example of this child's cure.¹⁶³

The people of Piat, and perhaps the surrounding settlements, learned quickly what power this new Catholic religion could have.

In the following year of 1624, a drought affected the region. In an attempt to counter the drought, one Dominican convinced several of the settlements to make processions to the image. As the different settlements did this, the people of Piat confessed their sins hoping this would alleviate the drought. According to the account, it did, and the "floodgates of heaven"¹⁶⁴ poured over Piat, but not on Tuao. The Dominicans reminded the people of Tuao that they had not confessed their sins and that God was withholding the rains from them. The people of Tuao began confessing their sins, and when the night came, so did the rain.

Here we see two specific miracles being described: the healing of Maguilabun's nephew and the cessation of a drought through the faithful obedience of the indigenous Cagayans. The first is similar to Tangui at Tapihan. Through whatever means, Maguilabun, just like the other loyal Catholic women, was performing a specific Catholic deed and received a miracle when her

¹⁶³ Ibid. The document used the term "*principalito*" to describe the child's social status. This is translated as "a young member of the principle class."

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 1:310.

nephew was healed of his dangerous abscess. While she actively did not pray to the Virgin in this account, the fact that she was assisting the Virgin by taking care of the Virgin's altar supposedly encouraged the holy being to bless her and her nephew. The Virgin also supposedly used the nephew as a means to increase the devotion of the Cagayans and "comfort them with the example of this child's cure." The nephew, who belonged to a well-known family, became a public example of how the Virgin and the Catholic Church could help the indigenous people. Being brought to the altar by a diligent Christian woman only helped this argument.

Instead of needing to rely on the animist traditions for healing and comfort, the Cagayan community could now turn to the Catholic faith with the assistance of the Mother of Mercy. Rather than turning to *maganitos* and their feminine model of healing, they could turn to the matriarchal mercy and grace of the Virgin. Not only did the Cagayans have proof of the Virgin's mercy, but Maguilabun initiated it. She was a woman of high affluence, influential in her town. Yet instead of relying on animist traditions to heal her son, she relied on this new Catholic faith. And, according to Aduarte, the Virgin blessed her for her obedience. Maguilabun, through her own influence as a woman of the *principalia*, encouraged others to follow the precepts of Catholicism more thoroughly through her diligence in maintaining the shrine and through her nephew's subsequent healing.

This miracle spread further as the image of the Virgin gained prominence. Because of this healing and Maguilabun's involvement, the priests used the Virgin's image as a means to expand the Catholic influence. When a drought hit the local area in 1624, they used the image to encourage the Cagayans to more devoutly follow the teachings of the Catholic clergy. This was done through processions and confessions. Once rain began to pour on the people of Piat but not

on Tuao, the priests manipulated the event to encourage the people of Tuao to attend to their confessions and submit more fully to Catholic authority.

Maguilabun's faithful acts of devotions to the image helped expand Catholic power in the region because of her social status, the healing of her nephew, and her symbol as a woman benefiting from Catholicism without the assistance of the feminine-led indigenous animism. Her nephew's healing through the image of the Virgin Mary added validity to its power, which the priests could then manipulate to subjugate more Cagayans to their influence and teachings through processions and confessions.

Healings and Miracles Recorded by the Jesuits

Several more stories of healings and miracles exist throughout missionary records. One particular historical work, *Relacion de las Islas Filipinas*, written by Jesuit historian Fray Pedro Chirino, recounts many of these that occurred throughout the Jesuit missions in the Philippines. Chirino does not go into detail with these accounts, but provides enough information to show that indigenous women experienced miracles and healings through interaction with Catholic clergy, the Christian God, or the Catholic saints. In 1596 at the settlement of Paloc on Leyte, a woman was very ill with an unnamed illness and had herself carried near some holy images. Chirino claims that God answered her faith and healed her. She then made it public that the images cured her.¹⁶⁵ Another incident happened in 1598 near Manila, when a woman who suffered at the hands of an abusive husband was about to throw herself into the water. A voice believed to be sent from God stopped her saying, "What are you doing, woman? Trust in God,

¹⁶⁵ Father Pedro Chirino and S. J. Roma, *Relacion de las Islas Filipinas* (Rome: Estevan Paulino, 1604), 67, accessed from Österreichische Nationalbibliothek - Austrian National Library, http://digital.onb.ac.at/OnbViewer/viewer.faces?doc=ABO_%2BZ166475101, accessed May 2, 2017. Translations are my own.

and your husband will treat you well.”¹⁶⁶ She trusted in the voice, and her husband came and caressed her and treated her with kindness. Around the year 1600,¹⁶⁷ a woman of Bohol fell violently ill and called for the sacrament of unction. She healed rapidly and regained her entire health.¹⁶⁸ One last account takes place in the settlement of Tanay in Negros around the year 1600. A woman of influence fell ill with madness and began running into walls and could not be held down. She began to die, and the clergy brought her holy water. After administering the holy water to her, the Jesuit priest began to hear her last confession. But as she confessed, the illness left her. She went to the church the next day and told many about the miracle that happened to her the day previous.¹⁶⁹

All of these miraculous events show the many ways Jesuit missionaries described indigenous women interacting with the Christian God. They show how women supposedly benefitted through what the account describes as divine intervention after their Christianization. It gave space for women to receive spiritual blessings by following the precepts of Catholicism without needing to rely on animism. More importantly, Jesuit missionaries sanctioned these events and recorded them in a way that strengthened their religious authority. These perceived supernatural occurrences happened, or at least were recorded, in line with Catholic and Jesuit teachings during that time. The experiences pointed people to a powerful Christian God who would protect and heal them as they followed the Jesuits and their teachings. Having women, the traditional spiritual figures, receive these divine manifestations, further strengthened their validity among the indigenous communities. It created space for women to still communicate

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁶⁷ The years are not specified in the Bohol and Negros accounts, but due to the chronological nature of Chirino’s work, it is assumed they occurred around these times.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 160.

with divine or supernatural beings and to bring about miraculous healings through these beings, as the *maganitos* did in animism. But this Jesuit acceptance allowed women to have these supernatural experiences only through a Catholic framework, enabling them to hold onto these traditional ideas of healings and communing with the unseen world through the lens of Catholic doctrine and practices.

Campan

The women described by Chirino had agency and chose to follow Catholic precepts and divulge their experiences to the Jesuits. However, other women chose to rebel. One account from Mindanao shows how a woman rebelled against her Catholic leaders, even after adopting certain Catholic precepts. The Recollects in the area could not accept her partial adoption of Catholicism because it threatened their power and authority in the region.

In 1631 in the Caraga area of Mindanao, various chiefs started an armed resistance against colonial officials and Catholic priests. As told in Luis de Jesús' account,¹⁷⁰ the resistance started because of Captain Pedro Bautista, a colonist working to subdue the indigenous people to the Spanish crown. He was heavily focused on raiding the indigenous settlements throughout the region to gain submission. One raid triggered a wide-spread violent conflict where the indigenous people killed several Spaniards and Augustinians. One of the Augustinians killed was Father Jacinto who died while listening to the confessions of a dying Spaniard.

After Jacinto's passing, one of the chiefs, named Mangabo, decided to hold a mass near the Tago River. The account states that he said, "'Come,' (he said in ridicule), 'to the Mass of Father Mangabo.'"¹⁷¹ The account continues with: "The people assembled at the Church of our

¹⁷⁰ Jesus, *Historia General*, 163-169.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 165.

Convent and an *India* named Maria Campan, revered for having a good life, dressed, and went through the aspersion, saying when she sprinkled the water, ‘I am Father Jacinto.’”¹⁷² The mass continued with Mangabo breaking a crucifix and cutting it with his *kris*, or indigenous blade, asking the Castilian God to fight him. Afterward, he and his followers pillaged the convent and church and killed a servant in the convent.

Mangabo and his followers continued on to other convents and churches, pillaging and killing clergy. Eventually Mangabo made his way back to the convent at Tago, encountered two priests, and proclaimed that he would defend them with his life. “Our Good God,” the account reads, “who knows how to draw water from the hard rock, changed the Barbarian’s heart.”¹⁷³ After talking to the priests for some time, Maria Campan approached one of them with a small chest which held the convent’s chrismatories, or vessels containing consecrated oil for the sacraments. The priest commanded her to keep the chrismatories, wrapped the chest in a cloth, told her to not open it, and promised her six pesos once he could obtain the money.

Maria Campan held true to the priest’s command. The Spanish decided it was time to punish the indigenous people. She fled up river to escape the conflicts in a *baroto*, or indigenous outrigger sail boat, with the chest. In the word of the Recollect account, “she carried the chrismatories in her skirt, with other things, when a deformed *cayman* [crocodile] leaped from the middle of the river, arriving at the [*baroto*], shoved his head and grabbed the Crismera with his mouth, and with a great roar, he leapt back into the water.”¹⁷⁴ The event astonished Campan. She repented for her sins, looked for the priests, told them what happened, and became a good Christian woman.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

In her analysis of Campan's role in the rebellion, Oona Paredes accesses more documents describing the rebellion. Campan's role in the rebellion was allotted its own special hearing and was treated with the same gravity as that of those who murdered Catholic authorities.¹⁷⁵ Paredes argues that this gravity in treating Campan's role is because of Iberian understanding of gender and gender roles during the time. Campan posed as a priest, taking on public role that attempted to supplant Spanish authority in the rebellion. Officials documented this event as blasphemy and not apostasy, suggesting that they did not interpret it as her reversion to animism. They accused her of mocking her own religion of Christianity, not stepping away from it. Moreover, her crime is stepping into the realm of masculinity and of the European: a clear attempt to usurp the order of gender and racial superiority that the Spanish colonial regime tried to establish. Only a European man could be a priest, and Campan was obviously not, and further insulted the faith by taking that role in the midst of a rebellion. Coupled with her blasphemy, this attitude made the Spanish view her crime with the same gravity as those who murdered the clergy.

However, the Recollects later accepted her reentry, or her redetermination, to Catholicism by pardoning her of her perceived apostasy. According to Paredes, this reentry is because of the "complex intimacy of the missionary-convert relationship."¹⁷⁶ Trust and betrayal played important roles in these relationships, and the Recollects found themselves trusting the indigenous people when they recommitted to Catholic doctrine out of the need to work with indigenous people through the negotiation processes of colonization. The Recollects depended on relationships of trust with indigenous people, and this dependence on this trust allowed them to forgive betrayal more easily. The Recollects could accept Campan's rededication to

¹⁷⁵ Paredes, *Mountain*, 83-119.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 84.

Catholicism and overlook her attempt to occupy the European and male realms when she demonstrated her willingness to work with the priests and save the chrismatories.

Paredes argues that Campan's actions of impersonating a dead Recollect was a heavy offense due to Iberian cultural understandings of race, gender, and religion. Campan sought a position of power as a Philippine woman in a realm that only belonged to European men trained in that field. Despite this offense, and because of her miraculous conversion that sustained the spiritual authority and superiority of the Catholic Church, as well as her willingness to help the Church with the transportation of the chrismatories, the Recollects regained their trust in her and accepted her willingness to resubmit to their authority. The story also shows the perceived superiority of the Recollect order over the indigenous rebellions. Obedience to the recollects supposedly gave Campan a change of heart, even after the grievous sin the Recollects accused her of committing.

This remarkable account illuminates various themes of race, gender, and miracles. According to the Recollects, Campan committed blasphemy and disgraced her own faith as a Christian, but her subsequent devotion to the faith and the Recollects made the priests reconsider her standing as a Christian. It appears that Campan's change of loyalty from Mangabo to the Recollects is her attempt to maintain a level of religious autonomy. The account never mentions if Campan was a *maganito* before her conversion to Christianity, but it does show how the Spanish acquired power in the region, but began to lose that power through rebellion, and then violently suppressed rebels in an attempt to regain control. Campan seems to be working within this framework. First, she accepts Christianity at some point before the rebellion with the coming of the Spanish. Once Mangabo gains power and promises to drive the Spanish and the Recollects out of the region, Campan quickly follows him and acts as a religious figure in his mass. Then,

seeing that the Spanish sought to put down the rebellion violently, she began working with the Recollects again. Campan's actions imply that she was not necessarily loyal to either the Recollects or the rebels, but that she was looking after her own interests for survival. The rebels were fighting against the colonizers and the Recollects, and Caliman chose to be loyal to the rebels during the rebellion until the Spanish began raiding the area. Seeing that the rebels were under fire, she then chose to help the Recollects. Her actions also suggest that she wanted to maintain some religious or spiritual role. She acted as a priest in Mangabo's mass and looked after the chrismatories when she went back to the Recollects. When the chrismatories disappeared, Campan told the Recollects a miraculous story of a *cayman* divine intervention to explain where they went.

The Recollects accepted this story and Campan's redetermination to be a devout Christian because she sought to help them in a time of need and her story validated their authority. The sacred chrismatories saved her life in her attempt to obey the priest that charged her with protecting the chrismatories. It was after this event that de Jesús begins describing her in a positive manner, describing her as a good Christian. Once she demonstrated that she would submit to Augustinian authority and claimed to receive a divine manifestation of protection from her obedience, then she was readmitted into the Christian community despite her previous rebellion.

The account does not specify if Campan's actions influenced others or how far the Recollects disseminated the story, but it does show how Recollects rejected certain indigenous women's attempts to adopt Catholic principles because they usurped Catholic authority and fell out of line with Catholic dogma. Despite this, it also shows how quickly Augustinians accepted miraculous events that strengthened their power and fell in line with their doctrines.

Jesuit Rejections of Convert Visions

The Recollects were not the only order to reject indigenous women's claims to Catholic visions and miracles. In Chirino's account we read about the Jesuits in the Manila area encountering a group of *maganitos*, locally called *Catolonas* in the Tagalog language. This occurred sometime around 1597 after the Jesuits resettled many of the Tagalogs from their sprawled-out locations into various villages. This particular case took place in San Juan del Monte. Chirino's account states:

There was a group of useless women, the *Catolonas* who have nearly tyrannized the village in secrecy. They compel and coerce many through various means and plots to come to them on all occasions, which formerly was done before they became Christians. Among these was a leader, who said that her *anito* was a very close friend of the *anito* of the Christians, and who descended from heaven. This stirred the fire even more because she was not only powerful in both sagacity (which she possessed in reality), but her influence and reputation in the village.¹⁷⁷

Chirino recounts that the lead *Catolona* had many sons who married into prominent families throughout the village.

The secret society of *Catolonas* led by this woman existed for quite some time, as "it is assumed that two years passed with this secret pestilence occurring, tyrannizing the town so that there was almost no sick person who they did not go to with all diligence."¹⁷⁸ The Jesuits did not learn about this until some loyal Christian Tagalogs reported the continuation of animist practices in the village, which distraught the Jesuits because it revealed that their religious and spiritual authority was weaker than they thought. Despite their constant desire to eradicate

¹⁷⁷ Chirino, *Relacion*, 56.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.

animism in the village, Tagalogs continued to go to and support the *Catolonas*. The Jesuits began relying on these loyal Tagalogs to make reports about the continued animist practices, in which the Jesuits discovered *Catolonas* of lower ranks. Working with these lower *Catolonas*, the Jesuits worked their way up the secret society's hierarchy until they discovered the lead *Catolona*. Once they found her, every effort was made to destroy the objects of the animist ceremonies (which Chirino calls the "idols"). This they did, making sure to remove the gold from the more prized "idols" to be used for the service of the Church before throwing them in the fire.

After this incident, the lead *Catolona* experienced "visions and cruel threats" from the devil.¹⁷⁹ After experiencing the what may have appeared to be the superior Catholic ability to destroy her "idols" and society, she lost her faith in the power of her *anito* and begged for conversion and mercy. Her *anito*, which the Jesuits assumed to be a devil, came back to haunt her and threatened to kill her through visions and audible voices. With the help of the cross, the threats from the *anito* abated and the *anito* departed. After this event, the Jesuits publicly refuted the errors of the *Catolonas* and put them in the care of devout Tagalog Christians. The Tagalogs of San Juan del Monte, convinced of the errors of indigenous animism, brought their sacred animist garments, vessels, idols, and belongings of their ancestors to the priests to be destroyed. They also strengthened their commitment to Catholicism, attending their confessions more frequently, and reporting continuing animist activities.

Nearby in Taytay around the year 1600, Chirino recounts the efforts of Father Francisco Almerique, a Jesuit priest, to eradicate another form of "idolatry," where a woman of rank claimed to have a vision.¹⁸⁰ She declared to see the Lord Jesus Christ who "taught her many

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 112.

things and commanded her to teach the town.”¹⁸¹ Chirino notes that the devil transformed himself into “the form of our Savior Jesus Christ” and that he deceived the woman, who, in turn, deceived the people. Once Almerique discovered this woman’s story, he quickly tried to convince her it was not from God and that she should not share her experience with others. The woman, disobeying the commands of Almerique, gathered with others at night in secrecy to tell them of her vision. Chirino recounts how during these secret gatherings, those present noted that her “method of instruction and speech was like a trance that the priestesses of the idols had when they were possessed by the demon.” He also noted that it was in these trances that the demons would “give their answers by the mouths of their *Catolonas*.” Once Almerique discovered that this woman had rejected his order and began teaching others about her visions accompanied with the animistic trances, he gathered the woman and the people she taught at the church. There he told all of them that it was a trick of the devil and that the devil had deceived the woman. According to Chirino, this “evil” was done away with.

Both of these accounts show influential Tagalog women who claimed to have communications with the divine. One declared to communicate with an *anito* who was close to Jesus Christ. Another stated that she communicated with Jesus Christ himself. Because these divine interactions motivated these women to continue various animist practices and encourage others to join with them, they threatened Catholic authority. These women, after having this contact with the divine, used their experiences as a bolster to practice animism and convinced others to support them. These practices took spiritual power away from the Jesuits as these women convinced Tagalogs to listen to them and participate in their ceremonies, contrary to the Catholic demand that all animist practices should be stopped. The lead *Catolona* in San Juan del

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 112.

Monte even attempted to usurp Catholic attempts to dominate the realm of medicine. Instead of going to the Jesuit priests in the region, praying to their God and their saints, and seeking the sacraments for various healings, this *Catolona* drew the Tagalogs back into indigenous medicinal practices that revolved around animism.

To the fortune of the Jesuits, the powerful lead *Catolona* of San Juan del Monte could not hold onto her secret society for much longer. Once her secret society was unraveled, the devil supposedly began tormenting her with cruel visions and threats. This allowed the Jesuits an opportunity to show their spiritual superiority over her indigenous animism by bestowing her a cross. This utilization of the cross, the cessation of the demonic tormenting, and public humiliation of her and her fellow *Catolonas*, strengthened the position of the Jesuits. It showed submission of these spiritually powerful Tagalog women to the authority of the spiritually powerful Jesuits. It also showed the power of the Catholic framework of the supernatural. First, it showed what the Jesuits saw as the superiority of their institutionalized power. The Jesuits had the ability to discover the secret society, destroy their “idols,” and use their symbols (in this case the cross) to free the lead *Catolona* from her tormenting. Second, it promoted the idea that the animist traditions were led by the devil. This lead *Catolona*, perhaps psychologically devastated at the loss of her religious authority as a *Catolona*, was framed in a light of being tormented by the devil. Once she took the cross, a powerful Catholic symbol, these “tormentings” abated and she recovered. The same idea is presented in the visionary Tagalog woman of Taytay who claimed to see Christ and began teaching animist principles again in secret. She encouraged people to listen to her, despite the commands of Almerique. Once uncovered, Almerique took her and her followers to the church and denounced what occurred in an attempt to regain authority.

It is interesting to note that these Jesuits did not deny the existence of these visions or accused these women of lying. Chirino's account accepts that they happened. But they had to be placed in a theoretical framework that worked with Catholic authority. Therefore, the visions were interpreted as coming from the devil, deceiving the women and those under their influence. The Jesuits knew of these *Catalonas*' influence and the need to acquire that influence to enhance their spiritual power, and they condemned these women and encouraged them and their followers to accept the authority of the Catholic Church. In the case in San Juan del Monte, they even had a miraculous expulsion of a verbally violent demon to help show the head *Catalona* and her followers the superiority of the Catholic faith.

Conclusion

All of these accounts show how Catholic clergy worked with women and their supernatural experiences to expand Catholic influence. In cases where their visions and miracles could be used to bolster support for the Catholic religion, the Church adopted them and made them known. They utilized these miracles, like in the case with Maguiluban and Tanguí, to encourage others to adopt the faith or follow it more devoutly. In cases where women attempted to usurp Catholic authority by mingling animist traditions with the new Catholic faith, the clergy reconstructed their stories to show how these women rebelled and how they were not being protected by the Christian God.

The clergy found that the divine experiences indigenous women had within the Catholic Church helped promote the religion. As the *maganitos* wielded feminine power through their spiritual abilities, the missionaries and clergy appropriated this feminine power within a Catholic framework. If an indigenous woman experienced a miracle, a healing, or a vision through her

devotion to the Catholic faith, it strengthened the authority of the Church. These women became models for their indigenous communities of the perceived power Catholicism could have and how it could benefit their societies spiritually. These devout women and their experiences also became challenges to the *maganitos* and their animist traditions, which the missionaries and clergy worked diligently to suppress. If a woman claimed to have a divine experience that did not fit into the Catholic framework or threatened the power of the Church, the clergy easily modified the story to show that the manifestation came from the devil and not the Christian God. Thus, the Catholic clergy appropriated the divine experiences of indigenous women to strengthen their authority in the archipelago while silencing the experiences that threatened that authority. This appropriation became a process of syncretism that attempted to give spiritual authority to men, but continued to allow women to have supernatural spiritual experiences as long as it validated the authority of the male clergy.

Chapter 3

Power, Control, and Marriage: The Catholic Utilization of Indigenous Wives

While women held important spiritual roles in society before and after colonization, they also maintained important roles in sex and marriage during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Catholic clergy, Spanish colonial officials, and other European visitors acknowledged the type of leverage indigenous Philippine women wielded in marital and sexual relationships. This leverage, or feminine power, was distinct because only women could have it in their marital relationships. Elements such as dowries, property, and sexual practices gave women significant power in their relationships and allowed them to control men in different areas of their lives. Catholic missionaries witnessed how women encouraged their husbands to adopt Christianity. This chapter argues that missionaries understood that women held feminine power in marital and sexual relationships and harnessed that power within marriages to convert indigenous men.

Marital Relationships in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Philippines

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century Philippines, both women and men experienced more sexual liberties before and after marriage.¹⁸² In Mindanao and the Visayas, polygyny was a common practice, although it could only be practiced by men who had the economic ability to support multiple wives. This practice was limited to men in good financial standing, typically the chief of a village or a man of the higher classes.¹⁸³ According to William Henry Scott, Tagalogs also practiced concubinage, or a system with a “secondary wife...usually of lesser rank than her husband.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Francia, *History*, 41-42.

¹⁸³ Linda Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Early Spanish Philippines* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 59.

¹⁸⁴ Scott, *Barangay*, 217.

Dowries were an interesting precolonial and early colonial concept and practice in the Philippines. When a man wanted to marry a woman, he would have to pay a dowry to her family before marrying her.¹⁸⁵ The dowries men paid to the woman's family varied according to social status, wealth, and culture. As discussed in the first chapter, land was not a major source of wealth and was seen as a communal resource for a given community. Thus, men typically gave the woman's family gold, jewelry, or slaves as dowries.¹⁸⁶ In lieu of a dowry, men also worked for a period of time in the paternal house of the future bride, allowing him to engage in sexual relations with her.¹⁸⁷ Dowries therefore gave significant value to daughters. While men frequently gave these dowries to the male relatives of the bride in some cultures, particularly to her father or her brothers, it made the daughters and sisters of a family more valuable and even desired.¹⁸⁸

According to Pedro Chirino, the dowry could be returned if a marriage ended. If the marriage ended because of something the wife did, her family would lose their dowry and would have to pay it back. If the union dissolved because of the actions of the husband, the dowry remained with the wife's family.¹⁸⁹ Because of this potential to lose the dowry, the family of the bride, at least in the Visayas, worked diligently to make a marriage last with their daughters so they would not lose the dowry.¹⁹⁰

This system of dowry is the opposite of what European women experienced in the early modern period when parents of the bride often brought dowries into her marriage to add value to

¹⁸⁵ While the term "bride-wealth" may be more appropriate for situations similar to this, the Spanish documents all use the term *dote* to denote this dowry paid by men in courtship settings. Thus, the term dowry will be used to describe this transfer of wealth for this purpose.

¹⁸⁶ Scott, *Barangay*, 140-142, 270.

¹⁸⁷ Phelan, *Hispanization*, 19.

¹⁸⁸ Scott, *Barangay*, 140-142. Newson, *Conquest*, 59.

¹⁸⁹ Chirino, *Relacion*, 69-71.

¹⁹⁰ Newson, *Conquest*, 59.

their daughter. This dowry then became the husband's property and could not be owned by the woman, though some European women still managed and took care of the dowries they brought into the marriage, especially in situations where land was included as part of the dowry.¹⁹¹ In Medieval Iberia, a woman's dowry became important in the control of land and property. Marriages and inheritances were influenced by the property a woman had claim to, and a woman and her family ties became important factors in the transfer of wealth.¹⁹² The concept of negotiating a dowry after a dissolving of a marriage was not foreign to the missionaries. In Medieval Europe, if a separation occurred in a marriage, the dowry was negotiated. If the wife was at fault, she forfeited her dowry and was typically socially ostracized or physically punished. If the husband was at fault, he would have to repay the dowry alongside a heavy fine.¹⁹³

Divorce was another common practice in pre-Hispanic Philippine society. While the Catholic church forbade divorce, indigenous polities permitted its practice. Divorce could be initiated by either party, but Catholic missionaries observed it as excessive, claiming that it was a simple process triggered by the most trivial of issues. Chirino also said that it was uncommon to find a couple who were in their first marriage.¹⁹⁴ When a couple divorced, precolonial culture already had systems in place to simplify the process. Since property belonged separately to men and women, division of property after divorce was not necessary unless it was shared. Chirino elaborates the division of slaves and children among the couple. Children were divided equally between the two parties with no distinction in regard to sex, and the same rule applied to slaves that were jointly owned by the couple.¹⁹⁵ These systems helped simplify divorce and facilitated

¹⁹¹ Wiesner, *Women*, 37-38

¹⁹² Dillard, *Daughters*, 27, 47.

¹⁹³ Brundage, *Law*, 516-520.

¹⁹⁴ Chirino, *Relacion*, 69-71, Morga, *Sucesos*, 301-303, Newson, *Conquest*, 59, Scott, *Barangay*, 143.

¹⁹⁵ Chirino, *Relacion*, 69-71.

both men and women to leave a marriage. The only party who suffered the most from a divorce was, perhaps, the husband who was at fault for the divorce because he would lose the dowry he gave to the wife's family.

The practice of dowries given to the family of a bride, sexual liberties, and the ease of divorce all show the power women wielded in sixteenth and seventeenth century marriage relationships in the Philippines. A woman held a great amount of influence over her husband because of the dowry. Her family could only lose the dowry through her own negligence or abusive behavior in the marriage. Her husband therefore was less motivated to dissolve the marriage in fear of losing this dowry and having to pay another to remarry. Women could also leave a marriage whenever they wanted, though it might cost her family the dowry. Nevertheless, if she did leave, she did not have to abandon her property and would take half of the children and half of the shared slaves. These elements empowered women and made divorce feasible and relatively simple, which would explain the frequency of such divorces. This gave women leverage over their husbands in the marriage, giving women advantage over men to sever the marriage should he fail to sustain the marriage in the way the wife wanted him to. If the man failed, his wife would leave and he would lose his dowry.

With the coming of the Spanish and the implementation of Catholic standards for marriage and sexuality, divorce was barred, as well as polygyny, and all sexual practices outside of a Catholic marriage. The dowry stayed in place until the eighteenth century and was banned when clergy and colonial officials feared that fathers were bargaining their daughters to men who had the highest dowry offer. Missionaries demanded that if a man was baptized, he had to dissolve his polygynous marriages and keep only one wife, preferably the principal or first wife. After baptism, a man and one of his wives would enter into a Catholic marriage sanctioned by

the clergy through the Catholic marriage ceremony, regarded as a sacrament. Divorce, of course, could not occur after this marriage, as it was not recognized in the Catholic Church. They also implemented the sacrament of confession to monitor the sexual habits of the indigenous people and educate them in the standards of chastity required by Catholicism.¹⁹⁶

While the implementation of Spanish and Catholic cultural constructs in the Philippines ultimately did away with polygynous relationships and the concept of divorce, some of these practices remained until official conversion to the Catholic Church and the entrance of a man and a woman into the Catholicized sacrament of matrimony. These practices included the woman's ability to divorce her husband, leading to her gaining half of all shared property and potentially controlling the dowry, and the sexual leverage she had in a pre-Christian relationship. These aspects gave women power in their relationships, and the clergy noted this power and used it in their utilization of these women to convert their husbands. Thus, the clergy could appropriate these indigenous forms of feminine power, including feminine leverage, to expand the Catholic church and motivate husbands to adopt Catholicism through their wives.

Sexual Power of Indigenous Women: The Penis Pins

Another form of indigenous power women wielded was sexual power. This manifested itself physically in the male usage of penis pins or penis inserts. Indigenous men placed these inserts horizontally in the head of the penis at a young age with both ends of the pins coming out on either side. Depending on the ethnic group or cultural practice, they used different materials to fashion these pins or placed different studs on each end of the pin. The purpose, according to the Catholic and Spanish sources, was to enhance the sexual pleasure of women during vaginal

¹⁹⁶ Phelan, *Hispanization*, 60-68.

sex. It was noted that a woman would not engage in sex with a man if he did not have one. Missionaries observed this practice frequently in the southern low-land regions of the Philippines, mostly in the Visayas and the coastal areas of Mindanao.¹⁹⁷

In describing these penis pins, Scott states that “in use, these ornaments required manipulation by the women herself to insert, and could not be withdrawn until the male organ was completely relaxed,” and that “there were twenty or thirty different kinds [of pins] to cater to a lady’s choice.”¹⁹⁸ These statements by Scott show the type of sexual power and leverage women held over their male sexual partners. They controlled the actual act of penetration and had a selection of inserts for their male partner to enhance their sexual experience in whatever way they wanted.

These pins and the practice in general horrified the Catholic clergy who thought it was the invention of the devil, an inhumane practice that put men in so much pain at such a young age.¹⁹⁹ They viewed the practice as a way to satisfy and pleasure indigenous women, which fitted well into the early modern European Catholic narrative that viewed women as the authors of sexual vice. Instead of placing the blame for perceived sexual immorality equally on men and women, Catholic culture placed a greater burden on the woman because of her assumed inherent danger to men because of their sexual allure. Uta Ranke-Heinemann argues that Catholic priests in early Christian Europe, due to their vows of celibacy, created distance between themselves and women. Despite this distancing, the continual sexual fascination these celibate priests had for women began painting women as dangerous and the priests began depicting women in a

¹⁹⁷ Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680: Volume One: The Lands below the Winds* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 149. Tom Harrisson, “The ‘PALANG’, its History and Proto-History in West Borneo and the Philippines” *Journal of the Malaysian Branch Royal Asiatic Society* 37, pt. 2 (1964), 168-172.

¹⁹⁸ Scott, *Barangay*, 24.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

demonic light. She writes, “to this day the Church’s celibates believe that danger has a female face.” A number of women within the Catholic Church went from second sex to temptress in the eyes of the priests. Women were not just seen as a weaker sex, incapable of doing as much as men could, but also as a constant temptation to men that could never be taken away. Women became the perpetrators of sexual sin, alluring men to disobey the commandments of God and seducing the clergy to violate their vows.²⁰⁰ Brundage also argues that men painted women as hiding behind a veil of modesty that hid an insatiable female sexual appetite. They were seen as mentally less acute than men and incapable of controlling their sexual desires and always sought after sex.²⁰¹ Friars and missionaries brought this perception of women with them to the Philippines during their early proselytizing efforts in the archipelago, and the reality of penis pins only supported this idea.²⁰²

Then, the indigenous woman, a natural temptress simply for being a woman, regressed to an even more carnal creature in the eyes of the clergy when she demanded that men physically injure themselves for the sake of her sexual pleasure. Brewer argues that Catholic ideas of gender and sexuality deeply influenced clerical perception of the penis pins. She states that the penis pin validated these ideas of a woman’s inherent carnal nature and painted indigenous Visayan and Mindanao women as lustful beings that tempted men to their demise, as Eve did with Adam in the Christian story of creation and humankind’s fall from paradise.²⁰³

The Catholic clergy made it a requirement that the penis pins be removed for baptism and not be used again. Brewer argues that this was done to impose a Catholic system of monogamy

²⁰⁰ Uta Ranke-Heinemann, *Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven: Women, Sexuality and the Catholic Church* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1990), 119-125.

²⁰¹ Brundage, *Law*, 424-427.

²⁰² Brewer, *Shamanism*, 31-32.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

and sexuality that restricted the sexual liberties of the indigenous populations.²⁰⁴ She also makes a strong point that penis pins within themselves cannot be simply analyzed as a woman's sexual dominance over her male partner. Instead, she looks at the penis pins as "symptomatic of a gender symmetry or parallelism with mutual power and authority enjoyed by both Filipino women and men."²⁰⁵ On the contrary, the Catholic missionaries viewed it as a sinful manifestation of the women's sexual desire, thus they threw the blame of this "immoral" practice onto the women, the perpetrators of lust. Despite the clergy's understanding of the practice, Brewer does well in describing the oversimplified nature of the discourse of penis pins. She argues that claiming the practice of penis pins was due only to satisfy the sexual desires of the indigenous Philippine women is too simplistic and gives undue weight to clerical observations that focused heavily on the "immoral" desire of the women to use the pin during intercourse.

Primary source accounts about the penis pins in the Philippines reveal more about them and their purpose when it comes to feminine power. Morga recounts the use of penis pins among the Visayans, mentioning that the women "shed a lot of blood and received other harm" but that they still used them for the sake of their own pleasure.²⁰⁶ Alcina describes the practice among the Visayans in detail, claiming that it had "almost disappeared completely" when he compiled his work in the mid-seventeenth century.²⁰⁷ He states that "the men, in order to demonstrate their courage," pierced their penises, which was "accompanied by the most excruciating pain." The purpose of this piercing, according to Alcina, was "for greater incitement to carnal pleasure, not only on the part of the men but especially the women." He describes how, before its banishment with the advancement of Christianity, those men without a penis pin were mocked, and this

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 32.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 31.

²⁰⁶ Morga, *Sucesos*, 309.

²⁰⁷ Alcina, *Historia*, 1:146-147.

further motivated men to undergo the painful operation, even at the risk of death from the piercing. In regard to the women, he states that many women died from a resentful husband who used sharpened iron pins to brutally wound his sexual partner during intercourse.²⁰⁸ At the end of his description of the practice, Alcina refers to the Queen of Cambodia who implemented a similar practice in her polity “to dissuade [the men] from the unnatural sin, so widespread among many.”²⁰⁹ This “unnatural sin” is a reference to sodomy, which, at the time in Hispanic-Catholic culture, had a vague definition, but typically covered any sexual act outside of vaginal sex.²¹⁰

A third source, coming from an English account of Thomas Candish’s circumnavigation around the world completed in 1588, describes a crew of Englishmen encountering the indigenous people of the island of Capul off the northern coast of Samar.²¹¹ Master Francis Pretty, an Englishman employed on the journey, recorded that, “these people use a strange kinde [sic] of order among them.” Pretty continues with a description of the penis piercing practices of the indigenous people. Pretty observes: “This custome was granted at the request of the women of the country, who finding their men to be given to the fowle sinne of Sodomie, desired some remedie against that mischief.”²¹²

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Pete Sigal, “(Homo)Sexual, Desire and Masculine Power in Colonial Latin America: Notes towards an Integrated Analysis,” in *Infamous Desire: Male Homosexuality in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Pete Sigal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 1-10.

²¹¹ Francis Pretty, “The admirable and prosperous voyage of the Worshipfull Master Thomas Candish of Trimley...” in *Principall Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1600) by Richard Hakluyt (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1904), 11:332-333. The work itself originally encompassed three volumes, but was reprinted in mass in the early twentieth century. While there could be issues with the reproduction of the sixteenth-century work in the twentieth century, the retention of the same writing style, including the unstandardized use of English spelling, suggests that the twentieth-century reproduction has authentic value to it. As well, the facts revealed by Pretty in this quote are supported by Alcina and Morga. This source differs mostly from Alcina and Morga in the fact that it is interpreted through English cultural understanding of sexual practices and not Spanish or Catholic understanding.

²¹² Ibid.

All three of these accounts reference how women wanted the penis pins implemented in their society. All three accounts were also written by European men. Morga and Alcina both argue it was for the sexual pleasure of the women, supporting the Spanish and Catholic mindset that women were the face of evil and the perpetrators of all lustful vices. It is interesting to note that the English historian Pretty does not make any mention of the women encouraging the practice for their own sexual pleasure, but to control the men from committing sexual acts of which they supposedly disapproved. Alcina supports this theory through the example of the unnamed Queen of Cambodia, but does not link it directly to the Visayan people. In all three cases, the three European authors support the idea of penis pins being implemented to control the sexual habits of the men in their societies.

Scholars Donald E. Brown, James W. Edwards, and Ruth P. Moore analyze the practice of penis piercings and implants throughout Southeast Asia and make alternative explanations to their purposes.²¹³ They explain that magical concepts attached to piercing and tattooing the body are general throughout Southeast Asia. Moreover, jewelry was used as a status of wealth or societal position. This practice was also used for medicinal purposes through indigenous charms and magic. Three of their explanations shed light on the practice in the sixteenth century Philippine world with regard to the penis pin's relation to feminine power.

One specific penis pin used by men was called the *sacra*. It was an actual ring-like object with the pin going around the center. It was meant to have the ring encircle the entire circumference of the penis. Around it, it had six lotus petals, with the seventh and eighth representing the pin itself. The word *sacra* is a derivative of the Sanskrit word *cakra*, which

²¹³ Donald E. Brown, James W. Edwards, and Ruth P. Moore, *The Penis Inserts of Southeast Asia: An Annotated Bibliography with an Overview and Comparative Perspectives* (Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley, 1988), 8-12.

refers to the centers of force and energy in the body. One of those centers is the genitals, where the *sacra* was worn. The *cakra* concept, the lotus petals around the *sacra*, as well as the eight-pegged wheel imagery of the *sacra* all point to Hindu and Buddhist concepts of spirituality and its tie to sexual excitement.²¹⁴

This idea of Hindu-Buddhist themes tied to the *sacra* enhance the argument regarding a woman's sexual power. Brown, Edwards, and Moore state: "In Tantric Buddhism women are conceived of as powerfully sexually motivated. Correspondingly, we find female sexual lust given as an explanation for the various penis inserts." They further explain that in Hindu Tantrism, the most powerful sexual union should occur during the menstruation of a woman. This is because the combination of semen and vaginal blood (white and red) is seen as "magically" powerful.²¹⁵ "Correspondingly," they state, "in the Philippines we find frequent comment [in Spanish sources] on the blood the women sheds during copulation with the penis inserts." Thus, the pins are a means to produce vaginal blood during intercourse so the blood and the semen can produce this powerful "magic."²¹⁶

This argument of using penis pins to achieve Buddhist and Hindu levels of spirituality, or "magic" in their words, shows the significance of penis pin usage, but has conflicting meanings in regard to feminine power. The idea of using the *sacra* to draw blood for magical purposes supports the findings of Barbara Watson Andaya who notes the perceived magical powers menstrual blood had in precolonial and early colonial Philippine society.²¹⁷ Moreover, Tantric Buddhism views women as sexually powerful, thus encouraging and promoting the usage of the penis pins. This supports the argument that women wanted to use penis pins for their sexual

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Andaya, *Flaming Womb*, 71-72.

gratification, giving increased power to women. On the contrary, the fact that a penis pin would have to inflict enough damage to a woman's reproductive tract to draw blood seems to counteract the feminine power of the penis pin.

Alcina and Morga both note the physical damage the practice had on the women, mentioning how they lost blood during the practice. But as Morga states, women still enjoyed the practice. Alcina argues that the loss of blood was a malicious act performed by men to enact revenge against their female sexual partner. In addition, with the *sacra/cakra* argument made by Brown, Edwards, and Moore, the female shedding of blood during sexual intercourse can be seen as a spiritual experience, a sexual pleasure, or a violent act depending on the intents and desires of both participants.

Newson argues that penis pins in the Philippine context caused injuries to both men and women. In the case of men, it is more obvious with the potential medical complications that follow the piercing of the penis. Women, on the other hand, could also suffer physically from the damage penis pins did to their reproductive track. These two factors, however, could be the very reason why penis pins were seen as a means of birth control and a way to curb men and women's sexuality.²¹⁸ The potential use of the penis pins to discourage men from engaging in "sodomy" or "the unnatural sin" are also another form of curbing men's sexuality. Brown, Edwards, and Moore also discuss the curbing of male sexuality and the frequency of intercourse.²¹⁹ This idea is supported by Linda Newson who argued that penis pins were a means of birth control. In sixteenth-century Visayan culture, large family sizes were undesired, and penis pins, coupled with abortions and infanticide, helped keep population numbers down.²²⁰ Thus, penis pins gave

²¹⁸ Newson, *Conquest*, 59-60.

²¹⁹ Brown, *Penis Inserts*, 10.

²²⁰ Newson, *Conquest*, 59-60.

women more control over the frequency of sexual intercourse as well as lessened her chances of conceiving a child as a result.

One last argument Brown, Edwards, and Moore make involves masculinity. They state that indigenous men perhaps saw “the inserts being installed as a sign of attaining manhood” and it being “connected with masculine bravery and swagger.”²²¹ This idea subtracts feminine power from the penis pins as they become a symbol of bravery, maturity, and masculine pride. Thus, the penis pin can also be a masculine symbol of power and a tool of feminine power, giving complementary sexual powers to both men and women. Alcina’s statement supports the idea that penis pins increased male power in sexual relationships. Men needed to pierce their penises to avoid being mocked by their peers or their potential female sexual partners. Alcina also says that men experienced more sexual pleasure from the pins, though not as much as women. Brown, Edwards, and Moore support the argument that it was a sign of bravery and maturation, and therefore validates the idea that men benefitted socially from this practice.

In conclusion, the discussion and history of the penis pins in the sixteenth-century Philippines is very complex. Spanish colonizers and the Catholic clergy alike seemed to agree that the penis pin was a tool of the woman to exercise sexual dominance over her male sexual partners. A different perspective, however, reveals that the topic of the penis pins is much more complicated and actually gave complimentary power to both men and women.

Europeans saw the penis pin as a tool of sexual leverage as women used this leverage to sexually control their male counterparts. Through the perspective of Brown, Edwards, and Moore, that leverage still holds, though men seem to have derived some form of power from the practice, too. However, women still gained “magical” power from the penis pins, as well as

²²¹ Brown, *Penis Insert*, 10.

sexual leverage and reproductive control. Women benefitted from the practice as their male counterparts did. They could use the penis pins as a form of sexual leverage to control aspects of a man's sexuality. The idea that women implemented the pins to curtail the practice of sodomy supports the existence of this leverage. Newson's argument that the pins also acted as a form of birth control because of decreased sexual contacts also supports this argument. Despite this evidence of sexual leverage and the benefits and power men derived from the practice, the use of penis pins was a physical manifestation of the sexual control women had over men. Penis pins did provide women with some level of sexual leverage over men, and even after the missionaries forced men to remove their penis pins at baptism, the sexual power of women would have still existed since the pins were only a symbol of that power. The missionaries understood this sexual leverage women had over their husbands and utilized this leverage to encourage wives to influence their husbands to convert.

Through their observations on the practice of penis piercings, as well as dowries and divorces, the clergy saw the feminine power women wielded in marital and sexual relationships. They noted that these feminine powers influenced how their husbands acted in both marital and sexual relationships. They knew that they could exploit the power women had to encourage husbands to accept the Catholic faith. By working with the women, the clergy could ultimately convince the men to submit to their authority through pressuring these men's wives.

Women's Power in the Conversion Process of Men

The Jesuits and Dominicans both recorded instances where indigenous Philippine women influenced their husbands to either accept or reject Christianity. Chirino shows clearly that Jesuit friars observed women who influenced their husbands to convert to Catholicism. This occurred

in cases both involving chiefs or men of higher social status in society and those with no specified social status. In the late sixteenth century in Alanglang, Leyte, a Visayan woman convinced her husband to accept Christianity.²²² The village experienced high numbers of conversions because of the music played in the church.²²³ One particular woman of the village received her baptism so joyfully that a few days after she “persuaded her husband to become a Christian, and was one of who happily attended to the practices of the Christians.”²²⁴

In the village of Dulag in Leyte in the years 1598 and 1599, another event occurred where a woman motivated her husband to adopt Christianity.²²⁵ A “Gentile”²²⁶ woman worried about the sickness her “Gentile” husband had contracted. Worrying that he would die and hearing that only good Christians went to heaven and all others burned in hell, she called for a missionary to baptize him. “She helped him to make his answers,” Chirino stated, as the priest asked the husband if he wanted to receive baptisms or instructions. Seeing the woman’s desire for her husband to be baptized, the priest asked her if she wanted to be baptized as well. The priest baptized her husband first, due to his worsening illness. The baptism brought him health, with made the woman desire it even more. She received her baptism afterwards and both were united in the sacrament of marriage in the Catholic Church. In these two examples, Chirino shows the observations of the Jesuits, but in other instances, the clergy utilized the sexual and marital leverage women held. The missionaries translated this power in a way that would help bring the husbands of these women into the Church.

²²² Chirino, *Relacion*, 98-99.

²²³ D. R. M. Irving has a detailed study on the use of music to Christianize and Hispanize the people of the Philippines. See D. R. M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

²²⁴ Chirino, *Relacion*, 99.

²²⁵ Chirino, *Relacion*, 105-106.

²²⁶ “gentil” is the term used in the original Spanish. *Ibid*, 105.

Clerical Intervention

Another event that Chirino describes showed the stubbornness of the chiefs in Samar and Ibabao, an island off the coast of Samar, in accepting Catholicism.²²⁷ He claims that the chiefs often only became Christians when all of the other indigenous people adopted Christianity. In one instance, in an undisclosed location in either Ibabao or Samar, Chirino describes a chief who refused to allow his wife to listen to the Jesuit missionaries or to attend the church. He forced her to stay home instead. Chirino states, “she sent a message to the Father making it known that her husband was using this force against her.”²²⁸ Once the priest ascertained that the chief was withholding his wife from attending mass, he had the chief arrested. Being freed from her husband’s forceful actions, the woman accepted baptism. After this, Chirino states that “she attained from God...the conversion of the husband.”²²⁹ The chief returned to the church humbly and accepted baptism.

This incident differs from the previous two incidents in Alanglang and Dulag that Chirino describes. In this account, a man shows spiritual domination over his wife by refusing to let her attend the Catholic Church or to become a Christian. The Jesuits responded with the help of Spanish authorities by arresting the man for refusing to let his wife join the Christian faith. It is interesting to note, however, that her baptism into the Church motivated her husband to do the same. While the account is lacking in detail, it credits this woman for the baptism of her husband. Not only did she have the power to supersede her husband’s decision of keeping her from attending the Catholic ceremonies by calling on the Jesuits, she also successfully motivated him to join the Christian faith through her example. She would have convinced her husband to

²²⁷ Chirino, *Relacion*, 165-166.

²²⁸ “embio un recaudo al Padre haziendo le saber, que el marido la hazia esta fuerça.” is the original text. *Ibid.*, 165.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 165-166.

join the Catholic faith through the marital leverage she had. As an indigenous woman who recently accepted the faith, she could have easily left her husband for refusing to allow her to attend the Catholic ceremonies and taken the dowry with her. However, using this as leverage, she obtained her husband's baptism and brought him under Catholic authority.

Lalo

While Chirino records many events of women motivating their husbands to convert to Catholicism in the Visayas, Aduarte makes mention of Dominicans observing a Pangasinan woman's role in the Christianization of her husband, the chief. Aduarte recounts the conversion of Casipit, the "great chief" of Mangaldan probably sometime during the first two decades of the seventeenth century.²³⁰ He describes the man as being so opposed to the faith that he almost killed a Franciscan missionary who was previously in the region. "This *Indio* had thrown him on the ground to kill him with a cruel dagger that they use," Aduarte states, "and would have if the others had not hindered him."²³¹ When the Dominicans came to Pangasinan, Casipit was enraged. He went to Manila to arrange to have the friars removed and even bargained half of his property to his *encomendero* in an effort to achieve this.

Fortunately for the Dominicans, Casipit was married to a woman who embraced Christianity. Her name was Lalo, and she was "the first to be converted" by the Dominicans in Mangaldan.²³² After her baptism, she insisted that her husband become a Christian, using "many warnings" and receiving help from the priests.²³³ Casipit eventually yielded and was baptized with their three daughters and the rest of their household. He then became a great tool for the

²³⁰ Aduarte, *Historia*, 1:83-86.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 1:83.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ *Ibid.*

Dominicans and set himself as an example to all of the people of Mangaldan and the surrounding area. He gathered the people around the church to exhort them to follow the Catholic precepts. While the account focuses on praising Casipit for his conversion and his help in converting the people of Mangaldan and the surrounding area, it also credits Lalo for her diligent efforts and wonderful example in spreading the Catholic faith, especially to other women.

This account shows that Jesuits were not the only order to observe this phenomena in the islands as the Dominicans negotiated the conversion of Casipit through his wife, Lalo. When the Dominicans entered Mangaldan, they encountered a chief who threatened the Augustinians that previously proselytized in the village and went to Manila to get the clergy out of his village.²³⁴ The Dominicans could not subdue or baptize Casipit easily. However, the first person they baptized was his wife, Lalo. The Dominicans could have chosen any other person to baptize first, but they chose her because of the leverage she had over her husband. The clergy baptized Lalo and worked closely with her and encouraged to work with her husband so he would be baptized. Through utilizing her sexual and marital leverage, Lalo and the Dominicans succeeded in subduing Casipit.

The reasons for Lalo's agreement to work with the Dominicans to convert her husband becomes more apparent with Casipit's visit to Manila. The fact that Casipit knew he needed to travel to Manila to appeal to the Spanish authorities to remove the Dominicans from Mangaldan shows that he was well aware of what was going on in the surrounding area. Lalo, being his wife,

²³⁴ Phelan adds insight into this discussion: "Given the triple handicaps of a shortage of ecclesiastical personnel, the scattered distribution of the population, and linguistic diversity, the geographical apportionment of the missionary foundations required careful advance planning; the lack of such foresight, prior to 1594, had led to the abandonment of several missions. But on April 27, 1594, the Council of the Indies in Spain instructed the governor and the bishop to divide up the Philippines into contiguous areas among the four religious orders." Phelan then explains how the Dominicans, after 1594, were assigned Pangasinan and Cagayan. Thus, the existence of an Augustinian in Mangaldan is probably through the establishment of an Augustinian mission in or around Pangasinan before 1594. It was subsequently replaced by the Dominicans afterwards. See Phelan, *Hispanization*, 49-50.

would have had some idea as well. She probably heard of several stories of quelled rebellions from other groups who fought against the Spanish. Seeing that working with the missionaries was a means to preserve her social status, as well as her own safety and that of her family and property, she decided to work with the Dominicans. The Dominicans, of course, wanted the conversion of Casipit, and she would have agreed to work with Casipit and convert him to protect their privileges as *principales*. This interaction between Lalo and the Dominicans was a form of negotiation between the two parties, to use the words of Burnshell and Greene.²³⁵ Lalo needed her privilege and her security, and the Dominicans needed Casipit. The two parties made the negotiation, and Lalo worked with Casipit to convince him to join Catholicism.

Aduarte recounts that Lalo used “many warnings” to convince her husband to accept Christianity.²³⁶ While these could be interpreted as the dangers of hell and purgatory that await those who reject Catholicism, they could have also been politically based. With her standing in the marriage, especially her dowry since she was a member of the *principalia*, Lalo could have easily convinced Casipit the potential dangers of fighting against the Dominicans and the Spanish. She could have warned him about the impending raids and the potential loss of their privilege. It is likely that through these means, coupled with the leverage she had in the marital relationship, Lalo convinced Casipit to adopt Christianity.

With the baptism of Casipit came the conversion of their daughters and their household, including presumably their slaves. Once converted, the Dominicans praised Casipit for his work of preaching Catholic principles to the people of Mangaldan and the surrounding area. He became a tool of the Dominicans to enhance their missionary efforts and increase baptisms in the surrounding area. Lalo helped in the process, as well, though the Dominicans gave more credit to

²³⁵ Burnshell and Greene, “Peripheries,” 1-14.

²³⁶ Aduarte, *Historia*, 1:83.

Casipit. Both the Jesuit accounts of the Visayan conversions and the Dominican conversions of Lalo and Casipit show how the clergy utilized women in a way to convert specific individuals. These examples also show that women played a highly significant role in the conversion of their husbands during the initial Christianization of the islands. This argument is further sustained in polygynous relationships.

Polygyny

While Chirino gives many examples of people in monogamous relationships converting to Christianity because of the deeds of the wife, his account also sheds light on the more complicated topic of polygyny. As discussed earlier, polygynous relationships needed to be dissolved by a man if he wished to join the Catholic faith. In doing so, he had to forfeit the dowry he gave to the wives he needed to let go of. Despite this obstacle, Chirino records that at least one man gave up this dowry because of the influence of his wife, presumed to be part of the *principalia*.

Chirino describes the conversion of an indigenous man who had three wives, primarily through the conversion of one of his wives in the late sixteenth century.²³⁷ In the village of Palo on the island of Leyte, Jesuit missionaries encountered a group of Visayans who accepted Catholicism without much difficulty. However, Chirino describes one man with three wives, all of high rank like their husband.²³⁸ “Although it was painful for him to think about leaving the two,” Chirino explains, “his greater contemplation was the dowry that he would lose.”²³⁹ This put the Jesuits in a predicament where they could not baptize the man until he abandoned his

²³⁷ Chirino, *Relacion*, 68-69.

²³⁸ The term used is “principales.” Ibid., 69.

²³⁹ The original states, “aunque se le hazia de mal dexarlas dos, mas reparava en el dote, que avia de perder.” Ibid.

polygynous practices. However, one Jesuit formulated a plan for this man's conversion. This Jesuit, "inspired by the Lord our God," went to the wife "that he loved the most" and persuaded her to be baptized.²⁴⁰ The woman did not hesitate. She claimed that she already wanted to become a Christian and was willing to do it, even if it meant disappointing her husband. She made this well known to the Jesuits, her husband, and others. The Jesuits responded by baptizing her, an event that was celebrated with feasts and dances. Chirino continues, "her husband saw this, put away the other two wives, giving them what was from his dowry."²⁴¹ He then accepted baptism on Easter day with eleven other chiefs alongside the festivities of the day which many people attended to.

In this situation, Jesuits encouraged this woman in such a manner to motivate her husband to forsake polygyny and to accept Catholicism. They intentionally chose his favorite wife who, to their fortune, already desired to become Christian. Once this was done, she worked with her husband and motivated him to divorce the other two wives and to give back their dowries. Aware of the sacrifice made by this man and the potential for this scenario to bring more Visayans into the Church, the Catholics turned his baptism into a public event. They chose one of the most holy days of the year: Easter Sunday, to baptize him and eleven other chiefs. Afterwards they had festivities to celebrate the occasion. This was done clearly to motivate others to follow the example of this chief, his wife, and the other chiefs, and to become Christians.

This example contains clear calculations. The Jesuits wanted to convert this chief to motivate the lower social classes to follow suit. To do so, they turned to his favorite wife, converted her, motivated her to convince her husband to accept baptism, then publicly baptized

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

him. They recognized the social and sexual power she had in the relationship which made her husband divorce the other two women so he could become a Christian. There are many explanations as to why this woman was his favorite wife, or why she was influential enough to convince him to divorce the other wives. She could have had the most expensive dowry, making her the wife with the most monetary leverage in the relationship. She even told the Jesuits she would leave her husband to join the Church, if needed. The fault of the divorce could have been placed on the husband if she made a good enough case, forcing her husband to give up his dowry. Her eagerness to abandon her husband in order to accept Christianity also suggests that she had issues with the marriage, which she could have used as leverage to put him at fault for the divorce. If she had the largest dowry and divorced her husband, he would have suffered the most economically by this wife's separation than from separating from the other two. She could have also literally been the wife "he loved most" because of his sexual or romantic attraction towards her. As stated earlier, women had sexual control over men, particularly in the Visayas. Penis pins were a physical manifestation of this sexual control women wielded. Even with the forced removal of the penis pins, this sexual leverage would have persisted, and she still would have had this sexual power in her marriage even without its physical manifestation of it.

While her motives cannot be fully known for sure from this source alone, it is clear that the Jesuits utilized her and the situation to baptize the chief and motivate the lower classes of Visayans to do the same by publicly celebrating his baptism with eleven other chiefs. Although this account records Jesuit 'triumphs,' they had their failures as well. Chirino recounts the story of a chief in Butuan, named Silongan, who had seven wives.²⁴² Chirino describes Silongan as the "largest fish," using Biblical language where Jesus called the apostles to become fishers of men

²⁴² Ibid., 97-98.

in his mission.²⁴³ He was devoted to Christian principles and worked closely with the Jesuits to ensure that the priests were taken care of. Silongan and his warriors even defended the Jesuits twice when enemies came to harass or plunder the region and their clerical transplants. Despite these great acts of heroism towards the Jesuits, Silongan could not get baptized. “Although he dismissed five of his wives,” the account reads, “one of them holds him captive that he has settled with having two wives.”²⁴⁴ While the account is not explicit as to why he chose to remain with two wives, it is assumed that one was the principle wife or his first wife, whom he would not part with, and the second was another wife who refused to leave him. Her “[holding] him captive,” through a Jesuit lens, suggests that the Jesuits blamed her for keeping him from baptism. Hence, because of the refusal of this second wife to leave, as described in the account, he settled with having both this wife and his principle wife. The Jesuits, according to Chirino, tried multiple ways to sever this marriage, but none availed and Silongan remained with both wives.

In contrast to the story of Palo, we see that one wife had the influence and power to refuse to leave a marriage. Even with the prodding of the Jesuits, she still chose not to abandon her husband. For some undescribed reason, her husband would not part with her, either. This is evident that, even with Jesuit attempts to utilize the situation, women still had agency and enough influence to choose their own paths and not follow the clergy. The reasons why Silongan did not abandon his one wife could also have to do with the dowry or the sexual leverage she had over him. Both sexual leverage and dowry were cultural aspects of marriage that existed in Butuan at the time. Butuan, located in coastal Mindanao, used penis pins until their eradication,

²⁴³ Matthew 4:19 KJV, Chirino, 98. “Pece mayor” is the original term for “largest fish” in Spanish. Due to Biblical context of becoming fishers of men, the term “largest fish” is the most appropriate translation.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

but, as with the Visayas, women would have still have had sexual leverage despite the elimination of the pin. Thus, the power women had in a marital relationships could motivate their husbands to adopt or reject Christianity.

Conclusion

The examples of Lalo in Pangasinan, the wife of the imprisoned husband in the Samar region, and the polygynous wife in Leyte all reveal that the Catholic clergy understood feminine power in marital relationships, harnessed this power by converting specific women, and having those women influence their husbands. The example of Silongan's wife in Butuan also shows, however, that women maintained their agency and, holding onto this sexual power, could also influence men to not convert to Catholicism.

Through clerical recognition of feminine power in the form of dowries, divorce, sexuality, and penis pins, the clergy realized the type of influence women had in monogamous and polygynous marriages. Jesuit missionaries, and probably many others, then observed that when a woman converted to Catholicism, she frequently convinced her husband to be baptized as well. In confronting male figures they needed to convert, especially village chiefs like case Casipit, Silongan, and the chief in Leyte, Catholic missionaries worked with their wives to convert their husbands. While they failed in Silongan's case because one of his wives chose not to obey the Jesuits, all three cases, alongside the Visayan man who was arrested, show the utilization of indigenous wives and their ability to convert indigenous husbands.

Chapter 4

The *Bayog*, Gender, and Sex in Proselytizing Efforts

In a discussion about indigenous feminine power in the early colonial Philippines, it is important to recognize that this power was not restricted to those of the female biological sex. As explained in the introduction, persons assigned the male sex at birth could gain access to some of these feminine powers. In doing so, however, they would have to don a feminine persona. Currently in the accessed sources of the early colonial Philippines, the only examples we have of these males donning a feminine persona are the *bayogs*, or the *maganitos* who were assigned the male sex at birth, but embraced feminine attributes, including dress, dance, and the mannerisms of indigenous women.

Jesuit missionaries, as well as a Dominican inquisitor, gave special attention to these *bayogs* because of the positions of influence they held in society and the feminine power they wielded. In the four cases that will be discussed, the *bayogs* proved to be beneficial to the expansion of the Catholic Church and the curtailing of indigenous animist practices. This chapter argues that the Catholic clergy also utilized the *bayog* as a proselytizing tool. The *bayog*, in the hands of Jesuits and Dominicans, became a powerful model and means to convert hundreds of indigenous Philippine people to Catholicism and to keep them as converted and obedient subjects of the mother church. This may have been the case with other orders, but only the records of the Jesuits and Dominicans are analyzed. As persons of spiritual authority through the practice of indigenous animism, the conversion of the *bayogs* became a symbol of societal religious transition from animism to Catholicism. Jesuits and Dominicans chose to work with the *bayog* because their sex assigned at birth fit into a Hispanic-Catholic cultural lens and because the *bayog* wielded indigenous spiritual power.

The discussion of the *bayog* is lacking as scholarship on the topic is just being developed, and there is a present need to analyze more sources on the topic. However, much can be derived from the available sources, especially in regard to clerical utilization and manipulation of these *bayogs*. The scholarly works at present reveals some information about the *bayogs*, who they were, and the role they played in society.

Three prominent works exist on the topic of the *bayog*. The most recent is J. Neil C. Garcia's *Philippine Gay Culture*, which focuses mostly on the *bayog* and analyzes the sexuality, gender identity, and anatomy of the *bayog* during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²⁴⁵ He interprets primary source documents meant to report and eliminate "sodomy," which entailed all same-sex sexual acts.²⁴⁶ He also evaluates sources depicting the *bayog* as "prudish," "unnatural," "vile and drunken" men who wear women's clothing and take on their roles and mannerisms.²⁴⁷ Ultimately, Garcia argues that the Catholicization of the archipelago was a violent process that not only debased women, but the *bayog* as well and forced many to adopt Hispanic understandings of masculinity and abandon aspects of their own femininity.²⁴⁸

Brewer also acknowledges the important factor of gender in her work *Shamanism, Catholicism, and Gender Relations in Colonial Philippines*. She states that it is important to distance the gender categories of masculine and feminine from the biological sex categories of male and female since gender and sex were viewed differently by Prehispanic societies and Catholic colonizers. This distancing becomes particularly important when the *bayog* could acquire the societal spaces offered to women in Prehispanic societies.²⁴⁹ In indigenous cultures,

²⁴⁵ Garcia, *Philippine Gay*, 151-197.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 184.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 180-183.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 193-197.

²⁴⁹ Brewer, *Shamanism*, xvii-xxi.

Brewer argues, both women and the *bayog* occupied a feminine space. But with the coming of the Spanish, *bayogs* had access to Hispanic masculine privileges because of their sex assigned at birth and could leave their feminine position. This was desirable since Spanish colonizers worked to diminish feminine privileges like spiritual authority, economic privileges, and sexual autonomy. Women, on the other hand, were almost entirely debased and manipulated into an invisible and dangerous sex in accordance with Catholic traditions at that time.²⁵⁰

While Garcia and Brewer shed light on the *bayog* and their subsequent colonization, Zeus Salazar brings to light the challenges and complexities that come with understanding the *bayog* and their gender roles. In his article, Salazar attempts to define the range of power held by feminine figures within precolonial society, but his work is questionable due to poor evidence, facile conclusions regarding gendered processes, and a general inclination towards heteronormativity.²⁵¹ He also created a seven-gendered system that supposedly existed in pre-Spanish Philippines, which included “truly male, truly female, effeminate male (‘bakla’) and mannish female (‘tomboy’),” a “neutral” or “real hermaphrodite,” “male ACDC,” and a “female ACDC” with no validated foundation nor clear definition to most of these terms.²⁵² Salazar’s work is an important attempt to better understand the feminine power in Prehispanic Philippines because of these inconsistencies that highlights the existence of misunderstandings in the current historiography and the need for more research on the *bayog* as well as indigenous feminine power to correct these misunderstandings. Salazar’s work does, however, provide excellent research in finding early colonial terms used by indigenous people to define gender fluid individuals from valid colonial sources.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 190-193.

²⁵¹ Zeus Salazar, “The Babaylan in Philippine History” in *Women’s Role in Philippine History* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1996), 209-222.

²⁵² Ibid., 210.

Another work on the topic of gender is Joan W. Scott's 1986 article "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." Scott argues that historians, when analyzing gender, are prone to using traditional social scientific frameworks and rely on oversimplified generalizations. She notes that in many historical analyses gender is synonymous to "women" or the issues revolving around women and feminism. Scott demands a "refusal" of the permanent quality of binary opposition when it comes to discussing gender.²⁵³ This article fits well with the *bayog* who incorporates elements of both the masculine and the feminine, being assigned the male birth sex but taking on a feminine persona, inviting scholars to participate in more complex discussions about the *bayogs* and the gender-related issues that surround their history.

The *Bayog* and Gender Roles

As discussed in the introduction, the role of the *maganito* was a distinctly feminine position throughout the lowland areas of the Philippine archipelago. The only way a person assigned the male sex at birth could access this role was to don a complete or partial feminine persona. J. Neil C. Garcia calls this requirement "transformation," where a male takes on an extended feminine persona that included dress and habits.²⁵⁴ The extent of the feminine persona taken on by the *bayog* varied widely, but Brewer effectively argues that this variation in extent comes from the introduction of male-dominated religions, like Catholicism and Islam. Before the coming of these world religions, it is apparent, through historical sources, that the *bayog* took on feminine roles that extended outside the spiritual realm of animist practices, including economic roles such as weaving and transplanting rice, and societal roles like wearing feminine clothing and adopting feminine mannerisms and dance styles. But with the introduction of Islam and,

²⁵³ Scott, "Gender."

²⁵⁴ Garcia, *Philippine Gay*, 162-167.

more especially, Christianity, males who wished to become a *maganito* only took on a feminine persona while performing animist ceremonies. Brewer argues that as these male-dominated world religions came to the Philippines, more opportunities for men to occupy religious spheres followed, influencing syncretic animism. Thus, depending on a society's exposure to Christianity or Islam, males no longer needed to adopt a full feminine persona before becoming a *maganito*.²⁵⁵ Because the definite gender identity of the *bayog* cannot be revealed from these Catholic sources alone, they will be referred to through the "s/he" pronouns to denote the ambiguity of their gender in the combination of the terms "she" and "he." The "s/he" pronoun is borrowed from Leonard Andaya who uses this to describe the third gender of the Bugis people in Sulawesi.²⁵⁶

Barbara Watson Andaya argues that a "male-female spectrum" existed in early modern Southeast Asia, allowing either sex to take on masculine or feminine roles accordingly. Hermaphrodites and individuals who embraced both male and female aspects of this spectrum were thought to have more animistic spiritual power in their societies. After describing in detail the variations and interpretations of spiritual animist power in early modern Southeast Asia, including the existence of three or more genders in Bugis society, as well as the existence of gender fluidity in Pegu, Borneo, the Philippines, and Siam. Andaya asserts that variations of spirituality, sexuality, and gender existed throughout Southeast Asia and cautions against a uniform interpretation of gender and sexuality in the region as a whole. Being such a diverse region, no one perception of indigenous spiritual power can be assigned to all groups of people

²⁵⁵ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 130-137.

²⁵⁶ Leonard Andaya, "The Bissu: Study of a Third Gender in Indonesia" in *Other Pasts: Women, Gender and History in Early Modern Southeast Asia* ed. Barbara Watson Andaya (Honolulu: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2000), 1-26.

in the region, though it is possible that they can be applied to subregions, like the Philippine Islands.²⁵⁷

The lowland settlements of the Philippine archipelago appeared to have an overall emphasis on being feminine to some degree in order to hold the position of *maganito*. The importance of femininity was apparent in the role of the *maganito*. Over time, as Brewer argues, this feminine attribute associated with the *maganito* changed with the coming of foreign world religions.²⁵⁸ This is supported by Alfred McCoy's account of the Franciscan missionary saying a prayer to harvest the fruit of a tree in the Zambales region in central Luzon as discussed in the second chapter. The indigenous Sambals watched as this missionary offered a Latin prayer and overcome the powerful spirit rumored to possess the tree. This was a physical manifestation of the spiritual power, in an indigenous sense, of the Catholic missionaries. This event, as well as others throughout the islands, convinced indigenous Philippine peoples that the Catholic missionaries, with their Latin prayers, possessed a spiritual power either just as powerful or even more powerful than that of the *maganito*.²⁵⁹ The Catholic missionaries clearly did not adopt a feminine persona to do these things. These connections and perceived manifestations of Catholic spiritual power without a feminine persona allowed the indigenous positions of the *maganito* to accept more men and *bayogs* without a cultural prerequisite to adopt a more holistic feminine persona. Brewer argues that the influence of Catholicism in Zambales allowed some *bayogs* to participate who only donned feminine clothing during ceremonies and had female spouses.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ Andaya, *Womb*, 70-75.

²⁵⁸ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 130-137.

²⁵⁹ McCoy, "Baylan," 356-359.

²⁶⁰ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 134-135, 171-172.

The Bayog

There is evidence that Catholic missionaries had a more gentle response to the *bayog* than to the female *maganito*. Chirino and Alcina show that Jesuit missionaries had a compassionate approach with interacting with the *bayog* and encouraged them to adopt Christianity. These Jesuits appreciated the *bayogs* for their faithfulness in accepting Catholicism and following it. Even though *bayogs* were technically *maganitos* and performed many of the same rites as their female counterparts, the Jesuits responded to the *bayogs* differently than to the female *maganitos* because of their sex assigned at birth.

The first event, related by Chirino, occurred in or before 1597 near Manila, in the village of Taytay.²⁶¹ One Jesuit priest traversed villages in the nearby mountains to relocate the various Tagalogs into one location. After successfully relocating several hundred of them, the priest learns that a few of the *Catolonas*, the Tagalog *maganito*, remained in the mountains. “When this was learned,” the account reads, “diligence was made that a person able to do so should remove them from there, to extinguish this scandal to those who were weak.”²⁶² The Jesuits worried that the *Catolonas*, though far away, would continue to tempt the newly relocated (and spiritually “weak”) Tagalogs, causing a “scandal.” Since the Tagalogs were in the process of being colonized, the Jesuits could not risk losing them to the *Catolonas* who already posed a threat to their proselyting efforts. Plans were made and executed to retrieve the *Catolonas*, and the Jesuit priest, through “much gentleness” or “much suavidad,” brought a *Catolona* down, who was a *bayog*, from the mountains to the new settlement. The Jesuit “subdued”²⁶³ h/er to cut off h/er hair, burn h/er idols, and submit to Catholicism. Chirino recounts that the *Catolona*, “beginning

²⁶¹ Chirino, *Relacion*, 48-52, 111-112.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 50.

²⁶³ Originally “allano” in the Spanish text. Chirino, *Relacion*, 50.

with the hair (as the Magdalene), publicly cut it, and with it the forces of the demon, who held him captive” and received baptism.²⁶⁴ The account describes this *bayog* as a male with hair that s/he braided during animist ceremonies that s/he wore “like a woman” or “como de muger.”²⁶⁵ The cutting of this hair was a symbolic rejection of the indigenous religion and the physical feminine aspect motivated five hundred Tagalogs to follow suit and to accept Catholic baptism, according to the Jesuit historian.

This particular account is interesting because it describes a Catholic priest diligently finding, persuading, and encouraging an influential *bayog* to relocate with the rest of the Tagalogs and to publicly renounce h/er animist beliefs and adopt Catholicism *to encourage* others to do the same. The text itself states that this *bayog* needed to be removed “to extinguish this scandal to those who were weak.” This line, coupled with the subsequent baptism of a supposed five hundred Tagalog souls after the *bayog*’s conversion, suggests that this *bayog* had social and spiritual power. The *bayog* was an officiator and ritualist for the animist traditions, and the missionaries feared that leaving h/er unchecked in the mountains would threaten the progress of Christianization in Taytay. So they utilized h/er and convinced h/er to accept Christianity. Once s/he did, a supposed five hundred followed h/er example. This demonstrates the influence s/he had in h/er society, both spiritually and socially. S/he could convince people to adopt a new religion as well as submit to Jesuit authority. Instead of actively fighting and suppressing h/er, this Catholic priest utilized and displayed h/er as an example of Catholic superiority over the animist religion. Chirino even uses powerful Christian imagery of the *bayog*

²⁶⁴ Chirino, *Relacion*, 50.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

releasing a demon when cutting off h/er braid. The account also states that the *bayog* admitted to the Jesuits that the Catholic God “was greater than those of other men.”²⁶⁶

This benevolent attitude of the Jesuit priest was contrasted by the attitude of another Jesuit in Chirino’s descriptions of female *Catolonas*, which were analyzed in the second chapter.²⁶⁷ In his *Relacion*, Chirino proceeds to describe the events of San Juan del Monte, where Jesuits unearthed an underground society of *Catolonas* and publicly reprimanded them. The leader of the society claimed to have communed with an *anito* who was a friend of the Christian God. Instead of responding to these *Catolonas* with the same level of gentleness, they initiated a witch hunt, finding specific *Catolonas* and publicly humiliating them as a means to debase them and increase the power of the Catholic church. The practices of these *Catolonas*, all described as female, was put to an end.

These two events provide a stark contrast. Two threats were present: the *bayog* who could have caused a “scandal to those who were weak,” or “escandalo de los flacos” and the *Catolona* who attended several of the sick “with all diligence,” or “con toda diligencia.”²⁶⁸ A major difference between the two stories is the location of the animist officiators. The first was away from the town, but the underground society was in the settlement operating in secret. While that does present an important contrast between the two accounts, the factor of gender should be highlighted. In the eyes of the Catholic clergy, one incident involved a man dressed in the garb of a woman with a braided hair like Magdalen. The others involved women. One was transformed from a feminine *bayog* to a male Christian convert and set as a public example through “much gentleness.” The others were publicly humiliated and belittled.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 56-58.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 57.

The imagery of describing the *bayog* and h/er braid as that of the Magdalen is a direct reference to Mary Magdalen of the Bible, a woman who “had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities” and “out of whom went seven devils.”²⁶⁹ Catholic traditions from the sixth century until now have also described her as a whore.²⁷⁰ These two elements of Magdalen, her life as a prostitute and her past experience of having seven demons inside her reveal how the missionaries saw this *bayog*. They saw h/er as a man possessed by the devil who was deceived enough to wear h/er hair like a woman and dress and act as one. Removing the braid freed h/er from the influence of the devil and allowed h/er to join h/er peers in participating in the ceremonies and rituals of salvation of the Catholic faith. The account itself has a redemptive theme where a deceived “man” is liberated from these demons that held “him” captive. Chirino shared this story because it showcased this redemption, even though the story also describes a lonely *bayog* isolated in the mountains after h/er fellow Tagalogs relocated to Taytay. The *bayog* clearly chose to work with the Jesuits and accepted the terms of Christianity to be united with the Tagalogs and to, perhaps, maintain some spiritual authority by submitting to the new religious regime.

Chirino’s *Relacion* also provides a second instance of an interaction between a Catholic missionary and a *bayog* which takes place in the early years of the seventeenth century in Silang, a Tagalog settlement south of Manila.²⁷¹ Chirino praises the Tagalogs for their faithful devotion to the Catholic faith and showers one individual with praises and compliments. This person’s name is unknown, but s/he is a blind *bayog*. According to the account, “it is of most esteem what this man is doing, having gone from one extreme to another, who was previously numbered with

²⁶⁹ Luke 8:2 KJV.

²⁷⁰ Bart D. Ehrman, *Peter, Paul, and Mary Magdalene: The Followers of Jesus in History and Legend* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 179-194.

²⁷¹ Chirino and Roma, *Relacion*, 183-184.

the heathen priests, which here are called *catalones*, and is now a preacher of our holy faith.”²⁷²

Chirino continues to praise this *bayog*, mentioning how he instructed those who wished to be baptized, told the clergy of those who did not attend mass, and received communion with great humility. While Chirino does not link any number of baptisms to this *bayog*, he does go as far as stating that the *bayog* “is so skilled in the catechism that none of us could teach them better.”²⁷³

It is interesting to note how Chirino claims that this *bayog* was more expert than the missionaries in preaching the Catholic faith to the other Tagalogs. This statement praises the work of the Jesuits, for either finding such a person and converting h/er, or the good will of God bestowing this great person on them because of the righteousness and worthiness of the Jesuits to be a part of the colonizing process. It is also interesting how they praise a person they perceived as being a man. Indeed, a few pages before this account, Chirino criticizes a woman who missed mass to weave a cloth that was subsequently eaten by moths. The contrast, though not as dramatic as the Taytay and San Juan del Monte, is still significant and gendered. The *bayog*, a former *maganito*, possessed spiritual power and authority in the indigenous society and could motivate those around h/er to accept Catholicism. The fact that s/he was perceived as a man also lessened the potential threat s/he posed, according to Hispanic-Catholic traditions, to those around h/er, particularly the Jesuits. This woman, on the other hand, disobeyed Catholic teachings, missed mass, and became susceptible to the power of the devil, in keeping with the portrayal of as many women in that period.²⁷⁴ The *bayog* received more favor than this woman who missed mass because of gendered assumptions.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 184.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 136-137.

The final example relates another Jesuit missionary's interaction with a *bayog* comes from Sulat, a town on the island of Samar.²⁷⁵ During his time in the town, Alcina encountered a *bayog* of whom he grew rather fond of. The *bayog* was mute, but "was extremely intelligent and made himself understood through his own signs."²⁷⁶ Alcina describes h/er as "effeminate," taking on female societal roles, like weaving, basket-making, and clothing production. Alcina praised h/er for h/er chastity. The *bayog* avoided both men and women, not allowing any to look upon h/er when s/he bathed or be with him when s/he slept. In confessions, s/he claimed to live a chaste life, avoiding violations of the sixth commandment (not committing adultery or anything like it). Alcina states that "if someone spoke to him, in jest about some joke or an off-color matter, he indicated his resentment through some motions and covered his eyes with his hands as if ashamed of such things."²⁷⁷

Later in the account, Alcina describes a woman in the same town who had what he called attacks of madness. When these attacks occurred, she would climb up a sacred tree, dedicated to the *anitos*, and disrobe there. When the attacks abated, she would feel humiliated because of her nudity and hide from society. Eventually, after months of these attacks, the indigenous leader of her town proclaimed that she was a *daitan*, or a friend of the *anito*.²⁷⁸ Alcina makes no comment on whether the woman was possessed by a devil, suggesting that he is of the opinion that this madness was caused by something else. It does allude, however, to the presumed weak nature of women as a second and "imperfect" sex.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ Alcina, *Historia*, 3:257-261.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 3:259.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 3:261.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 3:265-267, 529-530.

²⁷⁹ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 137.

Again, the contrast is apparent between the *bayog* and the madwoman with a perceived indigenous spiritual ability. Alcina contrasts the faithful *bayog* who was chaste and attended h/er confessions with the madwoman who frequently, and unchastely, stripped in the sacred tree. The *bayog* was very careful with h/er nudity, shielding h/erself from all observers. The madwoman, on the other hand, stripped for all to see and crawled out of the tree naked many times. Here it shows Alcina's bias towards those who are assigned a male birth sex in assuming that they are a stronger sex: the *bayog* could handle the Catholic teachings and followed them almost perfectly, unlike the woman who had bouts of madness that caused her to lose control. This contrast shows Alcina's bias of working with *bayogs* over women who was purported to be connected to an *anito*. While this woman was considered a "friend of the *anito*," a position that would have given her spiritual and religious power in animist society, Alcina favored the *bayog* because of h/er sex assigned at birth and h/er perceived ability to adhere to Catholic doctrines and avoid bouts of madness.

The authors of the three accounts project comparisons and contradictions, with an apparent preference towards the *bayog*, with all of h/er effeminate qualities (at least in the cases of Taytay and Sulat), instead of towards the women in various other accounts. It is a clear demonstration of Jesuit favoritism towards male religious figures rather than female religious figures. All three of these accounts, as well, show *bayogs* who chose to reform and work with the missionaries. This is apparent in other accounts, too.

Carolyn Brewer examines a semi-official inquisition in Bolinao, Zambales that ended in 1685. The Sambals continued to practice animism after being converted to Catholicism by Franciscan and Dominican missionaries. The Catholic clergy struggled to eradicate animism for decades until in the late seventeenth century a former Dominican inquisition official visited the

town with permission from the Archbishop of Manila to perform an investigation. There, he conducted a series of interviews to locate the *maganitos* and end animist practices. During his interviews, he encountered and utilized a *bayog* to gain information about the local practices and clearly favored the men over the women. Brewer shows that the Catholic official only interviewed one man more than once, but interviewed forty-nine women multiple times. While the interview questions were never revealed, the document does show that many of these interviews took a sexual turn with various accusations of adultery and promiscuity, and that many non-*bayog* men were interviewed for that purpose. These sexual accusations were all directed towards women, although no severe punishments were meted out.²⁸⁰ These interviews show distrust towards the female *maganitos* and their sexual lives and favoritism towards the *bayog*. The Dominicans turned to this *bayog* to gain information about these women, then left him alone as they interviewed the other *maganitos* repeatedly.

Clerical Interpretations of Gender and Sexuality

There were definite biases in the way missionaries approached the *bayog* and female *maganito*. When the Spanish and Catholic missionaries landed in the Philippine Islands in 1565 with the task of colonizing the whole archipelago for the Spanish crown, they brought with them their ideas of religion, sexuality, and gender roles. Indeed, Catholic ideals strongly influenced their ideas of sexuality. Missionaries frowned upon the extramarital sexual activities of women in general. European men, particularly the Catholic clergy, looked down on women because of their power of seduction.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 143-183.

²⁸¹ Ranke-Heinemann, *Eunuchs*, 119-125.

Europeans also saw gender as a more rigid, binary construct, not a flexible spectrum as many Southeast Asian cultures saw it.²⁸² This is why many of the Catholic sources analyzed earlier referenced the *bayogs* as men rather than using ambiguous gender terms or feminine terms to describe their gender. However, in the Spanish American colonies what was viewed as “cross-dressing,” or the act of wearing clothes that belong to the opposite sex, was oftentimes assumed to be associated with sodomy.²⁸³ Sodomy, considered by some the worst of the sexual sins, incorporated virtually all sexual acts outside of vaginal intercourse. This included any homosexual sexual acts, all forms of masturbation, bestiality, and anal and oral intercourse.²⁸⁴ Punishment for sodomy, at least in Spain and in certain cases in Spanish America, was severe, including execution when an individual was found guilty of committing acts of sodomy multiple times.²⁸⁵ Indeed, Catholic missionaries accused some of the *bayog* of committing such sins.²⁸⁶ However, records of these offenses are currently lacking, and no account of punishing a *bayog* or any indigenous Philippine person for sodomy in the sixteenth or seventeenth century is known to exist.

There could be multiple reasons why this is so. First, the Philippines is constantly subject to destructive natural forces, such as typhoons, earthquakes, and tsunamis. It is known that a fire in eighteenth-century Manila burnt hundreds of Inquisition records that were stored in one location. This makes studying any Inquisition cases in the Philippines extremely difficult, although some sources do exist in Europe and in some Mexican archives.²⁸⁷ It is also difficult to find cases of male-to-male sodomy when the Inquisition could not investigate or charge

²⁸² Brewer, *Shamanism*, 127-128.

²⁸³ Carvajal, *Butterflies*, 169-183.

²⁸⁴ Sigal, “(Homo)Sexual,” 1-10.

²⁸⁵ Cavajal, *Butterflies*, 39-43, 60-62.

²⁸⁶ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 131-133.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 143-146.

indigenous peoples of the Americas or the Philippines since they were recent converts to the faith. Clergy worried that Inquisition proceedings against the new converts in the colonies would drive the converts away from Christianity, so they barred the trial of indigenous peoples.²⁸⁸

Catholic interpretation of Philippine animism further complicated the clergy's perception of gender and sexuality. The Catholic clergy saw many of these animistic acts of veneration performed by the *maganito* not as spiritual acts of devotion, but as manifestations of the devil controlling the person performing the ceremony.²⁸⁹ The clergy often assumed that certain episodes that challenged the Catholic Church and its morals represented the work of the devil fighting against the Christian God. The clergy also assumed that the indigenous Philippine people were more susceptible to the devil than the clergy or the missionaries were since the Philippine people were so new to the faith.²⁹⁰ European cultures often associated the devil and his temptations more on women than they did onto men.

Men in Europe saw women and their sexual lure as devilish for several centuries because of the spiritual threat a woman's power of seduction had on men and the clergy. Missionaries transferred this same cultural assumption to the indigenous women of the Philippines when they arrived and colonized the islands. By the late fifteenth century, Europeans associated witchcraft, or the work of Satan and the devil, with devious women in society.²⁹¹ When missionaries came to the Philippines and witnessed the female *maganitos* entering trances and performing ceremonies that were foreign to the missionaries, they assumed it with the devil and witchcraft. This mindset is present in several sources.²⁹² This attitude only escalated because of the alleged

²⁸⁸ Stuart B. Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 126-128.

²⁸⁹ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 87-88.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 106-108;

²⁹¹ Wiesner, *Women*, 270-277.

²⁹² Brewer, *Shamanism*, 86-96.

promiscuity of the indigenous women who experienced a great amount of sexual privilege. Missionaries quickly labeled women who refused to follow Catholic precepts as whores, encouraging all women to either accept virginity or devout and faithful motherhood.²⁹³ In this labeling process, however, those who lived up to Catholic standards were seen as less dangerous, as is apparent in the last three chapters. If an indigenous woman was willing to cooperate with the clergy, and not fight against it like so many of the *maganitos* did, they were seen as less threatening because of their desire to follow Catholic authority and sexual standards.

These same stereotypes of female *maganitos* did not hold true for the *bayog*. As evident from the sources listed above, the clergy saw them as men deceived by the devil. They offered no apparent sexual temptation (in a heteronormative sense) to the Catholic clergy. They did exhibit powers of the devil, but they could be freed from this. Women could not be freed, due to their sex assigned at birth. Women maintained a societal role of being the devil's gatekeeper based on their sexual allure and their frail-mindedness inherited by Eve and her seduction by the devil, which led her to eat the forbidden fruit.²⁹⁴ European men saw women as "defective males," morally, intellectually, and physically inferior to men, who were more likely to give into the lures of the devil.²⁹⁵ Since the clergy viewed the *bayog* as male, they naturally had less influence from the devil. This allowed clergy to manipulate the *bayog* more effectively than the female *maganitos* because of their stronger moral aptitude and intellect that came from their birth sex. This also allowed the *bayog* to be more approachable to the priests and to use them for their significant social and spiritual position in their societies and the religious leaders of the pre-Catholic animist traditions.

²⁹³ Brewer, *Shamanism*, 39-58.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

²⁹⁵ Wiesner, *Women*, 272.

Why did the Jesuits and the Dominicans utilize the *bayog* rather than silence or persecute them for their “cross-dressing” and their presumed sodomy? James A. Brundage suggests that sodomy was a vague term during the early modern period that could be adapted based on the situation in the time or place. Factors such as age, class, and the degree of the sin were considered by Catholic clergy and Spanish officials.²⁹⁶ The fact that Jesuit and Dominican missionaries in the Philippines saw the potential use of these *bayogs* suggest that instead of condemning them and punishing them for perceived acts of sodomy, they actually used these *bayogs* as either public examples to expand the influence of the Catholic church, or, in the case of the Dominicans in Zambal, used them to gain important information about the continuation of animist practices among their female peers. Condemning, arresting, or even executing such useful resources would have been counterproductive to their attempts to Christianize the islands.

The fact that one Jesuit priest went into the mountains to extinguish the threat of the *Catolonas* is interesting as well. The account portrays the event as though he went into the mountains seeking women to apprehend and put down for continually threatening the spiritual peace of his colonized people. His response changed when he realized that the *Catolonas* was actually a *bayog*. He sought to bring the *bayog* down from the mountain and to publicly convert h/er to pave the way for the Tagalogs of Taytay to follow suit. In doing so he showed the transition of spiritual and religious power from the feminine to the masculine.²⁹⁷ The Jesuit also insisted that the *bayog* cut h/er hair, which symbolized not only the seven demons that came out of the Magdalen, but also her whoredoms. This shows that the Jesuits associated h/er presumed “cross dressing” with sodomy, but that s/he could overcome that by submitting to Catholic authority and working with them in the colonization process. Instead of suppressing and publicly

²⁹⁶ Brundage, *Law*, 533-536.

²⁹⁷ Garcia, *Philippine Gay*, 162-167.

humiliating the *bayog*, s/he could be manipulated to serve the Jesuit mission through the spiritual and cultural power that she wielded. S/he could also work closely with the Jesuits because h/er sex assigned at birth did not threaten them. Moreover, returning to Brewer's argument, s/he could also benefit from the colonial system that offered new privileges to men.

The assumed gender of this *bayog* is also why the Jesuits quickly accepted and utilized the *bayog* in Silang and spoke so highly of h/er efforts in proselyting and teaching those wanting baptism. S/he was another important spiritual leader who forsook h/er feminine identity, assumedly. Assumed gender is also why Alcina worked closely with the *bayog* in Sulat, noting the influence this *bayog* must have wielded in h/er community. Being a former *maganito* from before conversion, this *bayog* had feminine power and influenced the people around h/er spiritually. H/er subsequent adoption of Catholicism, though not stated in the account, must have had an impact on those in h/er realm of influence. Having a spiritual leader transform from an indigenous spiritual system to a new, imposed religious system influenced those who went to h/er for guidance for the spiritual or supernatural world. Alcina working so closely with this *bayog* is also a symbol of Alcina's trust in h/er because of h/er sex assigned at birth and gender. In the Inquisition investigation held in Zambal, the Dominicans found trust and confidence in a *bayog* who helped them in their attempts. The Dominicans trusted in h/er because of h/er sex assigned at birth and utilized h/er for the purposes of locating the more dangerous female *maganitos* who were more vulnerable to the will of the devil. In all these cases, the missionaries saw power in these *bayogs* that could be utilized to the advantage of the Catholic Church. Through the conversion and appropriation of these *bayogs*, their spiritual power was translated onto the Catholic priests, giving the priests the much needed spiritual power they sought in the colonization process.

Conclusion

The *bayog* provides interesting insight into the types of power women and feminine figures in the Philippines wielded. Through their conversions and choices to assist Catholic missionaries, they helped strengthen the Catholic church in their realms of influence. This is because of the feminine power they wielded as *maganitos*. Both female *maganitos* and *bayogs* held spiritual power that influenced the people around them. This spiritual power is why Catholic missionaries worked so diligently to fight against the female *maganitos*. The missionaries also manipulated and appropriated other indigenous women of influence to combat the influence of these female *maganitos*, as described in the introduction and first and second chapters. These women held significant power that became a hurdle to the Christianization process.

The *bayogs* possessed the same type of influence. The only thing that was different was their perceived genders. The Catholic clergy saw them as unique tools to propagate the Catholic faith and less of a threat than their female counterparts because of their sex assigned at birth. Individuals assigned the male sex at birth, in the missionaries' perspective, could overcome the temptations and snares of the devils more easily than biological females. By "guiding" and "convincing" these *bayogs* to adopt Christianity, they could then have these *bayogs* use their spiritual power and influence to convince those around them to do the same. They could also use them for the purposes of uprooting other *maganitos* who threatened the stability of Catholic conversions in a given village or town. The *bayogs* wielded the important feminine power of spiritual influence. But because of their sex assigned at birth, the Catholic clergy manipulated them into adopting the Catholic faith, motivating others to do so.

Despite the perceived superiority of the assigned birth sex of the *bayog*, the clergy still worked with indigenous women willing to live Catholic precepts. This thesis has shown in great

depth Catholic clergy working with these women. While the clergy and missionaries were always weary of their female converts and their potential to seduce them and others, they still utilized women willing to follow Catholic standards that did not threaten their spiritual authority. However, the female *maganitos* not only sexually threatened the clergy with their gender, they also posed a threat to Catholic authority. In most cases, as Brewer describes thoroughly, the missionaries and clergy violently suppressed the *maganitos* because of the opposition they presented to Catholicism. A few exceptions exist, including Tapihan who converted to Catholicism and became a useful teacher for the Jesuits, but missionaries and the clergy demonized many of these *magantios* and publicly ridiculed and silenced them. The *bayog*, as shown in the above four examples, stands as a contrast to that attitude towards the *maganito*. Because of h/er perceived gender, the clergy readily used them and their possession of indigenous feminine power in expanding Catholic authority.

Conclusion

In the Introduction, we encountered the story of two Cagayan women in different realms of influence. One was the *maganito* Caquenga who mobilized part of her village of Nalfotan to join an enemy settlement and prepare to wage war in response to the introduction of Catholicism. The second was Balinan, the sister of the village chief, who accepted the Catholic faith, who diligently followed its precepts, and taught the Cagayans of her village to follow the religion. The clergy set Balinan, with her social power as a member of the *principalia*, as a model of Catholic obedience to the people of Nalfotan to counteract the influence of Caquenga. This story of the contrast between these two powerful women in early colonial Philippines is symbolic of the Christianization process of the islands. One Christianized woman was pitted against another woman who represented indigenous values; both acting as pawns in the battle between the introduction of Christianity and efforts to suppress animism and non-Christian lifestyles. Yet beneath this black-and-white arena of colonizer versus colonized lies a complex layer of syncretisms, appropriations, compromises, negotiations, and cultural exchanges. The Christianization of the Philippines, like all colonial endeavors, was intricate and layered.

This thesis shows how clergy appropriated indigenous feminine figures and the social and feminine power they wielded to strengthen their authority in the islands. This appropriation of indigenous feminine figures was both a localized effort and the product of global endeavors. On a local level, clergy had to work with the agency of indigenous women. As seen with Caquenga and other women discussed in this thesis, women were powerful and did fight against or reject Catholic authority. Missionaries relied on willing feminine figures who accepted Catholic authority and appropriated and utilized them in spreading Catholic influence. This led to several compromises between the missionaries and the indigenous feminine figures, which resulted in

the syncretism of Catholic theology and indigenous understanding, sharing of social and spiritual power, and the pardoning of perceived wrongdoings for the preservation of power.

Syncretism was a common theme in colonization as Arroyo, Burkhart, and Lafaye argue.²⁹⁸ The clergy was forced to accept these syncretized practices and beliefs within their own Catholic framework if they wished to gain more influence in the colony, a pattern common in Latin American colonization as seen by the Virgin of Guadalupe. It occurred in the Philippines, as well, as indigenous people accepted Catholic ideas and translated them according to their own interpretations. Feminine figures, as the indigenous wielders of spiritual power, often translated these concepts into practices, such as acting as servants to the orders, receiving miracles, or witnessing of visions. In accepting these syncretic forms of religious practices, both the clergy and the feminine figures had to give up some of their own power in order to retain a spiritual position in society.

Paredes also navigates the tricky realm of trust and betrayal, showing how Catholic clergy in isolated colonial settings were forced to forgive and work with those who betrayed them in order to establish a stronger presence in these remote locations.²⁹⁹ Paredes examines the case of Campan in describing these trust and betrayal relationships, but this also applies to the *Catalona* of San Juan del Monte who became a model of Christian superiority over the indigenous *anitos*. After her secret society was dismantled and her *anito* supposedly began tormenting her, she became a prop to demonstrate Christian superiority when the Jesuits gave her a cross to cease the *anito*'s threats to her. The Jesuits placed trust in the *Catalona* when she came to them seeking help after her betrayal. In placing trust in her, the Jesuits were able to utilize her story of healing to promote the power of their faith and religion. The case of Tapihan, who first

²⁹⁸ Arroyo, "Transculturation." Burkhart, *Before*, 5. Lafaye, *Quetzalcoatl*, 303-314.

²⁹⁹ Paredes, *Mountain*, 83-119.

rejected to enter the confraternity but then eventually joined when Alcina returned to her village, also illuminates this concept of trust and betrayal to some extent, although her betrayal was quite minor.

The relationships between the clergy and feminine figures were complex, and the conversion of these figures required more than just humble submission to Catholic authority. Yet the role of these powerful women and *bayogs* in the Christianization process was important since they wielded significant power in their societies. Through these feminine figures, the Catholic orders were able to establish a firmer presence in the Philippines, which was vital on a global scale for the Catholic Church and the Spanish crown. The Philippines was Spain's Asian colony: their gateway to trade with China and Japan. Indeed, the Manila Galleon Trade was the main economic enterprise of the colony.³⁰⁰ Aside from trade, the strongest justification for Spanish possession of the Philippines was to Christianize the people, creating a complex Catholic colony that gave missionaries, particularly Jesuits, a crucial base and stronghold in Asia in their attempts to proselytize to other Asian polities.³⁰¹ Thus, to justify their stay in Manila, the Crown sent missionaries to convert the people of the islands, and these missionaries relied on the power of feminine figures in the Christianization process.

The Christianization process in the Philippines can be deemed a success. Through several decades of proselytization and monitoring of Christian converts, the Catholic Church gained a foundation in the Philippines that has lasted for centuries. However, the level of the conversions and the completeness of the Christianization of the islands were not perfect. Syncretism is a dynamic process of transculturation where all sides of the cultural transfer are influenced.³⁰² In

³⁰⁰ Clossey, "Merchants," 41-50.

³⁰¹ Rosa, *Jesuits*, 21-27. Francia, *History*, 62-64. Clossey, *Salvation*, 80-85, 144-148.

³⁰² Arroyo, "Transculturation."

the case of the early colonial Philippines, animism influenced Catholicism just as Catholicism influenced animism. Animist movements thrived throughout colonization in different locations in the islands and began to take on Christianized elements in their ceremonies.³⁰³ Indeed, a syncretic mix of animism and Catholicism is still practiced today.³⁰⁴

The complete and total process of Christianization was never accomplished in the Philippines. Just as Spain never had full control over the people of Latin America, neither did Catholicism control all of the Philippines.³⁰⁵ In spite of the imperfections in syncretism that accompanied imperially imposed *but* locally negotiated conversion, Catholicism became rooted in the Philippines, and the clergy's utilization of indigenous feminine figures and their power played an important role in this process.

³⁰³ Evelyn Tan Cullamar gives a detailed history of nineteenth and twentieth century animist millenarian movements in Negros that incorporated strong Catholic elements. She also gives a brief precursor to similar movements that occurred in the eighteenth century. See Evelyn Tan Cullamar, *Babaylanism in Negros, 1896-1907* (Quezon City: New Day Publisher, 1986).

³⁰⁴ Fenella Cannell in her anthropological study of the Bicol region of the Philippines analyzes the continuation of animist traditions mixed with Catholic symbolism. See Fenella Cannell, *Power and Intimacy in the Christian Philippines* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 77-118.

³⁰⁵ Restall, *Seven*, 64-76. Francia, *History*, 47-48, 90-95.

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