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FILIPINA

MORE HISPANIC THAN WE ADMIT

INSIGHTS INTO PHILIPPINE CULTURAL STORY

Edited by



MORE HISPANIC THAN WE ADMIT

INSIGHTS INTO PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HISTORY

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*Y si, por rasgos étnicos, en gran desemejanza
de tu linaje insigne nuestra nación está,
sabemos que, al principio, para pactar su alianza,
juntaron y bebieron, a la nativa usanza,
sus sangres en un vaso Legazpi y el Rajah.*

Cecilio Apostol
"A España Imperialista," 1915

Filipinos in the Spanish Colonial Army during the Dutch Wars (1600-1648)

JOSÉ EUGENIO BORAO MATEO

IN THE 1600s, Spain and Holland had extended their rivalry in Europe to Southeast Asia. This competition raged for half a century and ranged from small skirmishes to major battles, first in the Moluccas, and later in the Philippines and in Taiwan. In 1616, in the Moluccas, Manila Governor-General Juan de Silva launched an attempt to deal the deathblow to Dutch power, but failed.

Ten years later, in 1626, Spanish troops were deployed to Taiwan to overthrow the Dutch, to protect the China-Manila trade from Dutch interference, and to assure a safe and easy passage to China and Japan. The two powers occupied two different areas in Taiwan until 1642, when the Dutch finally ousted the Spaniards from the island.

Filipino soldiers were a key factor in Spanish armies because they usually outnumbered the Spanish soldiers. Here I will attempt to look into the reasons behind the progressive enlistment of Filipino soldiers, especially the Pampangos and the Cagayanos, not only in the conquest of Luzon at the end of the sixteenth century, but especially during the Dutch War period in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Main military expeditions and their soldiers

It is impossible to accurately quantify the number of Filipino and Spanish soldiers involved in military activities, but we have tried to make some estimates. Figures have been drawn from the classical

Philippine historical sources, particularly from the well-known Blair and Robertson,¹ and from the *Historia General de Filipinas* of Pablo Pastells, which precedes the *Catálogo de los documentos relativos a las Islas Filipinas existentes en el Archivo de Indias de Sevilla* of Francisco Navas del Valle.² In the case of Taiwan, we have used the collection of documents *Spaniards in Taiwan*.³ After contrasting the data we have made a provisional reconstruction of the military enrollment of the Spanish offensives from 1575 to 1639 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Estimated number of Spanish and Filipino soldiers in the expeditionary troops

Year	Expedition	Spaniards	Filipinos	Total
1575	Expedition against Limahong (Pangasinan)	250	2,500	2,750
1578	First expedition to Borneo	400	1,800	2,200
1581	First expedition against Taysufu (Cagayan)	100	No data	
1581	Second expedition to Borneo	No data	No data	
1582	First expedition to the Moluccas	No data	1,500	

1 Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898* (1589; reprint, Cleveland; The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1905).

2 Francisco Navas del Valle; Pablo Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos relativos a las Islas Filipinas existentes en el Archivo de Indias de Sevilla. Precedido de una Historia General de Filipinas*, 8 vols. (Barcelona: Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas, 1928-1935).

3 José Eugenio Borao, *Spaniards in Taiwan, 1582-1682* (Taipei: SMC, vol. 1: 2001; vol. 2: 2002).

1589	Second expedition to the Moluccas	No data	No data	
1591	Second expedition to Cagayan-Tuy	80	1,400	1,480
1591	Expedition against the Zambales	120	3,000	3,120
1593	Third expedition to the Moluccas	No data	No data	
1596	First expedition to Cambodia (Gallinato)	130	some	
1598	Second expedition to Cambodia (Dasmariñas)	No data	No data	
1602	First expedition to Joló	200	200	400
1603	First repression of the Sangleys	220	2,500	2,720
1606	Fourth expedition to the Moluccas	1423	1,672	3,095
1609	Offensive to Caraga (De Silva)	No data	No data	1,000
1616	Expedition to Sincapora (De Silva)	2,000	2,500	5,000
1617	The battle of Playa Honda (Manila)	1,736	1,593	3,429
1626	Expedition to Taiwan (advance fleet)	100	200	300
1626	Expedition to Taiwan (entire fleet)	500	1,200	1,700

Taifusu in the northern coast of Luzon represented the first indirect Spanish military contact with northern Cagayanos. In 1581, Governor Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa sent Pablo Carrión with sixty-six Spanish soldiers (who grew to a hundred as they passed through Bolinao and Vigan) and "a good contingent of Pampango, Tagalog and Visayan soldiers. The Japanese pirate, after being defeated, fled to Formosa and Japan."⁴

Carrión proceeded to explore the Cagayan Valley and there founded the city of Nueva Segovia. However, the regular establishment of Spanish control over the area did not take place until 1595. It is possible that, in the face of the imminent invasion of expansionist shogun Hideyoshi in 1597, a kind of cooperation in the defense of territory was forged between Spaniards and Cagayanos. However, this friendship took longer to consolidate, first because of the distance from Manila, and because it was hindered by the Cagayanos' uprisings against the first *encomenderos*.

With the incorporation of Pampanga into the Spanish sphere of influence, other areas, like Pangasinan, followed suit. Problems from remote areas cropped up, like that of Borneo's Sultan Sirela, who—since he had declared himself vassal of the king of Spain—requested the Spaniards to help him recover his throne.

One expedition was organized in 1578,⁵ which is also mentioned in the *History of Morga* (the first thorough historical narration of the Spanish dominion in the Philippines made by an officer of the Manila Court, published in Mexico in 1609). The account asserts that the same governor, Francisco de Sande, led the successful assault.

According to Rizal's comments on this book, the expedition was accompanied by one thousand five hundred bowmen from the

⁴ Julián Malumbres, *Historia de Cagayan* (Manila: Tip. Linotype of Sto. Tomás, 1918), 28-29.

⁵ Antonio Molina, *Historia de Filipinas* (Madrid: Ed. Cultura Hispánica, 1984), 1:76.

provinces of Pangasinan, Cagayan, and Pintados⁶ but no Pampangos were mentioned.

A second expedition to Borneo took place in 1581, motivated by another plea from the same Sultan Sirela, who was again dethroned. The Spanish governor sent "a considerable number of native and Spanish troops."⁷ This expedition was organized by the then-newly installed Governor Ronquillo de Peñalosa, who had brought with him from Mexico a motley group of six hundred Spanish soldiers and civilians. This time, the number of Filipino soldiers was not reported.

According to the same narrative of Morga, the union of Spain and Portugal under the same crown (1580) led the Spaniards of Manila to help the Portuguese in the Moluccas, upon the request of the captain of Tidore. He requested help for a Spanish expedition to conquer the neighboring island of Ternate.

According to Rizal's comments on Morga's *History*, the expedition was sent in 1582 (still under Ronquillo de Peñalosa) and was composed of more than 1,500 warlike natives, mostly from Cagayan and Pampanga, but did not succeed because of an outbreak of beriberi.⁸

Regarding other attempts to deal with the Portuguese in the Moluccas, it is believed that a similar proportion was levied in the two succeeding expeditions: in 1589 (under Santiago de Vera) and in 1593 (under Gómez Pérez de Dasmariñas). These overseas expeditions might have firmed up the Spanish government's confidence in the fidelity of the Pampangos; and this should also explain—as we shall see at the end of this essay—why these natives were generously rewarded with royal lands and properties, a great number of them coinciding with these expeditions to the Moluccas (1582, 1589, and 1593).

Other expeditions were later sent to the kingdom of Cambodia. Its King Paramaraja, feeling threatened by the kingdom of Siam, requested help from the Portuguese and Spaniards. The Iberians ini-

6 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 15:54.

7 Molina, *Historia de Filipinas*, 78.

8 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 15:57.

tially decided to stay neutral, but after the capture of Lawaek (Cambodia's capital) by Siam, the Spanish governor of Manila allowed two expeditions of mercenaries to depart on a private basis, first in 1596 (under the command of Juan Juárez Gallinato), and in 1598 (under Luis Pérez Dasmariñas, the son of the former governor).⁹ The contemporary author Aduarte said that in the first expedition 130 Spanish soldiers were sent along with an unspecified number of Japanese and Filipinos.¹⁰

After the first expedition to Cagayan, this territory was still considered unfamiliar. A formal proposal to incorporate it into the neighboring province of Tuy in 1609 led to a retrospective account mentioning all of the previous explorations.¹¹ One of them relates the incorporation of Tuy itself in 1591. The said account also attests that in that year, the local chiefs of Pampanga volunteered to help the Spaniards:

In the year 1591, Governor Gomez Pérez Dasmariñas sent his son, Don Luis Pérez Dasmariñas, with seventy or eighty Spanish soldiers, and many Indian chiefs of La Pampanga, who were going with their arms and men to serve with Don Luis, to explore the province now called Tuy. The chief took more than one thousand four hundred Indian bearers. Don Luis...ordered a cross to be made there on a tree... in his Majesty's name, on the fifteenth of July of the said year.¹²

Besides the initial defense of their land against Limahong as well as the help offered in the Cagayan explorations, the Pampangos would also become the Spaniards' allies in the conquest of other tribes, particularly those of their enemies. Thus in 1591, Gómez

9 For the evolution and details of these expeditions see Florentino Rodao, *Espanoles en Siam (1540-1939). Una aportación al estudio de la presencia hispana en Asia*, (Madrid: CSIC, 1997), 9-26.

10 Diego de Aduarte, *La Historia de la Provincia del Santo Rosario de Filipinas, Japón y China, de la Sagrada Orden de Predicadores*, 2 vols. (Madrid: CSIC, 1963), 1:316.

11 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 14:281-326.

12 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 14:282.

Pérez Dasmariñas declared war against the Zambales, a tribe that inhabited the mountainous area close to Pampanga.

The Augustinians, who had spent some years evangelizing the Pampangos and expressed their opinion on the “justification” of this new enterprise, suggested that it would be advantageous to employ Pampango soldiers. It wasn’t just that the Pampangos were apt for warfare, but also because these natives wanted to avenge the harm the Zambales had caused them. At the same time, it was recommended that these faithful Pampango natives be rewarded with slaves and farmlands:

The plan should be carried out chiefly by means of the natives of Pampanga, and the Zambales of Pangasinan—people who know the country and its hiding-places and coverts; and who, as being more agile than Spaniards, bear more easily the toils of the march over the routes that have to be traversed, owing to the wilderness of the region... In payment of the cost to these natives, the slaves captured in the war might be apportioned to them; and in virtue of this compact they will not commit the cruelties and murders to be apprehended from them. Besides, this will benefit the state; for, having more field hands, they will plow and cultivate more land. Further, as regard the Pampangos, they will in this way obtain satisfaction for the many and serious wrongs that they have suffered from the Zambales in the way of both murders and robberies.¹³

The expedition was a success, and Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas reported to the King that three thousand Pampango soldiers were sent, beside 120 Spanish soldiers.

Moreover, the said native soldiers were particularly brutal in their dealings with the Zambales. They took twenty-five hundred prisoners, four hundred of whom were sent by the governor to the galleys:

In conformity with the opinion of the religious orders, I resolved to strike the blow at once by sending troops with six captains. Under each captain was a troop of twenty Spanish soldiers and five or six hundred natives—Pampangos, who were willing to go to war, and gave much assistance, because of the damage received by them from the Zambales.

They approached that country, which had never before been entered, by six routes... they destroyed all the food and the crops... those whom they killed and took captive amount, men and women, to more than two thousand five hundred; and from the men taken the captains and soldiers gave me about four hundred Zambales. I have utilized them for you Majesty's service on the galleys, where they are learning to row.¹⁴

In other words, in this third occasion the Pampangos had a new motivation to join the Spaniards, which was to wreak vengeance on their close enemies from whom they would get land and slaves.

The first expedition conducted during the time of Governor Pedro Bravo de Acuña—before facing the so-called Sangley Uprising—was against the kingdom of Joló in 1602. It was assigned to the Major of Cebú, Gallinato, “who was sent with four hundred men, half of them Filipinos”¹⁵ to that Muslim sultanate. Leaving from Cebú, it is easy to presume that the Filipinos were mainly Cebuanos, but we do not have specific data.

In 1603 a new scenario unfolded, a rebellion not of natives but of Chinese settlers called Sangleys. In this case—ten years after the Zambales war—de Acuña once again called on the Pampangos for a special mission: to help suppress the Sangley uprising in Manila (1603). Pampangos responded to this call possibly for the chance to obtain war booty yet again.

According to Miguel Rodríguez Maldonado's account of the uprising, the first group that entered Manila consisted of one thousand

14 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 8:214.

15 Molina, *Historia de Filipinas*, 1:102.

Pampangos: "At the juncture, reinforcements of one thousand men entered the city—Pampangos, comprising harquebusiers and pikemen. They sallied out with some Spaniards and attacked the enemy. They killed more than a thousand of them and set fire to the rest of the Parian (i.e., the Chinese quarter)."¹⁶

The same account adds that the zeal of these Pampangos was so contagious that other foreign settlers caught on: "The Japanese, seeing that the Pampangos were destroying and sacking the Parian with great fury, gradually joined them."¹⁷

More reinforcements poured in from Pampanga. When the Sangleys fled to Laguna province, with Sergeant Major Ascoeta in hot pursuit, the bulk of the army was comprised of Pampango musketeers and harquebusiers:

The news reached the city, whereupon Sergeant Major Ascoeta went out with two hundred twenty Spanish harquebusiers, four hundred Japanese, two thousand Pampangos (of whom fifteen hundred were harquebusiers and musketeers, and the other were armed with spears, swords and arrows), two hundred Moros, and three hundred Blacks, who came as friends to take part in this war.¹⁸

And even when victory was already at hand, the Pampangos proved to be hardier and more fired up than the Spaniards: "The Spaniards did not go in pursuit of them, for they were very tired after six hours of fighting, while some were wounded. Consequently Sergeant Major Ascoeta sent an Indian chief, one Don Ventura de Mendoza, with two hundred Pampangos, to pursue them. In a few days all the Sangleys were killed."¹⁹

Dealing with the Dutch

Were there other special reasons behind the Pampangos' complete

16 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 14:218

17 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 14:129.

18 Ibid., 14:131.

19 Ibid., 14:132.

cooperation with the Spanish troops? One may surmise that besides the generous booty from the sacking of the Parian, a strong motive might have been the special honor they would receive from the governor-general for having directly helped the Spaniards in the threat of Intramuros.

The above-mentioned account ends thus: "On 14 November, Sergeant Major Ascoeta entered this city... They were well received by the governor and the Audiencia, and by the entire city. Don Pedro [i.e., the governor] showered a thousand compliments on all the Pampanga captains for their good services. They were much pleased at this, and offered their persons, lives, and possessions to the service of His Majesty. The Japanese and Pampangos had a share in all the wealth of the booty, and it was large, for it consisted mainly of gold, silver, reals, and pearls."²⁰

The expeditions against the Dutch that took place in the early half of the seventeenth century—in the context of the so-called Dutch Wars—marked a new phase in the enlistment of Filipino soldiers in the Spanish armed forces, presumably characterized by a need to professionalize. They were now to face a new enemy—one from a far-off land and armed with sophisticated European weaponry, fortresses, and strategies, and knowledgeable in the art of land and naval warfare. Fighting them would entail complex organizational problems. It was likely that the Filipino soldiers underwent more rigorous selection and more serious professional training in the same fortresses.

Fr. Gaspar de San Agustín wrote in 1698: "The Pampangas were in acquaintance with military warfare that had been learned in the presidiums of Terrenate, Zamboanga, Joló, Caraga and other parts."²¹ Once again, to cope with this new situation, first preference was given to the Pampango soldiery, which had proved reliable in the

20 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 14:134.

21 Gaspar de San Agustín, *Conquistas de las islas Filipinas: la temporal, por las armas del señor don Phelipe Segundo el Prudente; y la espiritval, por los religiosos del orden de nuestro padre San Augustin: fyndacion, y progressos de sy provincia del santissimo nombre de Jesus* (Madrid, Imprenta de Ruiz de Murga, 1698; reprint, Gaviria, Valladolid, 1890), 571.

Moluccas and Borneo expeditions. Other natives were assigned to local operations; for instance, the expedition to explore the mountain zone of the Igorots (central Luzon), under Alonso Martín Quirante, mayor and military commander of the provinces of Pangasinan and the Ilocos (1624), was composed mainly of men from the respective places. No Pampangos figured among them, just "70 Spanish soldiers, 14 adventurers, 11 of His Majesty's negro slaves, 9 natives imprisoned by crimes, 47 Sangley carpenters, smiths and sawyers, 1,748 natives (893 from Ylocos, 855 from Pangasinan)."²²

Three main Spanish offensives outside the archipelago against the Dutch were conducted in 1606 (Moluccas), 1616 (Sincapora Straits), and 1626 (Taiwan).²³ Others were more of the defensive type to protect Manila from the seasonal blockades enforced by Dutch galleons.

In the offensive of 1606, de Acuña went to the Moluccas intending to defeat the Dutch, who had dislodged and replaced the Portuguese in the area. This Moluccas expedition was extensively related by Argensola²⁴ after gathering all the information that had reached Madrid, saying that it involved the following soldiers: 1,423 Spaniards and 960 Pampangos and Tagalogs (344 for the infantry and 620 for the maritime service).

New Spanish military campaigns were conducted. In 1609 Juan de Silva, the new governor, arrived in Manila with five companies from the Spanish infantry. He immediately deployed three companies to the province of the Pintados to fight the Caraga tribe, although we do not have information on the number of native soldiers he sent there. The following year, on 24 April 1610, de Silva vanquished the Dutch. With regard to native soldiery, the only thing

22 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 20:265.

23 For an account of the blockades to Manila and the Spanish counteroffensives, see José Eugenio Borao, "Intelligence-gathering episodes in the 'Manila-Macao-Taiwan Triangle' during the Dutch Wars," in *Macao-Philippines, historical relations* (Macao: University of Macao & CEPESA, 2005), 226-247.

24 Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola, *Conquista de las Islas Molucas al Rey Felipe Tercero* (Madrid, 1609; reprint, Zaragoza: Imprenta del Hospicio Provincial, 1891), 354-393.

we know about this victory is that the Spaniards numbered less than a thousand, but they had under their command "a sufficient number of soldiers of other nations" besides, the casualty count was fifty-seven Spaniards and fifty native boatswains; about fifty were injured.²⁵

Another important military operation of de Silva's took place in 1616, when he attempted to defeat the Dutch in Java, in collaboration with the Viceroy of Portugal in Goa. De Silva left Manila in January 1616 with a powerful fleet of sixteen large ships (with three hundred bronze cannons), manned by two thousand Spaniards, two thousand five hundred Filipinos and five hundred Japanese,²⁶ leaving the city totally disarmed in case of a Dutch invasion. The account does not mention the ethnicities of these Filipinos; we can only assume that many of them were Pampangos.

De Silva's operation is well known for its disastrous results: the Portuguese did not show up, de Silva died of a deadly fever and, as a consequence, the entire fleet had to return to Manila. Schurz compared this incident to the "Invincible Armada": "The debacle of this expedition is as important in history of East Indies as was the failure of the Invincible Armada in 1588, for it definitely settled the question as to who should dominate that region."²⁷

With that disaster of 1616, the Spanish army lost all sense of initiative. The Dutch then picked up the slack, making their appearance the following year in Philippine waters with new impetus. This time, we have detailed reports of the Battle of Playa Honda (1617), a defensive operation ordered by the president of the Royal Audiencia in Manila, who acted as interim governor after de Silva's death.

There were seven galleons, one *patache*, and three galleys carrying 200 Spanish officers (48 captains, 94 second lieutenants, and

25 Navas del Valle and Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos*, 6:80-85.

26 See the whole affair in Navas del Valle and Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos*, 6:326; and Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 17:251-280.

27 William Schurz, *The Manila Galleon* (1929; Manila: Historical Conservation Society, 1988), 284.

66 sergeants), commanding 963 Spanish soldiers and more than 600 seamen (149 artillerymen, 426 sailors, as well as 53 caulkers and divers, and 23 members of religious orders). The Pampangos numbered 227, plus 430 boatswains, 456 servants, and up to 480 "galley slaves."²⁸ This battle left 500 Dutchmen killed for every fifty Spaniards and the same number of natives.

This time around, the Spaniards were not only impressed by the Pampangos' military skills; one of the natives' loyalty was duly noted: "Almost fifty natives, who performed very well [were present]; and one of them, at the start of the battle, seeing that one of the *flemulas* of our flagship had gone into the water, dove in after it and retrieved it so that the enemy would not take it."²⁹

Five years later, in 1622, the Dutch tried to seize Macao but failed. They proceeded to settle in the Pescadores Islands and later, in 1624, in the central zone of Taiwan. From there, they terrorized the Chinese who were trading with Manila. The Spaniards reacted to this in 1626 by occupying Quelang, north of Taiwan, something that we will consider more lengthily later.

In the 1630s the Spaniards hardly engaged in hostilities with the Dutch, which was a relief to then-Governor Corcuera who thus had more time to focus more on the problems of Mindanao and Joló. He started by sending three hundred Spaniards and three thousand natives³⁰ on a punitive mission against the Muslim chiefs in Mindanao.

Soon after, another mission in Joló (1637) saw Corcuera dispatch on eleven junks three military companies—one comprising one hundred fifty Spaniards, the second, one hundred Spaniards under the command of Captain Lorenzo de Orella, and the third, one hundred Pampangos.³¹ When they reached Zamboanga, they enlisted one hundred Spaniards and fifty more Pampangos. Later, Juan Nicolás arrived with eighty Spaniards and twenty Pampangos.

28 Navas del Valle and Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos*, 6:396.

29 Ibid., 6:404-405.

30 Navas del Valle and Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos*, 9:34.

31 Ibid., 8-b:53.

The troops overran the entire Mindanao coast up to Caraga, accompanied by one thousand native warriors who were vassals of the King and Christians as well.³² It was probably because of this that in his report about the Joló mission of 1637 Corcuera listed rounded-off figures for the number of men who participated in it: five hundred Spaniards to three thousand natives.³³ Assistance from the Pampangos is presumed.

Another mission to Joló took place in 1638, consisting of eighty boats, six hundred Spaniards and one thousand natives, five hundred of whom were adventurers and galley slaves.³⁴

We end this account about the participation of native soldiers in the Spanish armed forces during the term of Governor Corcuera, ascertaining that four thousand were involved in quelling the Sangley uprising of 1639. Of these, Corcuera gave a ratio of two hundred Spaniards to one thousand Pampangos and three thousand Tagalogs.³⁵

It should come as no surprise that the Augustinian Medina manifested his wonder that males could still be found in Pampanga:

This place has had a great drainage of soldiers, that I am impressed how there are still males. Certainly the governors send soldiers [from Pampanga] to Moluccas, Cebú, Otón and Cagayan, places that have fortresses kept by Pampangos, who, even if they work more than the same Spaniards, do not receive salary, have scarce food and receive bad dealings.³⁶

Soldiers in the fortresses

We have so far tracked the movements of some soldiers assigned to specific missions, but another aspect to look into is every for-

32 Ibid., 8-b:54.

33 Ibid., 9:34.

34 Ibid., 8-b:133.

35 Ibid., 9:34.

36 Juan de Medina, *Historia de los sucesos de la Orden de N. Gran P. S. Agustín de estas islas Filipinas, desde que se descubrieron y se poblaron por los españoles, con las noticias memorables* (1630; reprint, Manila: Chofré y Comp., 1893), 127.

tress and the number of native soldiers enlisted to serve in each. For the moment, this is a task that exceeds our available resources. Nevertheless we can analyze the memorial of the Procurator of the Philippine Islands in the court of Madrid, Juan Grau de Monfalcón, presented to the King in 1637, which describes the situation in the island two years earlier.³⁷ It helps us visualize the condition of the Pampango soldiers who were assigned all throughout the islands.

The infantry soldiers were divided into two groups. The first was involved in "land combat" (section 51); it was assigned to the Manila encampment, which, besides Fort Santiago in Intramuros, was extended to the fortresses of Cebú, Otón, Cagayan, and Isla Hermosa [Formosa, Taiwan].

Monfalcón's report states that these satellite fortresses of the "Manila camp" had a company of 140 Pampango soldiers with their respective officers. The second group was assigned to Moluccas (section 52 of the report), where seven Spanish companies (570 soldiers) and two Pampango companies (two hundred soldiers) comprised the infantry of the "war of Maluco."

At this point, it would be interesting to look at their supposedly monthly wages to see the difference between Spanish and Filipino soldiers.

A captain should earn twenty-four pesos, a second lieutenant sixteen pesos, a sergeant eight pesos, and a soldier four pesos. It is possible that—at least in theory—this was also the salary for native soldiers designated by the Council of the Indies; however, the wages that each soldier actually received in Isla Hermosa in 1641 were much lower³⁸: four *reales* per soldier and one peso per officer. It seems that—excluding mismanagement—said wages were "stretched" to accommodate a greater number of soldiers in the fortresses.

Besides the Pampangos and Cagayanos, we have to consider the entire branch of the navy, officially called *el ramo naval y de maes-*

37 Borao, *Spaniards in Taiwan*, 232-234.

38 Ibid., 336-342.

tranza (the branch of the navy and of weaponry services) that surely included native personnel.

The same memorial states that there were six galleys, two of which were assigned to Manila, two to Isla Hermosa and two to Terrenate, and that these were manned by 1,080 penal workers (per ship) who probably corresponded to half of the 2,200 natives working in the said branch.

It seemed difficult to recruit these personnel in Manila, and the most expedient method was to do it along the way. For example, in one of his reports (1632), the Dominican Esquivel recommended a solution to gather more workers in the port of Bangui, such as artisans and blacksmiths, a port that lies along the route to Isla Hermosa.

[These men] are also needed to row the vessels. Some thirty of them have been recalled. This year [of 1632], native blacksmiths, carbon makers, iron workers, box makers and *gastadores* are urgently needed to replenish [the work force] in the galleys. They can be recruited from the provinces of Bulacan, Pangasinan, Ilocos, and Cagayan. They may assemble at the Bangui port, where they can board two sampans that ply the route from there to Isla Hermosa, as the distance between the two points is very short.³⁹

Were the Pampangos a “martial race”?

The studies on “martial races” have been addressed initially to the colonial armies in India in the nineteenth century, and more recently to other countries in Southeast Asia. The bureaucratization of all activities in that century created a big bulk of documentation that allowed researchers to know in detail the behavior and social and racial background of the native soldiers in service to the colonial powers, especially after the publication of the memoirs of the Indian Army Commander Roberts of Kandahar in 1897.⁴⁰

39 Borao, *Spaniards in Taiwan*, 195.

40 See Stephen P. Cohen, *The Indian Army: Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1971).

The British crafted a kind of social engineering by labeling races as “martial”, but the concept resulted in an ambivalent formulation that by inducing loyalty, efficiency, and a sense of calling, the colonial power also developed a sense of national identity. As Sara Womack said: “The inventors of the peculiar racism of warlike peoples could not wield it adroitly for their ends, and, ultimately, the myth of the martial races proved at best an uncertain weapon.”⁴¹ Nevertheless, the Pampangos sided with the Spanish colonial army almost until the end of the independence (1898); such loyalty was built into the seventy-year process (1575-1647) of military incorporation and colonial assimilation. Why, indeed, had there been an active participation of Pampango soldiers in the Spanish armed forces?

We began this paper saying that more than thirty thousand Pampangos could have been enlisted in a span of seventy years, or an average of four hundred men a year. Even if their level of commitment and the time spent in the service varied, the number seems significant.

Consider the report of Bishop Domingo de Salazar, made on 25 June 1588, on the number of natives in the Philippines, which says that Pampanga province had twenty-two thousand people paying tribute; seven thousand of them belonged to His Majesty, and the other fifteen thousand were divided in eleven encomiendas.⁴² Even if we consider that each person paying tribute was a family, the proportion of Pampangos joining the Spanish armies was very high.

The question can be formulated in another way: why were the Pampangos the keenest to collaborate with the colonial government? The traditional eyewitness answer was because of their bel-

41 Sarah Womack, “Ethnicity and Martial Races. The *Garde Indigène* of Cambodia in the 1880s and 1890s,” in *Colonial armies in Southeast Asia*, ed. Karl Hack and Tobias Rettig (London: Routledge, 2006), 123.

42 See Navas del Valle and Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos*, 2:317. We can compare this data with the one offered by W. E. Retana, *Archivo del bibliófilo filipino* (Madrid: Minuesa de los Ríos, 1898), 4:10-12. He said that in 1591 the population of the five central communities of Pampanga, Betis, Lubao, Macabele, Candaba, and Apalit, totaled 39,000 souls. Considering that in this figure the term “soul” includes all the population, both figures seem consistent.

licose character and adaptability to war or, as we might say, they belonged to a "martial race."

Eyewitness accounts always tended to testify to the Pampangos' "martial spirit" and bellicosity. One example is that of Governor Acuña, preparing for the Moluccas expedition. In 1602 he wrote King Philip III: "I intend to take with me some Pampangos and some other natives from this region [of Manila, the Tagalogs], among whom there are many good harquebusiers and musketeers. In company with Spaniards, they prove to be very good soldiers."⁴³

Another testimony is that of the Jesuit Gregorio López who had seen events that tell of the Pampangos' more than thirty years of service to the Spaniards. López, narrating certain events in the Philippine Islands from 1609 to 1610, said: "For the greater security and some relief of the citizens, several companies of Pampangos were summoned. Among all these islanders they have proved themselves most loyal to the Spaniards, and most fit for soldiers."⁴⁴

Another testimony of the Pampangos' bravery was given by the Spaniards during the above-mentioned threat of Koxinga to the Philippines in 1662. They hurried to raise some companies of soldiers to defend Manila, first removing the garrisons of Ternate, Zamboanga, Iligan, and Calamianes, later ordering the demolition of the unprotected churches of the walled city of Manila, and finally organizing a company with four hundred horses from the nearby farms, and several *tercios* of infantry with the most "animosos (brave) soldiers, like Pampangos, Merdicas, Criollos o Morenos, Pangasinanes, Boholanos and others, reaching a total of eight thousand soldiers."⁴⁵

Gaspar de San Agustín in 1698 said the Pampangos were different from the other Filipino groups because they were sincere, had a keen sense of honor, and were brave and industrious; they had good habits and did not try to hide them.⁴⁶

43 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 14:54.

44 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 17:105.

45 Navas del Valle and Pastells, *Catálogo de los documentos*, 9:158.

46 Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, 40:252.

Modern observations were similar. An English traveler who was moving around the Philippines from 1819 to 1822 said: "The Pampango is brave, faithful, and active," adding that the "fidelity of the Cagayanos is proverbial."⁴⁷ The same martial faithfulness was attributed to the Pampangos by the nineteenth-century Spanish ambassador to China, Sinibaldo de Mas. After his trip to the Philippines he wrote a report saying that: "The provinces of Pampanga and Bulacan remained faithful during the English invasion (1762-1764) and were the only resource for the Spaniards."⁴⁸

We also can mention that besides bravery Spaniards saw faithfulness and affinity in the Pampangos. For example, Medina published in 1630 in his *Historia*: "Among all the nations in those islands, [the Pampangos] are the ones that better have accepted Christianity. They are also devoted to the Spaniards more than others, and they try to imitate them as much they can."⁴⁹

On the other hand, Gaspar de San Agustín mentioned in 1698 that some of the natives fought for the Spaniards out of fear, but the Pampangos did it out of "*pundonor*" (i.e., sense of loyalty and honor), since they were admitted to join the Spanish armies and were treated with trust.⁵⁰

It is difficult to formally assert that the Pampangos were inherently a martial race or even that they were more bellicose than their neighbors. In fact, the Augustinians who had missions with other Filipino ethnicities had described these groups as bellicose, for example the Ilalones, Abacaes, Calonasas and Iturías.⁵¹ In any case, the fact that the Pampangos lived in the plains with extensive ricefields could have afforded them greater social organization (and thus better nutrition) than their neighbors in the mountains, like the Zambales, hence their preparedness for war.

47 Ibid., 51:89.

48 Ibid., 49:262.

49 Medina, *Historia de los sucesos*, 127.

50 Gaspar de San Agustín, *Conquista de las Islas Filipinas*, 571.

51 Ibid.

But why they used their strength not to fight the Spaniards but to assist them lingers as a valid inquiry. Larkin⁵² cites two reasons: first, the Pampangos' early conversion to Christianity, and second, the special status the Spaniards granted them through the *encomienda* system. Regarding the first, Larkin pointed out how the Augustinians' missionary activity could have explained directly or indirectly the Pampangos' joining the Spanish troops. By 1597, the Augustinians had built churches in eleven of the major Pampango communities.

By 1612 some 28,200 Pampangos had been prepared to receive the sacraments. A great number, if we recall the previous figure of 1588 stating that 22,000 people (most probably households) were paying tribute. Moreover, we can presume that by the mid-seventeenth century the entire Pampanga would have been Christianized.

But Larkin still considers this factor insufficient to explain the Pampangos' famed allegiance since the actual reach of Spanish missionaries and laymen throughout the province was very limited. In 1594, only twenty-nine missionaries had settled there, a proportion that even fell in 1848, when only nineteen Spanish missionaries and laymen were living in that province.

Moreover, Larkin and Cushner uncovered a more telling document six years later,⁵³ allowing us to better understand the Pampangos' willingness and availability to join Spanish troops. The document is the list of *encomiendas* that the colonial government enacted from 1571 to 1626, which reflects how the crown rewarded native collaboration.

If Spaniards were granted *encomiendas* so were some native Filipinos, and the Pampangos were the ones who benefited most from this. For example, 7,168 *cabalitas* (small *encomienda*) out of

52 John A. Larkin, *The Pampangans. Colonial Society in a Philippine Province* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), 28-32.

53 Nicolas P. Cushner and John A. Larkin, "Royal Land Grants in the Colonial Philippines (1571-1626): Implications for the Formation of a Social Elite," *Philippine Studies* 26, no. 1 (1978): 102-111.

8,950 were granted to Pampangos, and so were a few *caballerías* (big *encomienda*).

Furthermore, there is a clear parallelism between the Pampangos' participation in military campaigns and the granting of these *cabalitas*. For example, 8,063 of these rights were granted during the terms of Governors Santiago de Vera and Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas (1584 to 1594), meaning at the height of the first three expeditions to Maluco (1582, 1589, and 1593).

The granting of so many "small ranches" in those years could well lead us to think that this should be the primary reason behind the Pampangos' collaboration. The first expedition saw a deployment of Pampango and Cagayan soldiers, but we do not have exact figures of Pampango participation.

But in 1593, when the third expedition to the Moluccas took place, we observe the greatest number of land grants: fifty-two, a big number compared with the seventy concessions for the whole decade.⁵⁴ Also, the important campaign against the Zambales, the Pampangos' enemy-neighbors, took place at the end of this particular decade. This campaign recruited three thousand Pampangos and only 120 Spaniards. It may not seem that a reward was at stake here, but Zambales slaves were the Pampangos' main profit.

The Pampango aristocracy

In the granting of *encomiendas* to natives a distinction must be made between the *cabalitas* and *caballerías* and those *encomiendas* granted throughout the seventeenth century. Luciano Santiago studied ten cases of granting of *encomiendas* in the seventeenth century; in the case of the Spaniards, these were granted after a formal application to the Crown, exhibition of merits (usually military service), and even traveling to Madrid to submit the application.

This kind of *encomienda* was understood, as in America, as a kind of royal grant comprising tributes taken from a particular vi-

54 Among the fifty-two beneficiaries, there were ten women who were probably widows of native leaders who perished in combat.

cinity regarded as a pension to be enjoyed by the encomendero, who in turn is obliged to render a particular spiritual and material assistance to the residents of that vicinity.

It is interesting to mention that eight out of the ten cases studied by Santiago referred to Pampango aristocracy, who fought in the Spanish overseas military expeditions.

For example, the application of the Pampango Don Gerónimo de Lúgay epitomizes the enrollment of Pampangos in the Spanish armies. When he applied for an encomienda in 1654, he claimed that his father, grandfather, and other close relatives fought in the royal service in the conquest of Ternate (1606), in the subjugation of Sultan Kudarat of Mindanao (1637), in the Jolo wars (1638), in the repression of the second Chinese uprising (1639), and against the Dutch in Abucay (1647).⁵⁵

Finally, we must say that the good relations between Spaniards and Pampangos was probably based on a major Hispanization, something that we can observe comparing the surnames of the Pampangos' and Cagayanos' soldiers' lists in the encampment of Isla Hermosa.⁵⁶ It is also discernible in the fact that the Spaniards granted the Pampangos greater independence by delegating power to the local *datus*,⁵⁷ but this did not keep their allegiance to the colonial government from being entirely unconditional since revolts happened,⁵⁸ as did with the Cagayanos.⁵⁹

55 Luciano P. R. Santiago, "The Filipino Indios Encomenderos (ca. 1620-1711)," *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 18, no. 3 (1990): 172.

56 Borao, *Spaniards in Taiwan*, 336-339.

57 Larkin, *Pampangans*, 33.

58 The first revolt in Pampang occurred in 1585. The rebels tried to massacre the *encomenderos*, because they had committed abuses. But the plot was betrayed by a native woman, the wife of a Spanish soldier. The second happened in 1645, also connected with the collection of tributes, and another in 1660. See Celedonio A. Ancheta, "One hundred revolts against the Spaniards," *Philippine Historical Review* 5 (1972): 165-179.

59 In Cagayan and Ilocos Norte the first revolts related with the payment of tributes were in 1589. Later, due to the cruelty of the major Marcos Zapata, some rebellions happened in 1625-27 and in 1639. In Ilocos Norte, there was another rebellion in 1788 motivated by the dissatisfaction over the wine and tobacco monopolies. See Ancheta, *One hundred revolts*, 168.

We have cited five reasons why the Pampangos were progressively involved in Spanish armies, eventually becoming the native elite troops of the Spaniards in the Philippines. These were: (1) the defense of their territory during the Limahong invasion, (2) the acquisition of overseas experience and the grant of cabalitas-encomiendas during the Borneo and Moluccas wars, (3) the revenge against close enemies in the Zambales war and subsequent reward, (4) the booty and honor during the Sangley uprising, (5) the professionalization of their military skills during the Dutch wars.

But now, after explaining the other kind of encomiendas the Pampangos acquired in the seventeenth century, we can propose a last reason for the Pampango aristocracy's constant help in recruiting soldiers to fill up the Spanish armies during the last years of the Dutch wars—the expectation of acquiring a formal encomienda on par with the Spaniards, which would help them consolidate a status akin to the Spanish aristocracy.

Precisely, among the ten known applications, the first ones—according to Santiago—were submitted by Pampangos: Don Ventura de Mendoza, who was half Tagalog (ca. 1620); Don Diego de Marácot (1623); Don Juan de Vera (1624); and Don Nicolás de los Ángeles (1631).

As for a possible martial spirit of Pampangos and Cagayanos, we can ascertain their behavior in the military encampment of Isla Hermosa from detailed documents.⁶⁰ Apparently they were a kind of federated army that fought under their own banners and captains, in proportional numbers with Spanish soldiers.⁶¹

To be sure, a more detailed study of Pampangos and Cagayanos in other places like Zamboanga, Cebú, Terrenate, etc., will help confirm the proposition of a possible special martial spirit of the Pampangos—if in fact it was more a social construct of Spanish military personnel, or the limited view of some Spanish writers and travelers.

60 Borao, *Spaniards in Taiwan*, 147-148, 171, 289.

61 *Ibid.*, 445-448.

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