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THE VISAYAN RAIDERS OF THE CHINA COAST, 1174-1190 AD

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Introduction

Chau Ju-Kua, writing in the thirteenth century, probably was the first to mention that certain ferocious raiders of China's Fukien coast probably came by way of the southern portion of the island of Formosa. He referred to them as the *Pi-sho-ye*. He wrote:

"The language of Pi-sho-ye cannot be understood, and traders do not resort to the country. The people go naked and are in a state of primitive savagery like beasts.

The savages come to make raids and, as their coming cannot be foreseen, many of our people have fallen victims to their cannibalism, a great grief to the people... During the period *shun-hi* (1174-1190 AD) their chiefs were in the habit of assembling parties of several hundreds to make sudden attacks on the villages of Shui-au and Wei-t'ou in Tsuan-chou-fu, where they gave free course to their savage instincts, slaying men without number and women too, after they had raped them.

The were fond of iron vessels... one could get rid of them by closing the entrance door, from which they would only wrench the iron knocker and go away... When attacking an enemy, they are armed with javelins to which are attached ropes of over a hundred feet in length, in order to recover them after throwing; for they put such value on the iron of which these weapons are made, that they cannot bear to lose them.

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They do no sail in junks or boats, but lash bamboo into rafts, which can be folded up like screens, so, when hard pressed, a number of them can lift them up and escape by swimming off with them (Chau Ju-Kua 1965: 85).

Chau surmised that the raids were launched from one of the islands of the Pescadores. He said that when they failed to make a landing in Formosa, they had to proceed straight to the coast of Fukien. The Marquis D'Hervey de Saint-Denys translated a 1273 work of Ma Tuan Lin where he commented that these barbarians known as *Pi-sho-ye* inhabited the southwestern portion of the island of Formosa and were very different in appearance and language from other oriental races and savage tribes (Ma Tuan Lin 1876: 425-426, n. 30). Lacouperie was the first to categorically identify *Pi-sho-ye* with the Visayans of the Philippines. Writing on the destruction China suffered from coastal raids, he said "...the Bisayas of the Philippines...made a raid on the coast of Tsuan-chou in Fuhkien during the period 1174-1189 A.D. under the Sung Dynasty..." (Lacouperie 1887: 127). Laufer (1907) argued against identifying the *Pi-sho-ye* as belonging to the Formosa aboriginal tribes, citing culture-historical considerations. Laufer noted that the Formosans must not have been skilled seafarers, otherwise they would not have lost contact with the mainland and would have had some idea of the Chinese. He observed further that the Formosans never visited the Chinese coast, nor had China any cognizance of Formosa before the year 607. During the Chinese military expedition to the island in 610, the two cultures had clashed like two alien worlds. Laufer thus concluded that piratical moves towards Fukien at the end of the twelfth century cannot have been of Formosan origin. Noting the accessibility of Formosa from the islands to the south (the Philippines), he agreed with the possibility of a Visayan origin for the *Pi-sho-ye*.

This paper aims to make a small contribution to prehispanic Philippine history by using a process of historical detection to look for the origin of Chau's raiders. Certain questions need to be answered in a logical order. If Visayans, how could they have been mistakenly construed by Ma Tuan Lin to have come from the southwestern coast of Formosa? What path could they have taken to reach and return from China? What kind of seagoing vessel could they have used? Can we make an educated guess as to where they might have come from within the Visayas? And why were they going so far away to raid for metal?

Question 1: If Visayan, How Could the Raiders Have Been Mistakenly Construed by Ma Tuan Lin To Have Inhabited the Southwestern Coast of Formosa?

If the raiders were Visayan, they could have passed southwest Formosa from the Japanese or Kuroshio Current on their way to the coast of Fukien. It would have seemed to the Chinese, and to Ma and Chau that they were attacking from a base in Formosa or the Pescadores.

Lacouperie and Laufer's theory that *Pi-sho-ye* could very well have been Visayans may hold water only if we can find answers as to why the Visayans are a logical choice, and how and why did they venture to China by way of the southern part of Formosa. No group from the north of Luzon to Japan has ever had a reputation or tradition of conducting maritime/coastal raids. Gonzalez (1966: 10) described how chiefly rank among the prehistoric Ivatan depended on "a show of their riches either in lavish feasts...or by displaying in the attire of their children all the gold and silver they possessed." But the Ivatan were never known for conducting raids to capture such wealth. And while the northern coast of Luzon had been known to be infested by Chinese and Japanese pirates during the Spanish colonial period (Salazar 1903-09: 51), these pirates were never known to be called *Pi-sho-ye*. The phonetically nearest tribal name to *Pi-sho-ye* was that of the agricultural *Pazehe* of Formosa (Torii 1898: 43-44). Davidson (1903) identified the *Pazehe* as belonging to the Pepo group, and located them as scattered over the Taihoku Plain and in the Kelung districts of the interior.

On the other hand, linguistic, archaeological and historical evidence indicate a strong tradition of raiding, maritime or terrestrial, called *mangayaw/kayaw* among Filipino groups from Luzon to Mindanao (Barrantes 1878; Scott 1982: 133-135; Scott 1994: 154-155, 186-188, 231-233; Junker 2000; Warren 2002). In major Philippine languages, the meanings of *kayaw/pangayaw/mangayaw* had to do with raiding. Among the northern tribes of Luzon, *kayaw* was "to go on a headhunting expedition" while *mangayaw* in Bicolandia, the Visayas, and Mindanao was to conduct slave-raiding on coastal villages (Scott 1994: 154-155, 231-233). Social privileges and rewards were conferred on those who successfully participated in *kayaw*, which enterprise required some resources in manpower and materials. *Kayaw* was a socially acceptable, even prestigious enterprise launched and led by men of courage, means and prowess (Alcina 1960: 173-174, Junker 1999).

Zayas writes that in the present-day Visayas, the word *pangayaw* is used by local people to refer to sojourning fisherfolk who migrate seasonally to live and fish in their islands, away from their places of origin. But prehispanically, the Visayan *pangayaw* were those who left home to undertake raids for slaves and other wealth (Zayas 1994: 75, 108, 128 notes 8 and 9).

Thus the likelihood that Chau's *Pi-sho-ye* came from a Philippine region is strong. Some might think that Mindanao is the likeliest candidate since Western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago were notorious for slave raiders immediately prior to and during the Spanish colonial period (Cruikshank 1979, Warren 1985, Mallari 1990, Postma 1997). But one fact eliminates that suggestion. Those raiders were known to be Muslims, and it was not until 1380 that Islam was able to establish a foothold in Mindanao. The Sultanate of Sulu was established in 1450 and in 1511 that of Maguindanao. By this time *Pi-sho-ye* raids on the Fukien coast of China had long ceased, the last reported raid being in 1190 (Wang Ta-yuan 1349 cited in Scott 1982: 21). It might be more rewarding to examine the much nearer Visayas and Bicolandia.

In Bicolandia, the island of Catanduanes was known by the Spanish shortly after their arrival as a lair of pirates. Although this, too, is much after 1190, it seems that this occupation was entrenched in Catanduanes culture. Juan de Salcedo led a pacification campaign in 1573 and succeeded in subduing Camarines and the "pirate" inhabitants of Catanduanes "that cause pain and suffering whenever they go" (Morga 1903-09: 206). Perusing Marcos de Lisboa's Bikol dictionary (1865), we can find many terms for maritime combat (see also Scott 1994: 187-188). True, many of these terms are significantly defensive in nature, and imply that the Bikolanos, with the possible exception of the people of Catanduanes, have always been more an object of maritime raiding than the originators of it.

Other points favor the Visayans as the probable *Pi-sho-ye*. Contemporary accounts of the raids between 1174 and 1190 observed that the raiders had covered their bodies with tattoos (Chau Ju-kua 1965: 85). The Visayans were named *Pintados* by the Spaniards for this practice, which they found to be widespread in the major islands of Panay, Cebu, Leyte and Samar (Loarca 1903-09: 115-117; Chirino 1969: 252; Morga 1962: 268-269; Colin 1900: 62, 100; San Antonio 1977: 134-136). In 1623, Fray Rodrigo de Aganduru Moriz recorded the repentance of the indios of the Visayas for having launched raids toward Mindanao in the early days.

The indios of the Bisayas say that before they gave obedience to the King our lord and became Christians, not only did the Mindanaoans not make raids in their territory, but that, on the contrary, they would go to Mindanao where they took many captives, and terrified them; and now it is the opposite, because since they are Christians and it is not licit for them to make those raids, and they are disarmed, they are paying for what they did...(Aganduru Moriz 1882: 336).

This is an indication that Visayans were going on raids even before the Muslims to the south began their northward slave raiding expeditions.

Question 2: What Path Could the Raiders Have Taken to Reach China and Return to the Visayas?

Physical geographic knowledge takes the lead in answering this question.

The period 1174 to 1190 was very well within the rule of the Song Dynasty of China. It was during this period that the Song established a fifth Southeast Asian trade route in the South China Sea. The backbone of their trade network was the China to Java route. Significantly, this new route passed through the Philippines and pulled the western side of the archipelago into the network. The success and prosperity of the trade depended heavily on the ability of local principalities to curb piracy. Those principalities benefiting from the trade coordinated with the recognized regional powers, such as Java and China, to police the trade route. Their vigilance discouraged any group from using the established trade routes for piratical or slave-raiding expeditions (Hall 1985: 20-25). The Philippine ports integrated into the network were located in Ilocos, Pangasinan, Manila Bay, Batangas, Mindoro, Panay, Cebu, Butuan, Palawan, Zamboanga and Sulu – all lying most accessible to the established trade routes (Hutterer 1974). On the other hand, the eastern portion of the archipelago must have suffered from limited participation to almost being shut out from this trade.

The *Pintados* islands of Panay and Cebu were bound by the rules governing participation. The existence of a flourishing trade in these two islands upon Spanish arrival strongly signifies that they had, early on, effectively desisted from engaging in piracy or raiding. If the *Pi-sho-ye* were from the Visayas, they would not have come from Panay or Cebu. Considering further that if a northward route to Formosa was to be made, with the South China Sea closed for *pangayaw*, the Pacific was the only logical

alternate route going north. Of the *Pintados* islands, those oriented to the eastern Philippine Sea were Leyte, Samar, and Bicolandia.

Northward sailing via the Philippine Sea was made favorable by the Pacific current known as the North Equatorial Current. It begins off the western coast of Central America at 85 to 90 degrees West longitude and 5 degrees North latitude (during the month of February) or 10 degrees North latitude (in August), and turns West. As it reaches the end of its western flow, it crashes into the Philippine continental barrier, and splits in two, one branch turning southward and the other northward. The northward current travels along the entire length of the eastern Philippines beginning at a point east of Samar Island up to and beyond Taiwan, where it then bears northeast upon the Ryukyu Islands and toward Yokohama in Japan. North of Japan, the current turns east towards the western coast of North America, and then southward back to Central America (see **Figure 1**) (Tchernia 1986: 228).

This northward current in the eastern Philippine Sea that begins east of Samar and moves toward Japan is referred to by the Japanese as *kuroshio*, meaning “black current” because of its cobalt blue color. For us, a most significant character of this current is that as it reaches the Bashi Channel between Taiwan and Batanes, the northeast monsoon winds cause it to branch off westward, leading south of Taiwan (Formosa) and heading straight for the southeast coast of China. This westward branch has been observed to be strongest in February (Tschernia 1986: 228).

The Visayan raiders, having turned west along the rapid western branch of the Kuroshio to Formosa, whenever possible might indeed have landed on the southern coast of the island to prepare for a final assault on the China coast, and so Ma would have thought them to come from Formosa. We can deduce that the raids would have taken place in February, at the time when this western branch of the northern current is strongest, making a Formosa landing difficult, and so usually and forcibly taking the raiders straight on to China. Most of the raids were probably conducted between December (the earliest month would be November) and April (the entire period of the northeasterly winds or *amihan* in Visayan) to make the most of the westward branch and for an easier westward sailing to the China coast from Formosa. Wouldn't the return trip against the Kuroshio have been much too difficult, requiring the raiders to venture into patrolled waters on the western side of the Philippine archipelago in order to get home?

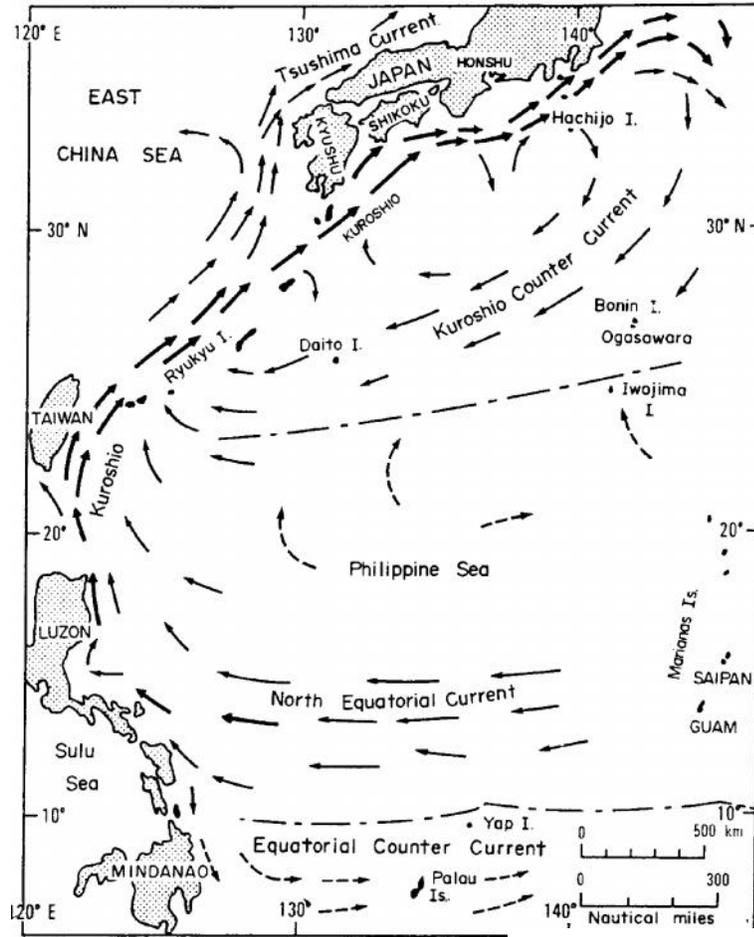


Figure 1. The *Kuroshio* current. From Tchernia (1986).

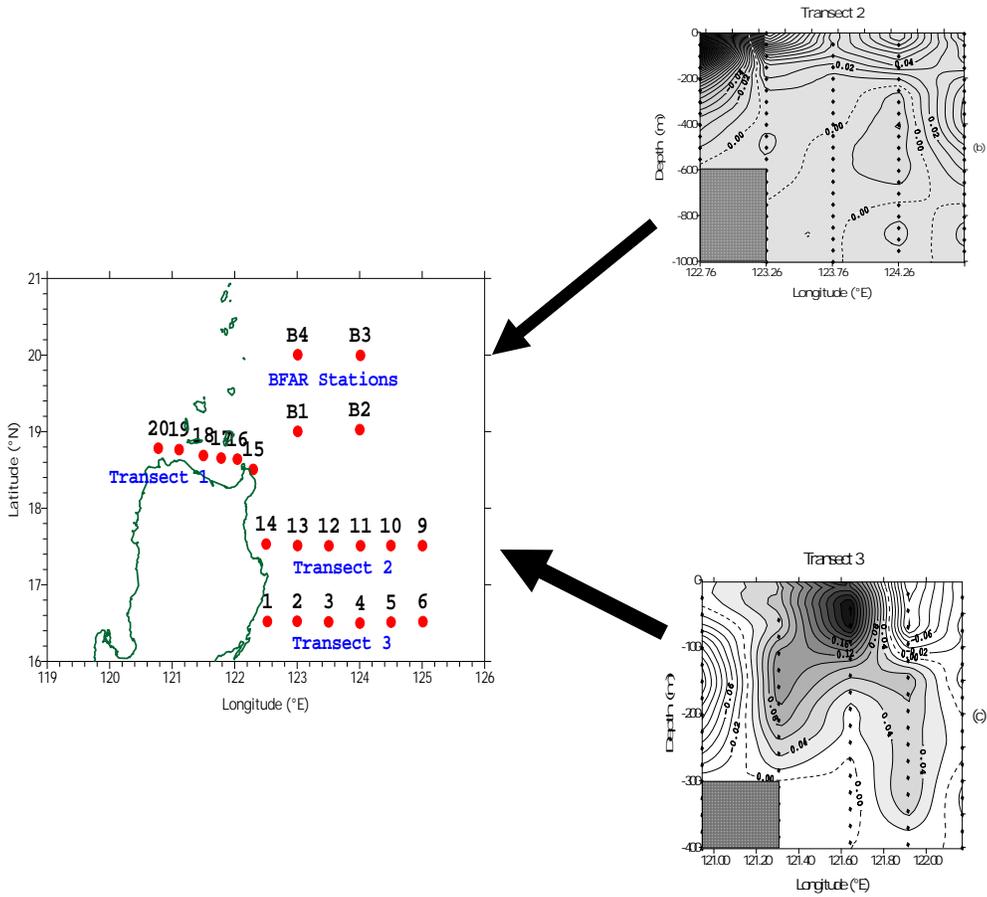


Figure 2. Geostrophic counter currents in the Philippine Sea. Southward flow is indicated in Transect 2 and Transect 3 east of the main *Kuroshio* current (with thin arrows). Geostrophic velocities are shown on the left with Transect 2 having a near surface velocity of 0.47 meters per second and Transect 3 with 0.26 meters per second (Courtesy of the UP Marine Science Institute).

A recent study (Magno *et al.* 2003) conducted by the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute of currents in the area between the Philippines and Taiwan has revealed, through geostrophic calculations, the existence of narrow bands of current, created by the rotational movement of the earth, flowing *southward*, just east of the main Kuroshio Current between 123 degrees to 125 degrees East longitude. Across Transect 2 in **Figure 2**, its maximum near surface velocity is 0.47 m/s^{-1} . It has a width of more or less 39 kilometers with a vertical extent that is greater than 500 meters. Geostrophic calculations across Transect 3 revealed a broad southward band of flow. The southward flow, with a vertical extent ranging from 300 to 370 meters, is strong, with a maximum near surface velocity of 0.26 m/s^{-1} . The magnitude of this return flow is comparable to that of the Kuroshio itself. While geostrophic calculations have yet to be conducted beyond Transect 3, there is very good reason to suppose that this southward flow could extend down to 10 degrees North latitude where it rejoins the main Kuroshio current (David 2003). Sailing southward between 124 to 125 degrees East longitude from Formosa leads straight to Catanduanes Island. I have proposed elsewhere (Isorena 1998: 159-160) that Catanduanes (Katadungan) got its name from the Visayan term *katadlungan* or *katadungan*, meaning a reference point for a straight course (Makabenta 1979: 408). If the northward flow of the Kuroshio in the Philippine Sea conveniently took the raiders from the Visayas to Formosa, this southward flow could have well brought the *Pi-sho-ye* back to their origin in the south, in the Visayas, with Catanduanes as a possible way station for repair and refitting in both directions. The raiders would have been able to avoid a politically and geographically (because of the treacherous San Bernardino Strait) dangerous sea passage home. The idea that the raiders could have come from the Visayas now takes on more credibility. But how did they make this journey with the “bamboo rafts” which Chau mentioned?

Question 3: In What Kind of Maritime Conveyance Could Visayan Raiders Have Made the Voyage?

Elsewhere (Isorena 1998) I proposed that the probable center of innovation in boat technology in the Philippines was the Visayas (see Funtecha 2000). Because of the rugged topography of many Visayan islands, settlements were concentrated on the coast rather than in the interior. This pattern may have been more true in the early days, when the

interiors would have been less inhabited than now. Consequently, the Visayas may have had a longer and more intense maritime tradition compared to other areas in the Philippines.

This is reflected in any inventory of Visayan boats, which existed in great variety and had a long history of innovations from ancient forms. By the sixteenth century, the *balangay* boat was the most advanced Philippine watercraft. It evolved as a family boat among the Tagalogs (Patanñe 1976: 755-766), a trading vessel among the trading communities of the archipelago (Ronquillo 1989: 61-69; see also Peralta 1980), and a war-boat (Quirino and Garcia 1958: 408-409) in islands and communities that could afford to build such a vessel (see **Figure 3**).

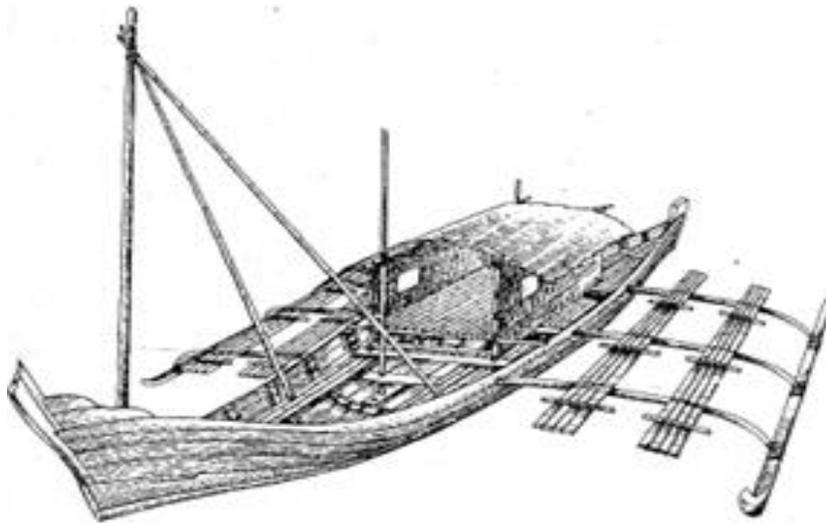


Figure 3. The *Balangay* Boat. From Peralta (1980).

The *balangay* varied in size depending on the purpose for which it was built. Family boats were the smallest. Trading vessels were larger, with a wider hull and higher side plankings. Man-o-war *balangay* were much the largest, with platforms in the middle and two-layered outriggers

for buoyancy and balance and to function as platforms for paddlers, giving them increased maneuverability and speed. From a technological point of view, an advanced double-outrigger canoe, like the *balangay*, was the best for sailing close to the wind in an open sea (Doran 1981), the perfect vessel to sail the Kuroshio, even during the northeast monsoon. But if the Visayans sailed to Formosa in their *balangay*, how do we reconcile that with Chau's observation that the *Pi-sho-ye* were not sailing by canoe but on bamboo rafts?

It is now known that the basic strategy employed by coastal raiders was to bring with their fleets certain auxiliary vessels on the main war-boat (Warren 1987). These were smaller and made of lighter materials for speed, enabling them to slip over shallow waters and coral reefs. They were used to land on a target coastal village while the main war-boat was safely anchored at sea or off a coastal base camp. Many, if not all, of these auxiliary vessels were made of buoyant materials – light wood for the canoe and bamboo for the double outriggers. Because the gunwales of such vessels were very low in the sea (causing them to look like rafts), they could easily take on water, but the paddlers would slosh the water out by jumping into the vessel and shaking it. In the Visayas, these outrigger floats are and were called *katig*. They were found on almost all early Philippine sea-going vessels, including the small canoes of fisherfolk as well as on the auxiliary vessels for *pangayaw*. Alcina described this Visayan practice of using bamboo as outrigger material.

They place at the sides [of the vessel] some pieces of which they call *katig*; these are made of three or four bamboos or else one or two according to the burden of the vessel which is completed. These serve as a balance and safety, because some *llavetas* or beams cross in the ships and extend beyond each side for about a braza in length according to the size of the ship. They fasten other round logs, some twisted into an "S" shape, to the lower part where they fasten the bamboos making a kind of a gangplank or half-port, which remains immediately above the water. The tips of the part towards the prow are somewhat raised so that they will not be a hindrance while sailing, as they would do as they came to rest in the water. As a result the vessels always sail with counterbalance and without roll, depending upon this *katig*... They serve as a place where to store some cargo... Many are the ships which although filled with water have not foundered nor capsized because they were balanced as though by counterweights with these *katig*. As a result they always stayed afloat... (Alcina 2002: 603).

From the reconstruction made by the National Museum of a balangay excavated at Butuan, one can easily notice the prominence of the bamboo outriggers (**Figure 3**). On first observation, one might mistake this vessel as floating only on bamboo. Writing in the first century, the Roman historian Pliny mistook for a raft the boats of the Malayo-Polynesians trading in cinnamon between Africa and Asia (Hall 1992: 186).

From all indications, the *balangay* remained the dominant Philippine boat until the sixteenth century, for sailing the archipelagic waters of Southeast Asia, the open water of the South China Sea, and even into the heavy seas of the Pacific. The Spaniards themselves found it an excellent vessel during their campaigns to subdue the natives in the islands, and on their Mindanao and Moluccan expeditions to establish access to the spice trade (Sande *et al.* 1903-1909: 243-265; Ronquillo 1989).

If there was any boat used for the conveyance of the Visayan raiders to the China coast in the twelfth century, it may have been no other than the *balangay*. Scott (1982) believed the *caracoa* was the type of boat used by early Filipinos in their maritime raiding expeditions. Its dating has been placed in the ninth century, based on a Borobudur inscription (Manguin 1980: 273). I am inclined to believe that the *caracoa*, with its more massive structure, and given the more specialized naval warfare it engaged in, was the boat used by more affluent societies (Hornell 1920: 76, 81, 86) which could afford the cost of building and manning it with professional warriors and sailors, such as the early maritime states of Java. The term *caracoa* came from the Javanese word *kora-kora*, which speaks for an origin of this boat outside the Philippines (Johnstone 1980). Coastal chiefs in the Philippines were eventually able to afford the construction and maintenance of this huge warship but not until a much later period, probably in the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries, when it must have constituted an important status symbol for them.

Question 4. Why did the Visayan Raiders Go So Far Away to Raid for Metal?

What was the purpose and motivation that would be worth the risk? They were going after iron, but why raid for it rather than trade?

From archaeological evidence, iron was brought to the Philippines from the outside either by migrating people (Solheim 1964: 211-212) or through trade (Hutterer 1974). Its appearance has been correlated with “improving the efficiency of productive labour, especially in agriculture

and war” (Bellwood 1992: 116-118). Iron was important because of its usefulness for manufacturing both weapons and tools. In many agricultural societies in Southeast Asia, the importance of iron accompanied significant increases in economic production. The introduction of iron tools enabled these societies to clear more forest land and cultivate it with iron plows. Increase in production was probably necessary due to increase in population, which could be translated into greater manpower if labor could use iron tools (see Boserup 1963). It was on the control of manpower that early chiefdoms were founded. It was therefore necessary to obtain and control commodities and symbols that could increase a chief’s or king’s authority. The rise in the complexity and extent of political integration among the early Southeast Asian states is now credited, among others, to the use of iron (Bellwood 1992: 116-118).

The same pattern of development could have ensued also among peoples who gained knowledge of iron however late. The importance of iron was such that natives of the Pacific and Southeast Asian islands clambered over big visiting western sailing ships to pry or steal from them anything made of iron, from the railings to the nails. Until the eighteenth century, natives of Batanes put a high premium on iron. In one instance, “a native bought 29 adults and ten young boys in exchange for iron” (Cortes Najara 1779, cited in Llorente 1982: 79-80).

While iron may be found in greater quantities than copper or bronze, its production requires a more mechanically complicated technique. Carburization of iron into steel requires technical knowledge of firing capable of reaching a temperature of at least 1200 degrees C. The Chinese had learned to fire their porcelain kilns to about 1400 degrees C as early as the eighth century B.C. (Dizon 1983: 50, 55) and this is perhaps the reason why China is credited as one of the early major sources of iron. But there was a scarcity of iron implements, even in later periods, in areas far away from established trade routes with links to China. Fox, writing on the early metal age of the Philippines, suggested that the first iron known there must have been found accidentally in “*drift materials*” (perhaps floating together with wood in the sea), “for even in historic times, the Spaniards noted, iron was difficult for the Filipinos to obtain” (Fox 1979: 238). There are some indications that there was an iron-producing site in the Philippines, at what is today Angat, Bulacan Province, but this has yet to be fully established archaeologically. Fox further suggested that “...it is likely that iron was obtained in trade during the proto-historic period from Santubong, Sarawak... as well as from China.” The exchange

and distribution patterns of Southeast Asian trade meant that those in proximity to a point of exchange were in a better position to trade and profit from it. As the distance of those who wanted iron increased away from the center of exchange, the less they could participate (Bronson 1977). This was reflected in the comparatively lower quantity and quality of foreign commodities found in the interior and upland communities and in other islands that were a considerable distance away from trade routes and trading centers. Chinese ceramics, a common trade commodity, are fewer in quantity and poorer in quality when found in the interior as compared to those excavated at the mouths of rivers (Isorena 2003).

Compared to the western *Pintados* islands of Panay and Cebu, the islands of Leyte and Samar were a backwater, even if they were secondary trade destinations. As such, high-priced commodities such as iron could only come to them, if at all, in limited quantities. Confronted by this situation, these societies found themselves in a dilemma as to whether to pursue trade from a disadvantageous position, or embark on, at least to them, socially acceptable raiding in order to offset this disadvantage. The people of those islands may have found reason for the latter choice. However, by the turn of the thirteenth century, Chinese authorities effectively put a stop to these raids by instituting a defensive naval force for the purpose of checking such incursions. There are some indications that the *Pi-sho-ye* then turned to raiding from the Batanes to the Bicol Peninsula until the sixteenth century, after which **the** were replaced as raiders by the Muslims (Isorena 1998: 161-171).

Question 5. From Where Might the Raiders Have Originated within the Visayas?

If the *Pi-sho-ye* and the Visayans were one and the same, who among the *Pintados* launched those expeditions? Eyewitness accounts described the raiders as being “dark as lacquer,” so dark in fact that their tattoos were hardly visible (Lou Yao as cited in Scott 1982: 21). But Alcina’s description of the *Pintados* indicated that there was a variation in complexion from one region to another.

...Their complexion varies...those of Samar and the neighboring Leyte are fairer in appearance from those in Ibabao who are *a little more brown* (emphasis mine)...some believe their color resembles cooked quince...the males who are accustomed to go about naked in the sun, in the wind and on the water especially in maritime places, from their

birth till about the age of ten or twelve years; as a result, they become very dark-skinned...(Alcina 2002: 97).

Perhaps, then, the *Pi-sho-ye* were from Ibabao. Ibabao was the prehispanic Waray name for **Samar's** entire eastern coast and a portion of Samar's northern coast; the western coast was always known as Samar (Tramp 1995: 201). If Alcina's informants in seventeenth century Ibabao are to be believed, some families in that time claimed to remember the times when they launched maritime raids against the coastal villages of Bicolandia and they even remembered old stories about expeditions to China (Alcina cited in Scott 1982: 22). The people of Ibabao were noted to resort easily to raids for the slightest of reasons, such as to make an impression on a woman (Alcina in Scott 1982: 22). One important aspect of the *pangayaw* of Ibabao was that it was performed by people from "among the more influential and more powerful" (Alcina 2002: 77). This indicates that it was socially and politically, as well as economically, motivated.

In significant association with *pangayaw* was feasting. Junker noted that feasting in the early Philippine chiefdoms was "generally associated with elite life-crisis events and events critical to the political economy" such as trading and warfare among others, "for which the ability to draw on the resources of a chief's constituency to finance them demonstrates a status-enhancing power to mobilize productivity." One of the features of feasts was the tributary contribution by subservient individuals of animals (carabao, cattle, chickens, and pigs) and goods for the performance of sacrificial rites (Junker 2000: 314-315). In very recent times, some barrios of Eastern Samar celebrated a certain form of feasting that may have been survivals from a past practice associated with *pangayaw*, and perhaps it is still being observed today. In Barrio Banuyo in Borongan the feasting was termed *katig-uban*. The feast never had a fixed date. It was held as the need arose or when a sponsor deemed it fit to have one. A very expensive affair, it required the village folks to contribute money, rice, chickens and vegetables. A carabao or cow was butchered to be served to visitors coming from another village (Anacta 1953: 23-29, 62-65). In prehispanic days, such feasting probably reinforced a chief's high standing. An ability and ease in procuring the materials to satisfy guests and everyone participating in such feasts were qualities of a first-class datu (Junker 2000: 318).

In Borongan's Barrio Calico-an, believed to be the site of an ancient settlement, another feast was held in the month of June in honor of the dead. Villagers shouldered all the expenses and were the ones to host

the prominent people of their own village (Anacta 1953: 63). It is important to note that this particular feast did not coincide with the Catholic All Souls Day, which falls on the first day of November. By June, a twelfth century raiding party would have been back home in its own village. There would have been no better way to celebrate their return and to honor those who had perished on the journey than to offer a feast. We know that feasts of this kind may be celebrated before and/or after life-crises events, or to ward-off spirits that may prevent the successful passage of individuals through critical life stages or the success of a collective activity. Perhaps the *katig-uban* of Barrio Banuyo was a survival of a feast that used to be intended to appease spirits who might *prevent* the successful completion of a community endeavor, such as a large-scale maritime raid, while the precursor of the feast in Calico-an was most likely celebrated *after* the activity.

Conclusion

The success of twelfth century Visayan raiding expeditions was largely due to their having the perfect vessel for the purpose. The *balangay*'s ability to sail close to the wind, its excellent material and construction which could withstand the heavy seas of the Pacific, and with all of its exhibited technical capabilities (Alcina 1960: 173-176; see also Doran 1980 on seaworthy specifications), made such an enterprise possible to accomplish. The Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century effectively put a stop to *pangayaw* (Aganduru Moriz 1882: 336-338), reducing the *balangay* to insignificance and leading to its gradual phasing out in many parts of the archipelago. In an annotation to Morga's *Sucesos*, Rizal commented that the local shipbuilding industries "...far from progressing, have retrograded; since, although boats are now built in the islands, we might assert that they are all after European models" (see Morga 1903-09: 84, note 70). The people of Ibabao were still known to construct and use the *balangay* until late in the seventeenth century. However, by the earlier time of Father Alcina, the *balangay* boat had for a long time not been used for *pangayaw* (Alcina 1960: 175). The extended period of use of the *balangay* there may have been due to the fact that the *balangay* was such an important symbol of Ibabao society.

The social prestige that may well have been attached to the conduct of Visayan *pangayaw*, the power-enhancing symbol(s) it accorded local elites, and its potential for propping-up local economic productivity,

were part of a way of life of a particular group of people in the distant past. Given Samar's position relative to the then existing pattern of regional trade, the enduring currents in the Philippine Sea and the opportunity they gave for raiding, the technical capability of the *balangay* boat as a vessel for transoceanic travel, and the "cultural personality" and traditions of the people of Ibabao of Samar, a logical argument can be made for a Visayan origin of the *Pi-sho-ye*.

From scattered writings and even clues in footnotes, this paper has been able to train a magnifying lens on some possible dynamics of an early Philippine society. Much work is still needed to fully establish the identity of the *Pi-sho-ye*. What this particular study has attempted is to put in perspective the reported maritime raids on the Fukien coast of China during the period 1174-1190 A.D. Chinese sources would certainly provide more details. Further ethnographic and archaeological work in eastern Samar could test the proposition advanced here, by uncovering Chinese metal artifacts, and investigating folk oral histories of old local celebrations.

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