

# Account of the conquest of Luzon, 1572

## The Spaniards' first 50 years in the Philippines, 1565-1615

**Source:** Blair & Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, volume 3, pp. 141-172. Translation from the Spanish by J.G. Gill.

An account of the discovery and conquest of the islands of Luzón and Mindoro, together with the most important events which took place therein, being a brief and summarized relation of the conquest and reduction of all that has been conquered and subdued in these islands up to the present time.

Likewise is contained herein a description of the civilization of the people and their mode of living; the weapons which they possess and use; and the forts which they build to defend themselves against their enemies. I have ventured to write this relation because I have been informed that many things concerning events in this land have been written, and sent to Nueva España, which are the merest fable and conjecture. For instance, they say that there are in this country Moors like those of Barberia [Barbary], and that their strength in arms is quite equal to that of those people; and that they fight and defend themselves like the Turks. Those who have so written are in error. Much to the contrary, it is quite certain that the natives of this island of Luzón, whom we Spaniards commonly call Moros, are not so; for the truth is that they do not know or understand the law of Mahoma—only in some of the villages on the seacoast they do not eat pork, and this for the reason that they have had dealings with the Moros of Burney, who have preached to them a little of the teaching of Mahoma. As I shall farther on treat more in detail of the rites and ceremonies of these natives, I shall in the first place describe the wars between them and the Spaniards, without useless amplification or omission; for thus have I been instructed to do by a certain person who has ordered me to write, and thus whatever I may say in defense of these natives will be read without any mistrust whatever, for whosoever reads this will know the truth with regard to what occurs here.

The first thing which I shall attempt to relate herein will be an expedition which was made by Captain Juan de Salzedo when he was governor in the island of Panai. As has been already related in other accounts, written in the year sixty-nine, the Portuguese raised the blockade established by them on the island of Çubú against the camp of his Majesty, because of certain difficulties which arose; and the governor determined to cross to the island of Panay with his captains in order to levy tribute upon the people of certain provinces. His nephew, recently made captain of the company which his brother Felipe de Sauzedo had brought to these islands, was sent with forty soldiers to certain islands. This captain embarked in fourteen or fifteen small native boats, and set out for an islet which is called Elem,<sup>39</sup> and when we had reached this island we did not find any resistance whatever, for all the natives came to us in peace. From there, led by a guide, he crossed to the island of Mindoro, and made an attack one night just about dawn upon a very rich native village called Mamburau, and plundered it. Many of the natives were captured, some of whom afterward bought their liberty, and others were allowed to go free. Thence he took a guide for a little islet, Loban by name, which is fifteen leagues farther. When the captain was departed, the natives, who had fled from the village, returned and saw the havoc and destruction caused by the Spaniards, and were unwilling to return to rebuild it; accordingly they themselves set fire to it, and totally destroyed it. The captain, having arrived at his destination at midnight, with all possible secrecy leaped ashore, and arranged his men and the Pintados<sup>40</sup> Indians whom he had with him in ambush near the

villages, in order to make the attack upon them at daybreak. However, the natives of this island having been informed of the hostile incursion of the Spaniards, withdrew with their children and wives and all their belongings that they could take with them, to three forts which they had constructed. Now since these were the first natives whom we found with forts and means of defense, I shall describe here the forts and weapons which they possessed. The two principal forts were square in form, with ten or twelve culverins on each side, some of them moderately large and others very small. Each fort had a wall two *estados* high, and was surrounded by a ditch two and one-half *brazas* in depth, filled with water. The small weapons used by these natives are badly tempered iron lances, which become blunt upon striking a fairly good coat of mail, a kind of broad dagger, and arrows—which are weapons of little value. Other lances are also used which are made of fire-hardened palm-wood and are harder than the iron ones. There is an abundance of a certain very poisonous herb which they apply to their arrows. Such are the weapons which the natives of these islands possess and employ. Now as the captain approached the villages at daybreak, and found them empty, he proceeded through a grove to the place where the first fort was situated; and, having come in sight, negotiated with them, asking whether they desired to be friends of the Spaniards. The natives, confident of their strength, refused to listen, and began to discharge their culverins and a few arrows. The captain, seeing that they would not listen to reason, ordered them to be fired upon. The skirmish lasted in one place or the other about three hours, since the Spaniards could not assault or enter the fort because of the moat of water surrounding it. But, as fortune would have it, the natives had left on the other side, tied to the fort, a small boat capable of holding twenty men; and two of our soldiers threw themselves into the water and swam across, protected by our arquebusiers from the enemy, who tried to prevent them. This boat having been brought to the side where the Spaniards were, fifteen soldiers entered it and approached the rampart of the fort. As soon as these men began to mount the rampart, the Indians began to flee on the other side, by a passageway which they had made for that very purpose. It is true that thirty or forty Moros fought and resisted the entrance of the Spaniards; but when they saw that half of our people were already on the wall, and the rest in the act of mounting, they all turned their backs and fled. A hundred or more of them were killed, while of our men five were wounded. In this way was the fort taken, together with fifty or sixty prisoners, ten or twelve culverins, and everything else in it. On the morning of the next day, which was the second of May, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy, the captain set free one of the Moro prisoners, and sent him to the second fort, which was in the middle of the island very near the first one, and charged him to tell them that he summoned them to surrender peacefully. The Moro having performed his mission, and delivered the message of the captain to those in the fort, they sent back the reply that they did not desire to be friends with the Spaniards but were eager to fight with them; and with this reply the Indian aforesaid returned to the captain. On the following day we went with some four hundred friendly Indians to the fort; and the captain, advancing within sight of it, addressed them, asking that they should be friends with the Spaniards and not try to fight with them, as that would result badly for them. They again declared that they did not desire this friendship, and began to fire their culverins and discharge arrows; and in return the soldiers discharged, on all sides, their arquebuses. But during the whole day we were not able to enter the fort, for we Spaniards were very few in number; and the heat was intense, and we had not eaten, although it was near night. The captain, seeing that he had not accomplished anything, decided to return to the boats which he had left behind, and on the next morning again to besiege the fort, and hem them in as closely as possible; and thus he did. Having come in this manner and having grounded his boats upon a beach close to the enemy, when these latter saw the determination of the Spaniards, and that they would not depart under any circumstances until they had conquered them, they therefore determined to make peace and become friends. To this end the leaders came out of the fort and made peace and friendship with the captain, becoming good friends, which they

are up to the present time. They gave him a hundred *tall* [*taels*] of gold, which he divided among his soldiers. From there the captain went to a rock belonging to another small islet very near to that of Loban, and lying in the sea at a very short distance from the said islet. The natives who lived in that island had retired to this rock to the number of about three hundred warriors. The captain, having arrived on the same day at about ten o'clock, went around the rock, and we captured a small boat containing thirty men. Many volleys from the arquebuses were fired at them during this day; and on the following morning the soldiers began to make ladders to scale the rock—whose occupants, when they saw the determination of the Spaniards, came to terms of peace and friendship, giving another hundred *tall* of gold, following the example of those of the other fort, who had been left good friends. The captain returned with all of us who were with him to the island of Panay, where the governor was with the master-of-camp, who had returned from another expedition made with his men to an island called Acuyo. Thereupon the question was discussed of sending men to explore the island of Luzón; and it was agreed that the master-of-camp and captain Juan de Sauzedo should set out upon this expedition with a hundred soldiers.

The necessary preparations having been made for this expedition, the master-of-camp and the said captain embarked in two of our small ships, with three large pieces of artillery; and accompanied by fourteen or fifteen ships of the Pintados Indians, our friends, who in their own language are called Viseys. They sailed out of the river of Panay in the year of seventy, above mentioned, on the third of May, the day of Sancta Cruz. I did not take part in this expedition but shall describe literally everything which occurred in it. I have drawn my information from the others who participated in it, and more especially from two of my associates, both of whom went on this expedition, and who are men of great reliability—an advantage, as I have before mentioned. The master-of-camp arrived at the island of Mindoro, the village and port of which had the reputation of being very great and very strong, but which proved to be an exaggeration, for the village is small, containing only about three or four hundred inhabitants. The master-of-camp having arrived, as I have said, at that port, the Indians were drawn up on a declivity before the village, and made signs that they intended to prevent the entrance of the Spaniards. The master-of-camp, with all his soldiers, leaped ashore in front of the village on a little plain, and, approaching the village in a zigzag course, thus attacked it. The gunners who were in the ship were ordered to discharge a cannon in the air when the attack was made, and this was done. The Indians seeing that they intended to enter the village by force, made peace with the master-of-camp, and paid him tribute; and they have remained friends and vassals of the royal Spanish administration up to the present day. This is the port where enter all the passengers who come from the islands of the Pintados and from España to this island of Luzón, where the governor resides. From here the master-of-camp set sail for the island of Luzón, or rather the port and village of Manilla, which was said to be large and very strong. It is but just to say that it is not more than one-tenth as large and as strong as in Nueva España and in other places it is reported to be; and yet, in comparison with the natives of this land, the inhabitants of Manilla were powerful, for they had twelve pieces of small and inferior artillery and a few culverins, with such other weapons as I have already mentioned. This village of Manilla is situated on a tongue of land extending from east to west between the river and the sea, and a fort had been built on the extreme western end of this peninsula at the entrance to the port. The sea makes a very large harbor about thirty leagues in circumference; and bordering upon this harbor are many villages, among which is that of Manilla.<sup>41</sup> Manilla is now a Spanish city, founded in the name of his Majesty by the governor Miguel López de Legazpi. The captain-general and Captain Juan de Sauzedo having arrived in view of this port of Manilla, entered in peace, and under the safe-conduct of two native chiefs of the said village. One of these was called Laya, lately deceased, who died a Christian; the other was called Rata Solimán. With these two

chiefs were drawn up articles of peace, although Raxa Soliman was suspected of lack of good-faith, while Laya was always to be trusted, even until the day of his death. While these peaceful negotiations were in progress between the master-of-camp and the two chiefs abovementioned, there collected a large number of natives of various classes; and yet there were not so many as was reported in Nueva España, where it was claimed that there were in all eighty thousand Moros in this village of Manilla, when this event took place. Indeed one should subtract seventy-eight thousand from the eighty thousand mentioned, in order to arrive at the two thousand which there might have been from the said village of Manilla and those in its environs, including the women and children, who were present in great numbers. Now, as I say, these negotiations being in progress, some of the natives desired peace and others war; for indeed the Indians had some pride, and it seemed to them that the Spaniards were very few and could be easily slain, even if only with clubs. Thus it was that, at the end of three days during which these friendly negotiations continued (because it was impossible to come to an agreement, or conclude them), one day at ten o'clock, on the twenty-fourth day of the month of May of the year above mentioned, the Indians, who were in the fort, began to discharge their artillery at two of our ships, which were moored very nearby. The master-of-camp was ashore with eighty soldiers, close to this same fort, on a small piece of level ground. The fort was made of palm-tree logs surmounting a very narrow mound, and the pieces of artillery protruded from immense gaps by which the soldiers could enter at will; as I have said above. Now when the Moros began to violate the articles of peace and friendship which the master-of-camp had made with them, the latter was deeply concerned; for he had great fear, because the enemy were in force. Yet, when he saw that the battle had broken out, he put on his helmet, and commenced to encourage his soldiers, telling them that they should acquit themselves as Spaniards, and as they had always done in critical times. Thereupon he ordered them to attack the fort through the openings made for the artillery, and it pleased God that not one of the gunners had the courage to fire his piece; and so great was the confusion, that they trembled upon seeing the Spaniards enter with so great spirit, and, turning their backs, abandoned themselves to flight, and slew one another in their mad rush for freedom. The master-of-camp, realizing that the village was large and rich, and that the victory was his by the grace of God, for the soldiers were few, feared lest our soldiers should, through greed, set to plundering the houses and become widely scattered; and that, if the enemy should see them thus scattered, they would return and attack them when unable to reunite. That he might avoid this danger he ordered the village to be set on fire, and the soldiers to collect upon the promontory, which order was obeyed. In this manner, as related, it befell the master-of-camp, and the victory was obtained over those of Manilla. The artillery which they possessed, and which I have mentioned above—namely, ten or twelve medium-sized pieces and a few culverins—was taken. On the other bank there was a village, whose chief was named Alcandora, with whom the master-of-camp did not wish to deal as yet, for he knew that the governor desired to establish a settlement in this island. Therefore, as he desired that this chief should stay where he was and do him no injury, he left him and returned to the island of Panay, making peace and friendship, on the way, with many villages on this same island of Luzon. Upon reaching the island of Mindoro, and being in a river which is called Vaco, news came to him that Juan de la Ysla had arrived from Nueva España with three ships sent by the viceroy, Don Martín Enríquez, and with the letters which the said Juan de la Ysla was bringing from España from his Majesty. News was received likewise of the payments of money which were being made to the soldiers in the service of his Majesty in these regions. There also came on these ships the most reverend Father Diego de Herrera, a member of the order of St. Augustine, who had gone hence a year before to Nueva España, on business which pertained to the public welfare and to the service of God and his Majesty. The master-of-camp, having received the news as to these ships, made haste and arrived in the middle of the month of June at the river of Panay, where the governor was. He was well received by the governor and by

all, although it grieved the governor much that they had burned Manilla, for he had planned to take up his residence in this village of Manilla, as he afterward did. According to the story told by those who were present, it does not seem that the master-of-camp was at fault in the burning of this village; for he did it in order to make sure of the victory, and so that the enemy might not return to attack him. This is my opinion, for I regard him as a good Christian. Laying aside this question, I shall relate the doings of the governor.

The ships having arrived at the said island of Panay, orders were given for all the other captains who were scattered with their companies through the other islands to assemble. The papers and letters of his Majesty were opened, and it was seen that it was his will for the lands to be settled and divided among those who conquered and subdued them. Other and greater favors were conferred by his Majesty, who has always striven and will always strive that our Lord should be served. The will of his Majesty having thus been revealed to the governor, he determined to go to found a colony on the island of Çubú, which he did, naming it El Nombre de Jesús. He left this colony populated by forty or fifty colonists, giving them some villages and islands in the immediate environs. From that island he returned to the above-named island of Panay, whence he decided to sail, with the rest of his men and all his munitions of war, to the island of Luzón. He was detained here, however, for five or six months, during which time the people suffered great distress from the lack of rice in the island, because of the swarms of locusts which had prevailed for two or three years. Therefore the father provincial preached to us each day, and strongly urged the governor, in all his public sermons and private conversations, that he should depart from this island and not permit the people to suffer so great distress. Therefore, influenced by the prayers and warnings of the said father, and because he saw that there was reason therefor, he decided to sail out of the said river of Panay with all his fleet and army, to settle the island of Luzón.

Accompanied by the ships necessary for such an expedition, the governor set sail in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-one, on the day after Easter, taking with him the father provincial, Fray Diego de Herrera, the master-of-camp and all the other captains, and two hundred and thirty arquebusiers. It was on the twentieth of the month that he set sail, and with fair weather he arrived at the island of Mindoro with his whole fleet of twenty-six or twenty-seven ships, large and small, including both our own and those of the natives who came with us. He remained on that island fifteen or sixteen days, and from thence set out for the island of Luzón, where we arrived a week later, at the bay which I have before mentioned and on which Manilla is situated. When the natives knew that the governor had come with his entire force to settle upon their lands, and when they saw him entering the bay, they set fire to their village of Manilla (which they had rebuilt after its burning, a year before, by the master-of-camp); and this time many of the houses were consumed and many remained standing, while the natives crossed to the opposite shore, to the village of Alcandora. The governor having arrived at the port of Manilla one day in the middle of the month of May, at two o'clock in the afternoon, Alcandora came out in a little boat to welcome him in peace and friendship, and speak to him on behalf of Raxa Solimán and Laya, begging that he would treat them with friendship; and pardon them for having taken up arms the past year against the master-of-camp. He said that on the following day they would come, under safe conduct from him, to talk with him and make peace. The governor received him very well, and told him through an interpreter to retire for the night to his house and to come on the next day with the two Raxas, saying that he would make peace with the latter, and would treat them as sons; for he had no ill-feeling toward them, but rather regretted that they had resisted the master-of-camp. Thus with these assurances, Alcandora took his leave, going to his house greatly pleased. The next day the governor disembarked in Manilla and the three chiefs came to talk with him and declare themselves his

friends. It should not be understood in Nueva España or in España that the chiefs in this land are absolute rulers, or that they have great authority or power. Rather the very opposite is true, for there exist among them the most primitive conditions to be found in any race. It often befalls that in one village, however small it may be, there are five, six, or ten chiefs, each of whom possesses twenty or thirty slaves, whom he has the power to sell, or treat as he pleases. Others there are who are called *timaguas* (that is to say, freemen), over whom the chiefs have no power—except that the *timaguas* are under obligation to follow their own chief when war arises between the different factions; and even this service is not compulsory and cannot be obtained by force. As I have said, there prevails among them the utmost rudeness and lack of harmony; so that if one says "basket," the other responds "crossbow." He who has the most gold and riches is the greatest chief and of the highest nobility, and is the most respected, in accordance with the vanity and vainglory of this world. It occurs to me now that this is borne out by the proverb current among the Spaniards, namely, "Dost thou wish to know thy value? see what thou hast."

These three chiefs, having become our friends, offered to bring all the surrounding country to terms of peace with us, a thing which they did not succeed in accomplishing, for they were not sufficiently powerful, as I have said, each village having its own chiefs. Indeed there are but very few chiefs who have authority over as many as two or three villages, for the reason which I have given above. The character and customs of these people, and their clothing, ornaments, and mode of government I shall describe further on—that is to say, of the people of this island of Luzon and of the other islands round about. As for those farther away in China, we are informed by those who come from there to trade with these islands that they are a cleanly, well-clothed race, and of higher morals. This is worthy of some belief, on account of the Chinese who come to these islands to trade, and whom we see walking about, well and decently clothed. Leaving this subject for its proper time and place, I shall continue to relate the governor's actions after disembarking in Manilla, on the sixteenth of May of the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-one. At the end of a week he published an edict that, in accordance with the command of his Majesty, he would, give lands and *repartimientos* to those who desired to settle in the city of Manilla, which he was founding in the name of his Majesty. Accordingly, all those who came with him, captains, soldiers, and gentlemen, settled as citizens in this city; but up to the present, and it is now about a year since the city was founded, there are very few who have *repartimientos* or even homesteads. This is, as I have said, a very unsatisfactory manner in which this city was founded and settled. I shall now return to relate briefly the war with the natives, which the Spaniards have carried on even to the present day.

All that I have above related having taken place, it was decided to make peace with the nearest villages, some of whom had come to beg it from the governor, and others would not. Among those who would not come was a village called Butas, situated on an inlet on the other side of the river flowing past Manilla, and about a league and a half away. This village, uniting with the others near by, sent word that they did not wish peace or friendship with the governor; and had the boldness to come as far as the village of Alcandora, quite close to Manilla, whence they sent defiance to the governor and the captains. Having endured this a number of times and having made offers of peace, it finally became impossible to endure such insolence; and the governor had to send the master-of-camp, with seventy soldiers and several native leaders, by sea to fight with those Indians at their village, where they were waiting with twenty or thirty of their boats, with one or two culverins in each boat. He set out (after having heard mass) on the day of the Feast of the Holy Ghost, which was the third of the month of June in the year above mentioned. The master-of-camp, having embarked with the soldiers, arrived at the place where the enemy were assembled at twelve o'clock on that day. When they saw that he was entering the port, they sailed out to attack him with their

boats (which were, as I said, twenty or thirty in number), and with a great outcry began to fire their culverins and many arrows. It was God's will that they caused no injury to our forces. Taking note of the order used by the enemy, the command was given for the Spaniards to fasten their boats by twos, and to row slowly toward the opposing forces. When they were in close proximity, all the arquebusiers began to shoot and to cause injuries among the enemy—who, not being able to endure the firing, which killed many of them, began to turn their backs and retreat to the land. When the Pintados Indians who accompanied the master-of-camp saw the enemy in retreat, they threw themselves into the water in pursuit, and caused great slaughter among them; for they are bitter enemies of the natives of this island of Luzón. And thus they attacked them on land, capturing all their boats and taking two hundred of the natives prisoners; and later they captured two or three hundred more. On the land there were five or six culverins in a little fort, which was captured. In this manner were routed those Indians, who had shown so much pride and had so little courage. On the morning of the next day the master-of-camp came to the city with all the booty, and divided the prisoners as slaves among the soldiers, reserving a fifth for his Majesty.

A few days having passed in peace and rest, there came certain Indians who told the governor that in the province of Capanpanga there were many densely-populated rivers; and that most of the people thereon did not desire to have friendly relations with the Spaniards. The master-of-camp had to go therefore upon, this conquest with one hundred soldiers. When he had entered the said province, some of the natives retired to forts which they had built, and tried to resist him. He routed them, and took from them some culverins in their possession and they were left pacified. While he was subjugating this province, there came news that two ships had arrived from Nueva España, sent by the viceroy Don Martín Enríquez, with a reinforcement of one hundred soldiers, under the captaincy of Juan López de Aguirre. The governor thereupon ordered the master-of-camp to go to Panay, to send the said ships to this port of Manilla, and to bring back his wife, who was in Çubú. In consideration of this service the first *repartimiento* in this island and a river called Bonbón was allotted to him.

At this same time of which we have spoken, there came down from up the river which flows by Manilla, several chiefs of a village named Caynta, to proclaim themselves friends of the governor. This said village had about a thousand inhabitants, and was surrounded by very tall and very dense bamboo thickets, and fortified with a wall and, a few small culverins. The same river as that of Manilla circles around the village and a branch of it passes through the middle dividing it in two sections. Now when they had made their declarations of friendship to the Spaniards, and saw our situation and condition in Manilla, they came to think lightly of us; and, after their departure to their village, sent word that they did not care to be friends, but would rather fight with the governor and his men. They said that, if the Spaniards would come up the river for this purpose, they would see how the people of Caynta would hurl them from their lands. The governor gave them a month or two to return to their allegiance, and sent certain friendly Indians to treat with them; but no conclusion could be reached until the governor sent his nephew Juan de Sauzedo with one hundred soldiers to conquer them, or rather to destroy them. During this interim there arrived the two ships coming from Nueva España, which had been lying in port in the island of Panay. I have already told above how the master-of-camp had gone to order them to come to this port of Manilla. On the fifteenth of August, the day of the Assumption of our Lady, they arrived; and on the same day Captain Juan de Sauzedo embarked in a galley, with his hundred soldiers and three pieces of heavy artillery, to go to the fort of Caynta. He ascended the river for three days before he reached the fort. After his arrival, the captain, following out the orders of the governor, waited three days longer, summoning them to return to the terms of peace and friendship with the Spaniards which had been

arranged with the governor at Manilla. The ill-fated creatures were intractable, on account of the confidence which they had in their miserable fort; and for response told the captain that they desired to fight. They called upon their hearers as witnesses of the fact, saying that on the day of the battle it would be seen that their God was better than the one worshiped by the Castilians. This latter statement was shown to be a falsehood; for God our Lord was vindicated, and they and their demons, whom they call gods, and worship, were proved liars. Thus on the third day, when the period set for summoning them had passed, the captain prepared his men; and, leaving the galley and the three pieces of artillery in a bend in the river with sufficient men, made a detour with the rest, and, on the side where the fort appeared the weakest, they entered. As they were entering, the enemy killed two men with a very small culverin which they had; and another man they pierced through his coat of mail and all with a lance of fire-hardened palm-wood, so that there were three dead. I have already said at the beginning of this relation that the lances of palmwood are harder than iron. The fort having been entered, as I have told, the enemy made no resistance after the Spaniards were within. Whoever was able to flee to save his life fled, and of the Indians there were slain, men and women, four hundred persons. The rest who had escaped came thereupon, and made terms of peace and friendship. The fort and all the bamboo thickets surrounding it were destroyed, and the people are today very humble and submissive. There were found in this fort but four culverins. Their having artillery, and the source of their knowledge of casting it, I shall state in a few words, for I forgot to do so at the beginning. According to the natives of the province of Capanpanga and Manilla, there were two Spaniards, from the first fleets which came to this land, who had been captives among them. One of these was a Fleming, the other a Vizcayan; and from them they learned to cast artillery. I do not affirm this, although, as I say, the natives make this assertion. I am inclined rather to the belief that they have learned it from the Moros of Burney, with whom they had dealings. The fort of Caynta was destroyed, as I have related. This fort or village was very near a great lake of fresh water located about four leagues from the city of Manilla. It was reputed to be very large and thickly populated along the shores; but it is not one tenth so thickly populated as they say. With regard to the lake, I shall state what it is like, for I have gone all around it afoot, and seeing gives authority: It is more than twelve leagues long and two wide, and is fresh. Its freshness is caused by the fact that a great number of streams enter it, and only two flow from it; and for this reason also it is very deep, because much water enters and there is but little outflow. The villages about this lake, containing about twenty-four or twenty-six thousand men, were pacified by the captain Juan de Sauzedo. From here the latter crossed with sixty men to the opposite coast of this island, in quest of some mines which the natives had told him were very rich and abounding in gold. The galley was left in the lake above mentioned. These mines are on the opposite coast of this island, which is the northeastern, and the natives call them the mines of Paracali.<sup>42</sup> When the captain had arrived at the mines with his soldiers, who had suffered much on the march because it was in the wet season, they found them excellent and very rich, and more than thirty or forty estados in depth. The natives were afraid and did not await the coming of the Spaniards. Some of the soldiers complained also that the captain conducted himself badly. And thus they returned having lost by death four soldiers, among whom was the sergeant Juan Ramos, newly come to this land. I believe, according to reports, that possession of these mines will be taken, and the whole coast thereabout conquered—for it is a very rich land—if our Lord will it and give his divine sanction thereto, for here we are gaining little profit.

I have told above how the master-of-camp had gone to Çubú for his wife; arriving there, he returned with her to this city. There was a river in the province of Capanpanga, named Vites, the inhabitants of which refused to be friends of the Spaniards; they were reputed to be very powerful. The master-of-camp had to take upon this expedition one hundred and fifty soldiers, and was

accompanied by a native guide from the same river who was an Indian chief hostile to the natives of Vites. This man had come to the Spaniards with the offer to conduct them into Vites in perfect safety, without any danger whatever; and this he did, getting the master-of-camp and the hundred and fifty soldiers with him into the place. When the natives saw the Spaniards so safely within their gates and at their fort, they surrendered themselves in peace and friendship and destroyed their fort. All the other villages round about came to offer their friendship; and thus we gained possession of this stronghold, which, by reason of the reports of the natives, was regarded as somewhat dangerous—but there was no more resistance experienced from it than what I have related. With this expedition was ended the last of the wars which have been waged in this island and in that of Mindoro, the most important being written in this relation.

I shall now give my attention to the treatment of certain facts with regard to the natives of this land, simply telling their manner of living, dressing, and dealing with one another. I shall describe a few things which I have seen as to the idols worshiped by them, and shall not enlarge upon other details. In the first place, the men are of medium size, and dark. They wear their hair clipped short, like the Spaniards. They wear a little cloth headdress and a small piece of cloth to conceal their private parts. From the belt upward, some wear a short doublet of coarse material, with half-sleeves and open in front. There is no manner of footwear. Among them the manner of dress and ornamentation is very indecent. The women are exceedingly ugly and most indecent. They clothe themselves with a piece of cloth hanging down from the belt, and a very small doublet, so that their bellies are left exposed. They can only be compared to mares glutted with hay. They have no personality or rank whatever, and eat and drink most vulgarly. There is no difference between the chief and his slave, or between the slave and his master, in the matter of eating and drinking.

As for their sacrifices, each one of the natives, so far as I have seen, has in his house many idols, to whom they pray. They call God, *Batala*, and the chief idol which they have is thus named; but others call him *Diobata*<sup>43</sup>—at least among the Pintados they give him this name. The natives of this island usually call him *Batala*, and even consider him God of all creation. Accordingly, after the religious came to this land and commenced to preach the faith of Jesus Christ, and to baptize, the natives have not known how to give any other name in their language to God our Lord, except that of *Batala*. They are people easily converted to the faith, and in the short time while those religious have been in this island, they have gathered much fruit and have baptized many people men, women and children, who have all been baptized without any chief or native Indian of this land denying our faith. Quite to the contrary, if they are questioned in regard to it, and preached to about it, they say that it is very sacred and very good. Returning to the discussion of the way in which they conduct their feasts, it is as follows.

When any chief is ill, he invites his kindred and orders a great meal to be prepared, consisting of fish, meat, and wine. When the guests are all assembled and the feast set forth in a few plates on the ground inside the house, they seat themselves also on the ground to eat. In the midst of the feast (called *manganito* or *baylán* in their tongue), they put the idol called *Batala* and certain aged women who are considered as priestesses, and some aged Indians neither more nor less. They offer the idol some of the food which they are eating, and call upon him in their tongue, praying to him for the health of the sick man for whom the feast is held. The natives of these islands have no altars nor temples whatever. This *manganito*, or drunken revel, to give it a better name, usually lasts seven or eight days; and when it is finished they take the idols and put them in the corners of the house, and keep them there without showing them any reverence. As I have said, they all, from the least to the greatest, eat and drink to the point of losing their senses. In the villages nearest the sea some do

not eat pork, the reason for their not eating it, which I have already given, being that, in trading with the Moros of Burney, the latter have preached to them some part of the nefarious doctrine of Mahoma, charging them not to eat pork. In this they act most childishly, and when, by chance any of them are asked why they do not eat it, they say that they do not know why; and if one asks them who Mahoma was and what his law commands, they say that they do not know the commandment or anything about Mahoma, not even his name; nor do they know what his law is, nor whence it came. It is true that some of them who have been in Burney understand some of it, and are able to read a few words of the Alcorán; but these are very few, and believe that he who has not been in Burney may eat pork, as I have heard many of them say. They swear by the sun and by the moon, and all the islands have this oath in common—a fact that I have noticed since our coming to this land. It does not seem to me that they are accustomed to worship animals, stars, clouds, or other things which many idolatrous pagans are wont to adore. I believe, nevertheless, that they have many other customs with regard to sacrifices and witchcraft, for they actually practice these; but there is little advantage in wasting the time or burdening the mind therewith, for any rational person will be able to understand sufficiently the rest after reading what is herein written. Among them, up to the present day, I have not observed any sin against nature, which is saying a great deal of so uncivilized a race; yet with regard to their treatment of women, they are so vicious and licentious that any race whatever might excel them, and this is no insignificant evil and sin. Their custom in taking wives is the following.

Whoever is the richest and has the most gold also has the most wives, and offends most God. There is a law among these natives which is not bad—namely, that however many wives a man has, among them all he regards one as his legitimate wife; and if, when he dies, he has no children by this woman, the children of the others do not inherit. In illustration of the truth of this, one may cite the death of Laya, whom I have already mentioned. When this man died, a Christian, he had no children by his legitimate wife, and although he had many by his other wives, they did not inherit; therefore his property descended to a legitimate nephew of his. It is true, however, that the bastard children may deprive them of their property. I have above shown the characteristics and mode of government among these natives. They do not care to know more than that they are Indians, like all the other Indians. The chiefs are but slightly distinguished in dress from the slaves and freemen. Both women and men wear anklets of gold, and bracelets upon their arms. In regard to the wars waged between them and the Spaniards hitherto, I have already told the principal exploits of captains and soldiers among them. I have already designated the captains who have achieved the most noted deeds in this conquest; and nothing further will be found. If it were necessary to give proof by calling upon all who are in this land, I would be ready to do that. As to what has taken place among the Pintados and among the Portuguese, my relation does not concern itself therewith; but I claim that the most important events which have occurred on these islands, touching the relations between the natives and the Spaniards, are those related and declared by me. As for the Portuguese, I shall say only that the Spaniards have shown great fidelity and bravery in the service of his Majesty; although they never came to a hand-to-hand struggle with the Portuguese—except in a few ambuscades, where they took some captives, as has been written at great length by many chroniclers who live here. May God grant that they write the truth; for, as far as I can learn, very little credit can be given them except in the case of father Fray Diego de Herrera and Fray Martin de Herrada, who, being religious and strongly attached to the service of God and the public good, will write the whole truth; and yet I do not believe that they will interest themselves in secular affairs. Now that I have written the customs and practices of the natives of these islands, I shall make a few remarks on the Indians of China, for I had begun to state them before. I said that they come to trade with the natives and the Spaniards of this island of Luzón as well as to all the islands in this region,

to import and sell silk stuffs, very good cotton robes, and other small articles, very neat and similar in make and style to those worn by them. As I began to say above, both men and women are vigorous and light complexioned. I say women, for some are to be found living in this island of Luzón. These Chinese live among these natives because they have fled from their own country, on account of certain events which took place there. They brought their wives with them; all of them, both men and women, number about one hundred and fifty. They became Christians after coming here. They are a very unassuming and modest people; they clothe themselves with long robes of cotton cloth and with silk. They wear wide breeches, and sleeves and stockings, like the Spaniards. They are a very ingenious and cleanly people. This is in brief what we have seen. They wear their hair very long, men as well as women, tied up and well arranged upon their heads. I have treated thus far of various matters; I come now to speak of the fertility of these islands, of what is gathered and sown in them, mainly with regard to those in which I have been.

The island of Mindanao is very large and poorly populated, at least in the part in which I have been, which is from the river of Butuan to the cape of Calamita, about eighty leagues along the coast. It is an extremely rough country. The natives there obtain very pure gold, for the mines are numerous and very rich. The cape of Caahuite, located in this island, and where cinnamon is gathered, lies in five degrees of latitude, and is toward the southeast. It is a very unhealthy country. As I remarked above, I have been at that cape. From the cape to the river Grande de Mindanao, the distance is about sixty leagues. We were very near this river of Mindanao with the small boat of the flagship which was lost in the Ladrones. Up to the present day none of the Spaniards of our number who were in that ship, have been in that river. Near this cape there is an island called Taguima,<sup>44</sup> and between the island and the said cape the vessels of the Portuguese pass on their way to Maluco for cloves. Therefore if the king our lord take Maluco for his own (for people say that his Majesty has a right to it), the ships sent out will be able to carry out two commissions in one voyage, taking on a cargo of cloves and of cinnamon, for Maluco lies in the course, and is a very good port, where they must of necessity touch. I have called attention to what I have seen in this island. Finally, I shall now speak of all the others which are on terms of peace, at least as far as concerns those where the Spaniards have been. The second is the island of Negros, which is absolutely peaceful. It contains about twenty thousand inhabitants, and is divided among the Spaniards who remained in Çubú. There are said to be gold mines there. Next is the said island of Çubú, which is poorly populated. Between these three islands there are many insignificant islets, some of them inhabited and some not. These I shall not mention, in order to avoid prolixity, but in all of them there are mines. Farther to the northwest from Çubú are Baybay, Bayugo, Abuyo, Cavalian, Tandaya, Barciogama, and other islets, among these which I have mentioned. They are divided among the same citizens of Çubú. Very few of them have peaceable inhabitants. With them as with the others, it is best to bring about peace in these islands. Rice, cotton, great numbers of swine and fowls, wax, and honey are produced there in great abundance. There are many mines, as has been shown, and the natives say that they are well populated. There is gold in all of these islands; but the most important thing is wanting, Spanish people to colonize them. There remains to the west the island of Panay, which was very populous and fertile, and yielded great abundance of rice, swine, fowls, wax, and honey. The natives say that there are gold mines in this island; and, since they say it, it must be true. The gold found there is very pure. When the governor was in that island there fell upon it—because of our sins and those of the natives, or God knows what—an extremely great plague of locusts, which has lasted three years and still continues. No field is sown which they do not destroy. A great famine and pestilence have sprung up among the natives of that island, so that more than half of them have died; and they will continue to die until God our Lord is pleased to remove his anger from over it. From that island to the island of Luzón it is about sixty leagues, and

in the course is that of Mindoro. This is an island where much wax and honey is produced. It contains many gold mines, and rivers where gold is gathered. I have been all about it; on the farther coast, which is to the south, it is well populated, while on the northern coast is the village called Mindoro, as well as other thickly-populated rivers. Those who have not seen it or set foot upon it say that it contains about eight thousand men. I shall dare to affirm from what I have seen of it that it has more than fifteen thousand. It is very near the island of Luzón. Between this island and the others above named, lie many small islets, which are friendly, although they have but small populations. As I say, next is the island of Luzón, where the governor resides now, and which was settled in the manner above related. This island is thickly populated and large. The greater and better part of it is still to be conquered, I would say from what I have seen of the villages and land. It does not seem to me that there will be any more resistance from any of them when they learn of the advantages of friendship with the Spaniards; for they have already been informed of the way in which those are treated who resist. To the present time, all that has been explored in this island is about fifty or sixty leagues along the coast from Manilla to Yvalón,<sup>45</sup> which is the landing-place for the ships sailing to Nueva España. On the farther coast, to the north, nothing is explored except the mines of Paracali, which were discovered by Captain Juan de Sauzedo when crossing from Manilla to the other sea with sixty men, as I have told above. Near these mines there is a large and thickly-populated river called Bico.<sup>46</sup> According to the reports of the natives, all of it is thickly populated. This island extends a long distance from Manilla toward the west. Toward the south is a province called Yloquio, which is said to be very rich in gold mines; but the Spaniards have not seen it as yet. The natives have not been able to say how far this island extends in longitude. I have already said that all of it is thickly populated, and that it has a great abundance of rice, fowls, and swine, as well as great numbers of buffaloes, deer, wild boars, and goats; it also produces great quantities of cotton and colored cloths, wax, and honey; and date palms abound. In conclusion, it is very well supplied with all the things above mentioned, and many others which I shall not enumerate. It is the largest island which has thus far been discovered in these regions. As I say, it is well populated and very rich in gold mines. There is much trade with China. That part of it which has thus far been conquered and pacified, the governor has begun to allot to the conquerors.

I could write many other things about this land, and the conditions existing in it; but I omit them, in order to avoid prolixity. Therefore I bring the present relation to a close, to the honor and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one and everlasting God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and of the glorious Virgin Mary, our Lady, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-two, in this city of Manilla, on the twentieth day of the month of April.

**39** Elem: in Retana's text, "el M." In some old documents appears the name Elen (or Helin); it apparently refers to the islet off the southwest point of Mindoro which is now called Ylín.

**40** *Pintados* ("painted"): a term applied to the inhabitants of the Visayas (and afterward extended to those islands), because they painted their bodies with red clay—or, as some writers say, on account of their being tattooed.

**41** The name Manila is derived from a Tagal word, *manilad*, meaning "a place overgrown with *nilad*"—which is the name of a small tree, bearing white flowers (*Ixora manila*).

Some writers claim that the name is a corruption of *Maydila*, from the Tagal words *may* and *dila*, meaning "the place that has a tongue" alluding to a tongue-shaped island formerly at the mouth of Pasig River.—REV. T. C. MIDDLETON, O.S.A

**42** Gold and other minerals are still obtained from the mines of Paracale (in the province of Ambos, Camarines), Luzón.

**43** Blumentritt says (*Dic. mitológico de Filipinos*, pp. 34, 35) of the appellation Bathala: "This name, of Sanscrit origin, is or was given to various gods of the Malay Filipinos. The ancient Tagalos called their principal god *Badhala*, or *Bathala mey-kapal* ["God the creator"], and gave the same name to the bird *Tigmamanukin*, and sometimes to the comets or other heavenly bodies, which, in their opinion, predicted future events." This is analogous to the manner in which the North American Indians apply such terms as "Manitou," "wakan," or "medicine," not only to their divinities, but to any phenomenon that is mysterious or incomprehensible to them.

The term *Diwata* (*devata*, *diobata*), also of Sanscrit origin, is applied variously by different races in the archipelago—sometimes to the souls of ancestors (whom they invoke); sometimes to any inferior spirits, whether good or bad (*ut supra* pp. 45, 46).

**44** A reference to the island of Basilan off the southwest point of Mindanao; it was formerly called Taguima. The route for ships here mentioned was through the strait of Basilan.

**45** Yvalón (or Ibalón) was the ancient name of Albay; it was sometimes applied to the entire island of Luzón.

**46** The Bicol river, which crosses the province of Ambos Camarines (Sur), while Paracale is in the same province (Norte) ; both are on the opposite coast from Albay. Yloquio is probably Ilocos; but that province is north, not south of Manila.

Ref.: <http://www.philippinehistory.net/first50/luzon.htm>