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Towards an Early History of Pangasinan: Preliminary Notes and Observations

Erwin S. Fernandez

This article examines relevant primary sources for the reconstruction of the early history of Pangasinan. Early history means the history of Pangasinan peoples prior to the advent of Spanish colonialism. It identifies key sites mentioned in ethnographic texts that are potential sites for archaeological investigation. Although it deals with the history of Pangasinan before the arrival of Juan de Salcedo and Martin de Goiti, it utilizes several contact period accounts, other earlier *cronicas*, dictionaries and even folklore to understand early Pangasinan society. In order to situate Pangasinan's early history, it understands first the geologic and geographic contexts that gave rise to an Agno river valley civilization. Finally, this article shows that the evolution of complex societies in Pangasinan happened through their frequent interactions and contacts with highlanders who are themselves their kin, the hunters and gatherers in the surrounding area, the Ilocanos, the Zambals, and foreign traders and settlers.

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To prepare the groundwork for an intensive archaeological investigation on the pre-Hispanic history of Pangasinan, which is around the 11th to the 16th centuries, examining the primary written sources on Pangasinan might lead to the identification of key sites that have the biggest potential in yielding artifacts. These sources are not limited to contact period accounts by the Spanish friars and expeditionary reports by *conquistadores*; Chinese accounts are also consulted but to a very limited extent. Dictionaries like the one written by Lorenzo Fernandez Cosgaya (1865) provide another window to that history of early Pangasinenses. A pioneering three volume-history of Pangasinan had been written but its first volume, although dealing with the pre-Hispanic customs and traditions, did not dwell on the history of Pangasinan prior to Spanish colonialism (Cortes 1974; 1990a; 1990b). Rather, it focused on the first two centuries of Spanish colonization dealing with Hispanization, political and social growth, economic and material progress and the Malong and Palaris revolts (Cortes 1974).

Without proper archaeological investigation, some of the assumptions made by local historians on Pangasinan before Spanish colonialism would remain, at best, facile conjectures. There are several of them that had been noted here. Archaeology as a discipline allied with history has few practitioners in Manila, even more so in Pangasinan where very few archaeological surveys and studies had been done except unauthorised and illegal diggings and sometimes accidental finds (Beyer 1947; Legaspi 1974). A recent one is the 1997 anthropological study conducted by UGAT on the San Roque Multipurpose Dam Project that yielded Palaeolithic and Neolithic stone tools in San Manuel, Pangasinan (as cited in Canilao 2008). The landmark study by Junker (1999) on Philippine chiefdoms makes a future study on Pangasinan polities of which this is the preliminary inquiry compelling because it would present a contrast for comparative purposes to the Bais-Tanjay chiefdoms in Negros Oriental. For example, the Bais-Tanjay chiefdoms were located relatively at the margins of international maritime trading networks unlike Pangasinan polities, which were able to participate in the growing long-distance commerce along the South China Sea (Junker 1999). This forthcoming investigation will also raise questions and possibly give answers on whether a Pangasinan “ethnic state” has

been in existence or not prior to 1572, which is an easy assumption because it lacks archaeological and historical evidence (Salazar 1993; Flores 2007).

As defined by Timothy Earle (1997, 14), a chiefdom is “a regional polity with institutional governance and some social stratification organizing a few thousand to tens of thousands of people.” A chiefdom is said to represent the political transition between a village and a state but the question on how a chiefdom becomes a state is rather problematic (Carneiro 1981). On the other hand, a state is “an autonomous political unit, encompassing many communities within its territory and having a centralized government with a power to draft men for war or work, levy and collect taxes, and decree and enforce laws” (Ibid., 69). To understand better the context of these definitions whether they apply to the pre-colonial political and economic structure of Pangasinan polities or not, one needs to situate them first in the geological and geographic environments that ancestors of present-day Pangasinenses had confronted.

The land where salt is made: Geological and geographic considerations

Pangasinan today is a first-class province north of Manila with a total land area of 5368.82 square kilometers and with a population of around 2.65 million making it the third populous province in the country. The present land area, however, is less than its breadth and width in 1580 when it includes Zambales, parts of Tarlac and La Union comprising 11,253.63 square kilometers (Cortes 1974).

The etymology of Pangasinan refers to a salt-making place from the root word “asin” meaning salt and affixes “pang” and “an” denoting location (Cortes 1974). Thus, the name implies the coastline along Lingayen Gulf where salt beds are abundant. Caboloan is said to be the other name, a place – hence, the affixes “ca” and “an” – where “bolo”, a species of bamboo, abounds (Ibid.). In Cosgaya (1865), Caboloan refers also to the language. Both toponyms betray their geological and geographic character.

About thirty million years ago, the western section of the proto-Philippine archipelago had begun to emerge with the formation of the Central Cordillera and other volcanic islands (Punongbayan

1998a). Due to water and wind erosions in the mountains, valleys were filled with sediments. It can be assumed that parts of what constitute Pangasinan now was still under water only to rise above the ocean when around six million years ago, the Manila trench collided with Taiwan (Ibid.). In 1861, the naturalist Fr. Antonio Llanos discovered marine fossils in Tarlac in a locality called Malitlit consisting of "Berenices, Trochus, Griphea, Caryophillea, Astrea, Oculina" and others with similar finds in Camiling making Jose Centeno (1876) to correctly conclude that the plains between Lingayen Gulf and Manila Bay were once submerged under the sea. The fluctuations of sea level during the Pleistocene period or around two million years ago extended the shore to several meters away from the present coastline of Lingayen Gulf. Toward the east of Pangasinan valley, geologic transformations particularly orogenic processes made the Cordillera mountains one of the rich deposits of gold and copper (Punongbayan 1998b). By this time, the geologic configuration of Pangasinan was much the same as the present with the exception of the contraction of the shore because of sea level rise due to the melting of ice in the Polar Regions.

Prior to the rise of the sea, species of flora and fauna from mainland Asia had reached the archipelago through the exposed land masses that connected the Philippines with Taiwan and Borneo. Fossil remains of huge, hooped animals such as elephants, rhinoceros, buffaloes and horses are found in the archipelago suggesting that they once inhabited the islands (Madulid 1998). A tooth of a pygmy elephant was discovered in Cabarruyan Island, in the town of Anda in Pangasinan (Beyer 1947). In the case of flora, Taiwan shares some forest species with what is found in Cordillera highlands in Luzon (Madulid 1998).

It was also through these "land bridges" that prehistoric man was able to reach the Philippines. Stone tools and animal remains in the Philippines suggest the presence of ancient peoples before the arrival of the Tabon man who is said to have lived in the island of Palawan 50,000 years ago (Dizon 1998 but see recent dating of human remains in Callao Cave in Cagayan from 67,000 years ago using uranium series dating, Mijares et al. 2010). But some believe that present-day Negritos (Arta, Alta, Atta, Ati, Ita, Aeta, Agta, Baluga, Pugot, Dumagat) scattered throughout the archipelago (one group

inhabited the Zambales mountains and in recent times roamed Pangasinan) descended from the Australoid population during the late Pleistocene. Nonetheless, several Stone Age tools such as stone hammers and grip-marked stones have been found in Bolinao, Pangasinan (Beyer 1947).

These earliest inhabitants could have confronted a fertile landscape fed by three river systems (Cortes 1974). The Agno river system, whose headwaters originate from Mount Data meanders its course south, then west through the once forested plains and empties in the gulf in Labrador, Lingayen and Dagupan. The Bued-Angalacan river system has its mouth at San Fabian going south, then northeast as it joins Abiroleng, Campa, Ymanduyan and Aluragat rivers. Aluragat and Abiroleng rivers derive its waters from the mountainous slopes of Benguet. Having its headwaters in Benguet highlands, the Toboy river with Tagumisín and Mitura rivers as its tributaries joins Tolong river in Calasiao before uniting with Agno at Calmay in Dagupan; hence the Toboy-Tolong river system. These river systems had supported a rich biodiversity that, as late as the 19th century, around 160,000 hectares of forests were home to birds, trees, wild animals such as deer, wild boar and monkey while the waters were swarming with crocodiles. But with the influx of migration, the forests were reclaimed as cultivated fields and eventually they became depleted.

Peopling of the coasts and the interiors of Northwest-Central Luzon

Presuming that the Negritos were the descendants of Australoid populations, some of them in the vicinity of Zambales-Pangasinan region would meet new people by 5000 to 4000 B.C. – to others it is 3500 B.C. – arriving by boat either coming from the north, which is Taiwan (Bellwood 1984-5; 1995; Blust 1984-85; Reid 1992) or from the south with Bismarcks archipelago as the staging point of pre-Austronesia (Solheim 1984-5; 2006) and bringing with them maritime and farming technologies. Since there is no myth among Pangasinenses that tells about their place of origin (Jose 1974; Nelmida 1982), others in support of H. Otley Beyer's waves of migration cite the route from Southern Celebes in Indonesia to southwest Mindanao and Cuyo Island (Tangco 1951) or from Borneo

to Lanao and Cotabato (GleECK 1983) before arriving at Lingayen Gulf. In any case, these Austronesians would settle first along the coast and would in the span of five hundred to a thousand years settle in the many coastal parts of the archipelago, hopping from one island after another (Reid 1992).

Having settled with some intermarrying with the local population, they developed their respective culture and language distinct from their Malayo-Polynesian kin around 1100 B.C. (Thomas and Healey 1962 as cited in Llamzon 1978). From then on, cultural and linguistic differentiations emerge between the Austronesians who lived in Luzon, in the islands in the Visayas and the island of Mindanao. By 700 B.C., Northern Philippine languages that include Ilocano and Kapampangan would evolve as a separate group fragmenting into different languages by 200 B.C. Meanwhile, Meso-Philippine language group would split into Tagalog, Bikol and Bisaya by 100 B.C. After 700 B.C. (following Thomas and Healey), proto-Southern Cordillera out of Northern Philippine would develop followed by another split that would give way to proto-Central Cordilleran and proto-Southern Cordilleran (Himes 1998). Ilongot would shortly diverge from the latter. Out of proto-west Southern Cordilleran, Pangasinan would emerge when it diverges from proto-nuclear Southern Cordilleran that would split into three: Ibaloi, Kalanguya and Karaw.

Prior to the break-up, the Austronesian conception on land as "territory" in "banua" is retained in Pangasinan although it will be paired with "anac." Its significance will be discussed in a later section. Settlement in a place means building a house, which in the language it is referred to as "manbaléy" (Cosgaya 1865). It also means to live a separate life, or to get married. The root word "baléy" refers to the shell, or covering of snails, crabs, and fruits; and to a whole structure made of bamboo or wood. It also means the placenta that comes after the birth of a mammalian creature. From building a house, the term "báley" with stress on "a" added with prefix "mama-" or even "on-" means to establish a town, a village or a neighborhood. The growth of settlements in a particular area gave rise to the cognate "bináley-báley," which means all the towns.

The development of Pangasinan as a separate language, hence as an ethnic group, happened centuries before the ancestors of Ibaloi,

Kalangoya and Karaw peoples began to migrate to the mountains. Keesing (1962) intimates that Pangasinan people are diverse in the beginning but the introduction of wet-rice cultivation and the intensification of external trade a cultural and linguistic homogenization occurred. Perhaps key to this change as articulated in Fernandez (2009) is the coming of the Indic written script, which according to Juan Francisco (1973) arrived around 1000 to 1100 A.D. It would take until the 15th century A.D. for Pangasinan and the other eight ethnic groups to adapt this script for according to Geoff Wade (1993), the Indian influence in the Philippines via Champa extended up to this period. In contrast, the Ibalois, Kalanguya and Karaw do not know any written script (Scheerer 1905) suggesting that their movements to the mountains happened before the introduction of the script.

In terms of ecological adaptations to their environments, one striking difference between Pangasinan and Ibaloi peoples is their burial practice. In Pangasinan, when a member of the elite called *anacbanua* dies, he had to be accompanied by one or two of his slaves in death, then mourning would end by beheading a slave or killing someone followed by an elaborate feast (Cortes 1974). This gruesome custom was lost among the Ibalois who had seen its impracticality in the mountains since they needed more labor to work the fields and especially the mines. In its place is a complex ritual beginning with the seating of the dead on a death chair and a funeral rite lasting from two to nine days (Cordillera Schools Group Inc. 2003).

From settlement to trade: The rise of Pangasinan polities

Between 1000 and 1500 A.D., it can be said that Pangasinan as an ethnic group – or as a nation – existed with its own culture and language quite separate from its kindred although it shares common ritual and practice with the Ilongot, Ibaloi, Kalanguya and Karaw. Himes (1998, 173) concludes that “Pangasinan, Ibaloi and Ilongot ethnic identities were already established” in 1572 when Juan de Salcedo led his expeditionary forces towards the northern areas to be pacified. Prior to 1000 A.D., Pangasinan people settled and practiced sea-foraging and wet-rice agriculture in the littoral areas such as Lingayen. Each community, no doubt a chiefdom, consisting of thirty

to a hundred families is headed by a “pangolo”, literally a headman from “olo” head from an elite class called “anacbanua” (Cortes 1974). A freemen class called “timaoa” serves as retinue of warriors of the elite although Cortes (1974) refers to them as composing the middle rank while people below the two classes are called “aripuen.”

Again regarding Lingayen, Beyer (1947, 224) believes that Pangasinan “offers rich archaeological possibilities for further exploration” although his idea of Lingayen as “the place of the lingga” where a Hindu-Malayan community had once resided seems doubtful. He was however correct that Pangasinan, possibly referring to Lingayen Gulf, has been the “entry point” for peoples and cultures. E. Arsenio Manuel (1994) postulates that around 5000 to 4000 B.C. Lingayen Gulf might have been the landing place of proto-Austronesians or proto-Philippineasians who came from the Tonkin Gulf area where the Bacsonians had perfected rice cultivation, rice terracing and boat-building techniques. They could have left marks in the lowlands – others might have left behind – before they went to the mountains. Finding the place suitable for terrace building, they built the famous rice terraces first in Kayapa Valley, then in Ifugao.

By 1225, Lingayen as Li-yin-tung had been listed in Chao Jukua’s *Chu Fan Chih* (An account of the various barbarians) as one of the trading places along with Mai (Mindoro or Manila), Liu-hsin (Luzon), Li-han (Lubang) where Fukien Chinese had developed commercial contacts (Scott 1984). The products the Chinese buy were beeswax, cotton, pearls, tortoise shell, betelnuts, and yu-ta cloth in exchange for their porcelain, gold, iron pots, glass beads and needles. In the town of Balincaguin (now Mabini), there were reports on burial jars as well as porcelains dated to be around the 9th to 12th centuries (Beyer 1947). In 1349, however, Li-yin-tung was not listed along with the places the Chinese traded with except Mai, Sulu, Mintolang and Ma-li-lu in Wang Ta-yuan’s *Tao I Chih Lueh* (Summary notices of the barbarians of the isles) (Ibid.). Four centuries before Chao’s account, at 800 A.D., it is said that a Chinese prince visited Luzon in search for gold and he named the place, Lin-Gayen in honor of himself (Zaide 1949). Different from this conceited story, local folklore relates the story of a tall Tamarind tree at the center of the plaza that passersby could not fail to look back at it; thus lingayen, which means “to look back” at the tree (Velasquez 1957).

The reference to a Hindu community in Lingayen comes to mind when in Wang Ta Yuan's detail on Ma-li-lu; it speaks of widows joining the funeral pyre for their dead husbands or the Hindu practice of suttee. Getting to Ma-li-lu, the Chinese "have to pass far through a little harbour to reach this place. The mountains are prominent and water full of 'salt-butt' rocks; the forests are few, and the fields high and barren; and the people grow lots of yams" (Scott 1984, 73). Again, the mention of salt brings us back to the coasts of Lingayen Gulf, not necessarily Lingayen, but Ma-li-lu had been identified to be Manila although it is still open to question as Li-yin-tung. Trade items include new products such as "Mai cloth" and an intriguing "bamboo cloth", which to Scott (1984) is a textile made of cotton and abaca.

That Lingayen had become a trade hub in Northwest Luzon suggests the existence of networks between the center at the mouth of the Agno river and the interior settlements upstream of the river in the town of Binalatongan (now the city of San Carlos) and other settlements along the coast, further upstream and east of the river along the coast such as Binmaley, Bacnotan (now Dagupan), Gabon (now Calasiao), Mangaldan, Anguio (now San Fabian), Malunguey (now Bayambang), and Paniqui. Binalatongan means the place where "balatong" or mung beans are grown indicating an agricultural hinterland. Ten years after the pacification of the province in 1572, Miguel de Loarca reports that Pangasinan has 4,000 tributes or 16,000 people (Cortes 1974). In 1591, Lingayen is accounted to have 4000 inhabitants while Mangaldan and Labaya (Binalatongan and Gabon) had 3200 and 6000 persons respectively for a total of 24,000 inhabitants for the province of Pangasinan including the encomienda of Tugui and Bolinao and Sunguian (Ibid.). These figures represent those people who were converted to Catholicism and, thus, do not include those who still resist the colonizers. To Cortes (1974), the total population at the time of Spanish conquest could have ranged from thirty to fifty thousand.

Coastal communities along the gulf were salt makers. Lingayen, for instance, was once a salt-producing town and now famous for its fermented fish sauce industry (inasin) (Flores 2001b). A similarity between salt-making practices in Pangasinan and northern coast of Java had been made suggesting a possible Javanese influence through migration or a shared practice of these two peoples before parting

ways in search for a new home (Cortes 1974). But it is likely an indigenous innovation.

Pangasinán itself means a place “where they salt or make salt” (Cosgaya 1865, 36). “Asin” or salt had six uses either as a verb or as a noun: “mangasin” is to make salt; “manasin” to eat with salt, which means to eat rice with salt if there is no other food available; “asínan” is the salt-pan; “asinan” is to salt a little while “asinen” is to salt well; and “inasin” is brine and in today’s parlance, fish sauce or bagoong (Ibid.). Incidentally, according to John Crawford (1856, 326), Pangasinan in Malay or Javanese means “place of salt” or “salt-pans.” Asin is also used in the following expression, which reveals the philosophy and worldview of the coastal dwellers: “ag to ni amta’y mananap na asin” (Cosgaya 1865, 36). Literally translated, it says: “he still does not know how to look for salt” meaning he still does not know how to look for a living.

Salt is a basic commodity for health and diet reasons then and now. In a version of Iloco origin myth of Angalo ken Aran, people from the Ilocos coast buy salt from a place which is assumed to be Pangasinan (Flores 2001b). In another version of Angalo the giant, it tells how Angalo went to build a palace for Sipnget, the beautiful maid across the ocean by buying salt bricks from the ruler of the Kingdom of Salt (Fansler 1921). Laborers would cross the sea along a bamboo bridge only to elicit the anger of the Ocean. Disturbed of her sleep, she caused the waves to topple the bridge and all the salt came to the sea and that is how the sea became salty. Taken obviously from the Iloco myth, a similar Filipino tale with the same giant motif relates the importance of salt in the daily sustenance of the people since salt is used to prepare tasty meals. A giant was the keeper of salt hidden in a cave. People used to buy salt from him by riding on boats to visit his island. One day, the sea went stormy so that they cannot sail out to buy salt. In their desperation, they asked the giant to help them out by extending his leg across the ocean so that they can use it as a bridge to fetch salt. But his foot rested on an anthill that ants kept on biting at him causing him to move his foot and the people with their sacks of salt fall down the sea. Along with fish and other sea products, salt could be the primary goods the coastal people trade with the interior communities. On the other hand, the people in the interior such as

Binalatongan would trade rice, beeswax, and other forest products to the people in the coast.¹

The rise of Lingayen as a prominent polity at the mouth of a great river reveals the extent by which it was able to maintain alliances with the interior communities. Like most Southeast Asian polities, Pangasinan complex societies exhibit the same political structure: chiefly power is diffused among the elite of different low-density communities and power is consolidated through kinship ties and claims to being founders of a settlement (Junker 1999). The latter is demonstrated by the term “anacbanua.” Cosgaya (1865) cites its Hispanic use as equivalent to the “cabeza de barangay” but its previous meaning refers to the original settlers of the land as “anac” means “children” while “banua” signifies “land” (Flores 2006).

Speculation is rife among local historians on the location of the “first” settlement in Pangasinan (Flores 2001b). Although Barangay Angarian in the town of Bugallon (formerly Salasa) seems to be a plausible site for archaeological investigation, it is not the first settlement since it is not located at the very mouth of the river. It is Barangay Capandanan in Lingayen. The word “angarian” is a curious term because it means “a place where once a king reigned” in Pangasinan from the rootword “ari” king. In the language, it has four cognates: “onari” to be a king; “manari” to rule; “panarian” kingdom and “arien” to consider one a king (Cosgaya 1865). Aside from Barangay Capandanan, another potential site is Barangay Uyong in Labrador (formerly a barrio of Lingayen), the site of the first chapel in the province erected in 1575 by the Augustinians who had to leave due to the obstinacy of the inhabitants (Cortes 1974; Flores 2001b).

Angarian is said to presuppose a pre-Hispanic kingdom in Pangasinan (Flores 2001b) but it is still debatable in the absence of archaeological and historical evidence although local folklore speaks about kings in the mythic past (Fansler 1921; Nelmidia 1982). In connection with this, local historians have propagated the existence of two kingdoms (*Census of the Philippine Islands...1918* 1920; Pulido 1936 as cited in Flores 2007; Velasquez 1957; Muñoz 1990; Basa 1997). The “Kingdom of Pangasinan” is said to be located on the coast while the “Kingdom of Caboloan” is said to be found in the interior with its center at the present-day San Carlos City (formerly Binalatongan) (Flores 2001b; 2007). These two kingdoms were said

to be interdependent economically. There is no doubt that the former is located at Lingayen but the reference on the latter is rather uncertain.

Based on thin evidence, local historians had assumed that Caboloan was the name of the interior settlement and that Pangasinan originally refers to the coast and through Spanish colonial administrative labelling, the term came to apply to the inland plains (Cortes 1974 et al.). As suggested earlier, Caboloan means a place where “bolo”, a species of bamboo, is abundant and that the language is also called Caboloan. Cosgaya (1865) suggests that the term was used when this kind of bamboo was thriving in Pangasinan during olden times; he does not speak about any kingdom. Nonetheless, although Caboloan fell into disuse, the name remained in one barangay in Urdaneta, now a city in the eastern part of the province, which had been reclaimed from the forest and established as a town in 1858 (Castro et al. 1970; Cortes 1990). It is also the name of a barangay in the towns of Sta. Maria, southwest of Urdaneta, and San Nicolas in the easternmost part of the province adjacent to the province of Nueva Vizcaya. These do not imply that a kingdom really exists by that name but this fact confirms the idea of Caboloan as name of a place in the interior deserving of a deeper archival investigation. Devoid of its Western connotation, a Pangasinan “kingdom” in the coast is no other than a “panarian” ruled by an “ari” (king, chief) that is situated in Lingayen. Lingayen would be able to consolidate its position over other coastal chiefdoms along the gulf.

Going back to the tales mentioned before, these reveal the interethnic connection of Pangasinan chiefdoms on the coast with the Ilocano traders, and later on their migration to the place. This, however, is not limited to the Ilocanos but also extends to the Zambals, their kindred in the hills and mountains, the roaming bands of hunters and gatherers in the nearby Zambales mountains, the Chinese and the Japanese. These diverse ties would intensify as Pangasinan chiefdoms would participate in the international trade.

The multi-ethnic nexus: Pangasinan in the long-distance trade

Pangasinan chiefdoms grew in response to the demand from interior settlements of goods coming from China or Japan and other

neighboring countries and in response to the demand of these foreign countries for goods coming from these interior communities. This transnational traffic of goods brought with it migration and settlement of peoples among Pangasinenses such as the Ilocanos.

Pending archaeological evidence to support this, the interaction between Pangasinense and Ilocanos that could parallel the pre-colonial relationship between Ilocanos and Igorots (Azurin 1995) is recorded in the Pangasinan language. Assuming that “ili” is an Ilocano word shared among other Northern Philippine languages, which today means “town”, three cognates of this word imply that Ilocanos prior to the arrival of the Spaniards had started living with the original settlers. For instance, “sancaili” means a foreigner while “nanguili” is a pilgrim while “manangcaili” refers to someone who tends to the needs of a foreigner (Cosgaya 1865); all these suggest the arrival of newcomers. But the entry of “cailian” into Pangasinan vocabulary to call a person or persons living in and belonging to a particular locality (“cabecera”) under an anacbanua (Flores 2006; Cosgaya 1865) hints at the changing configuration of Pangasinan society in that the newcomers had become residents and accepted members of the community but still limited in ways dictated by the anacbanua who are the original settlers of the place. It might help to say that “ili” in itself had no meaning in the language but it is unsettling to state that “inili”, according to old folks, refers to the natives of a town (Cosgaya 1865).

Although Bolinao is home to the Zambals, the area deserves to be studied extensively in the context of early Pangasinan-Zambal relations. Strategically located facing the South China Sea, it is a gateway no doubt for people coming from the sea with the Balingasay River serving as the conduit for transportation and trade to the interior. The genetic and linguistic relationship between the Pangasinenses and the Zambals could unravel the ties that bind these two peoples deeper and more ancient than the reckoning of Andres Malong who was able to gather among his forces the Zambal people in Bolinao and Masinloc – one leader was his relative – during the revolt of 1660-61.

It is a mistake to assume that Bolinao along with other towns in the westernmost part of the province did not participate in the growing commerce in the Lingayen coast and the interior areas

(Flores 2001b). Archaeological excavations 200 meters north of the Balingasay River in 1964 and 1966 reveal a former burial site with graves rich in locally-made jars, some trade ware potteries, iron implements, dental ornamentation in gold, other gold ornaments, Chinese coins, beads, shell, stone and bone objects dated to be around the 14th to the 15th centuries A.D. or earlier (Legaspi 1974). That the Bolinao people were in contact with the Chinese was attested to by Juan de Salcedo when arriving in Bolinao on 22 May 1572 he saw a Chinese junk moored on the shore and was able to find out that a native chief was captured to be brought to China and to be sold there as slave (San Agustin [1698] 1998). That the use of gold was prevalent among them as in the case of Pangasinan chiefly societies is shown in the payment of 28 taes of gold by the Burinao (Bolinao) chieftain Siac to Martin de Goiti on 9 December 1572 as tribute to the Spanish king (Santos 2004).

The widespread use of gold as an article for trade or as the medium of exchange among coastal and interior chiefdoms is shown in a mourning custom among Pangasinenses. A bereaved should wear a gold chain around the neck (Cortes 1974). Gold was extracted through panning at the Agno River in Asingan and San Manuel (Ibid.). Pangasinan vocabulary had a lot of terms about gold and its various grades (Cosgaya 1865; Fernandez 2009). The search for the source of this gold in the Benguet Mountains might have impelled the ancestors of Ibalois who are themselves Pangasinenses to migrate into the highlands that eventually differentiated them from their kin in the lowlands (Canilao 2008; 2009; Fernandez 2009). Migration to the mountains and later on settlement would intensify as Pangasinan polities would engage in international trade due to the increasing demands for gold (Reid 1999 and Miksic 2008 as cited in Canilao 2009). Nonetheless, Pangasinenses and the Ibalois maintained contacts through intermarriage, alliances and trade (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985; Prill-Brett et al 1998; Picpican 2003; Prill-Brett 2009). The increasing demands for gold, hence the gold trade, happened upon the discovery or introduction of techniques in gold extraction perhaps after 1225. In 1225, according to Chao Ju-kua, gold was one of the principal goods the Chinese traded with people from Mai perhaps including Li-yin-tung or Lingayen.

Equally important to gold are the forest products in the interior that were the products of trading relationships with hunters and foragers such as the Negrito. Expert hunters, the Negritos roam the wild forest, and in folklore accounts, inhabited the forest in Asingan, an eastern Pangasinan town (Castro et al. 1970). The demand on deerskins made them a reliable source because this game is abundant in Pangasinan wilds. As late as 1618, a report states that 60,000 to 80,000 heads of deer were killed annually in Pangasinan (Iwao 1943). The pelts were then sold to Chinese and Japanese merchants who would profit much when they export these to Japan. The traffic on this product prompted Japanese vessels to visit Agoo to engage in trade with the Pangasinenses. Agoo would earn the sobriquet "el Puerto de Japon" or the Japanese port due to the frequent visits of Japanese maritime traders to this place with some Japanese in the long run probably settling there.

As the international long distance-trade spurred the growth of polities in the south such as Mai (Manila or Mindoro) and Putuan (Butuan), Pangasinan polities would consolidate their position to enable them to participate in the lucrative commerce along the South China Sea. In the area between Lingayen and Bolinao, porcelain was recovered dated to the late Sung or Yuan, while in Tarlac province Yuan or Ming jars were found accidentally or inherited as heirlooms (Beyer 1947). By 1373 A.D., Pangasinan, Malilu (Manila) and Soli (Sulu) would be able to send tributary missions to China. As Feng-chia-hsi-lan in Chinese records, a chief by the name of Kamayin of a Pangasinan polity went to China to head a tributary mission on 23 September 1406 (Scott 1984; 1989).² The profitable trade with the Chinese and the status conferred when one is able to go to China as Wang Ta-yuan's account suggests could have prompted another tributary mission two years later in 1408 led by Chieftain Taymey. Chieftain Liyu the following year, 1409, presented himself before high-ranking Chinese court officials. Then, on 11 December 1411, a state banquet was accorded to the Pangasinan delegation by the Ming court in recognition of the growing cordial relations between the two peoples. While Pangasinan officials were only recognized as "chieftains" instead of "king", a term bestowed on the rulers of Sulu and Maguindanao, by the Ming court (Scott 1984), providing a state banquet to the Pangasinan delegation would indicate the growing

scale and extent of a Pangasinan “state” in the eyes of the Yongle emperor.

Conclusion

By the time Juan de Salcedo “pacified” Pangasinan in the name of Spain on 28 May 1572, Pangasinan polities were still participating in international long-distance trade. Before proceeding to Pangasinan, Salcedo in Bolinao saw a Chinese junk. As Pangasinan people were exposed to foreign traders, they welcomed and treated Salcedo and his men warmly and even asked for priests to instruct them (San Agustin 1998). They presented “quantities of rice, chickens, pigs and numerous gifts of very rich gold” (Ibid., 615).³ Salcedo went further inland via the Agno River and found a settlement called Malimpit (perhaps today’s Barangay Malimpuec in Lingayen) where they met a chieftain who deceived them into drinking a poisoned wine. Having discovered his plan, this chieftain along with his people left Salcedo and returned at dawn the following day with two thousand warriors and surrounded the house where the Spaniards were staying. Fight ensued with more than 500 men dead from the side of the resisting forces. Salcedo left and went plying the coasts until they arrived at Nagcarlan River (possibly the Angalacan River) in Mangaldan/San Fabian vicinity (Keesing 1962). After spending the night there, they went inland on May 30 and there they were attacked by the inhabitants with bows and arrows. The intruders embarked on a journey further north and arrived on the same day at a harbour where they encountered three Japanese ships. A fight broke between the Spaniards and the Japanese; the latter fled with their dead compatriots. The Salcedo party went upstream and found a deserted village and burned houses. The following day they found another settlement located on a high ground. Salcedo and his men scaled the steep location of the village called Atuley and found it to be abandoned. The grandson of the *adelantado* was in awe for he saw well-placed houses and streets, which, according to captured inhabitants, was the capital of the province and that further inland numerous villages could still be found (San Agustin 1998). Atuley was supposed to be an area under Balatao and later Bauang (Keesing

1962). From Atuley, they proceeded to Purao or Balaoang in the littoral areas further north.

Upon the return of the Spaniards to Pangasinan in December 1572, Martin de Goiti encountered chiefly polities along the Agno River and noted that gold was a status symbol among the elite and its pervasiveness among the elite indicated the close commercial contacts between the lowland and the highland peoples within the range of coastal and interior Northwest-Central Luzon. In particular as tributes to the Spanish king, Cabiabbab, a chieftain in an undisclosed part of Pangasinan paid 30 taes for his 40 houses, Sibinaga of Yngayen (Lingayen) 30 taes for his 40 houses, Amanitae of Sagno (Agno) 30 taes for his 30 houses, Mansanuum of Agoo 30 taes for his 30 houses, Balinguinguin of Silac 130 taes for 300 houses he had and other chieftains who gave their tributes in gold (Santos 2004).⁴ The amount of gold paid by these chieftains and the number of houses they own might reveal the social ranking of each chieftain within their network and also the extent of settlement they ruled over. Balinguinguin had the most number of houses and the highest amount of gold paid while Atiban of Gabon had the least amount of gold paid and Palinlingan of Maluguin had the least number of houses. The bias of relying on colonial accounts precludes the recording of resistance whether, for instance, Atiban or Palinlingan resorted to lying or not in order to evade the imposition.

The list of elite tribute payers had more important implications: where are Kasilag and Kasikis, known as kings of Pangasinan and Caboloan respectively? Pangasinan history writers had propagated the names Kasilag and Kasikis as the two kings ruling in the coastal and interior communities contemporaneous with Rajahs Soliman and Lakandula (Pulido 1936 as cited in Flores 2007; Velasquez 1957; Muñoz 1990; Basa 1997) but this contact period account did not cite any of these names. The reason might have been the 1920 source, on which these authors had relied, which mentioned Kasikis – the *Census of the Philippine Islands...in the year 1918*. Without going to the original sources, historical writers with the exception of historians are liable to writing fiction, not history. This situation similarly applies to the search for the founding date of Pangasinan (Cardinoza 2009). Kasikis and Kasilag might be another Urduja or Thalamasin (Cortes 1995). Mythmaking serves a purpose of

uniting a people under a symbol as in the case of Urduja (Flores 2001a) but to get to the bottom of things, especially history, a historian is tasked to get into what really happened. With dearth of historical materials about early Pangasinan, or Philippine, history, a historian has to be an archaeologist ready to use the trowel or the shovel for a dig into Pangasinan's rich precolonial past as delineated here.

ENDNOTES

¹History writers and others had erroneously linked Pangasinan with Thalamasin, a country Fr. Odoric of Pordenone had visited in the second decade of 1300s ignoring the copious notes by Henry Yule (1866) that it might refer to Banjarmasin, a tributary state of Majapahit, in the island of Borneo. It is tempting to associate Thalamasin with Pangasinan because Fr. Odoric of Pordenone tells about how bamboos, to him were trees, were fashioned into almost anything that one cannot fail to connect it with the bamboo cottage industry in San Carlos City (Flores 2007).

²Azurin (2007, 38) wrote that the Chinese name for Pangasinan "Feng-chia-hsi-lan" "might cast doubt on the veracity of the folkloric reference to a place of salt making" and that a research in the Ming annals is necessary to prove that the term signifies a salt-making site. This faulty assertion clings to a preposterous assumption that only outsiders, the Chinese, could validate the meaning of Pangasinan to be genuine and authentic folklore when in fact the Pangasinenses themselves should be the ones to define it.

³About gold, San Agustin (1998: 643) further wrote: "[Martin de Goiti] brought back so much gold that those who saw it claimed he brought into Manila more than twelve thousand taels, both as a tribute to His Majesty as well as what he and his companions gathered since the province was so rich due to the commerce they have with the mountain tribes [los indios serranos] called Zambals and Igorots. These people possess the richest mines throughout the island and take the gold from there so easily that they feel divine providence gave it to them for their preservation. Unfortunately, the take does not reach a tenth of what used to be mined."

⁴Included in the list were Suimaguimo of Sagut along the Pangasinan river, which means Agno, 30 taes for his 30 houses, Calic of Calabaco 15 taes for his 20 houses, Simacasic of Banagua, again near the inlet of Pangasinan river, 30 taes for his 50 houses, Macabcab of Madadan (probably Mangaldan) 10 taes for his 15 houses, Salabac of Agoo near the river Madadan 10 taes for his 75 houses, Palinlingan of Maluquin 5 taes for his 10 houses, Lamboy of Sumian 25 taes for his

40 houses, Marinclin of Baruan 10 taes for his 20 houses, Mablango of Pangayori 10 taes for his 40 houses, Simarayaque and Piquie of Autin 45 taes for their 200 houses, Dumacad of Panpan 28 taes for his 300 houses, Manalaca of Vacayo 8 taes for his 25 houses, Gayos of Lungay in Agoos 40 taes for his 50 houses, Amansainum of Bogue in the valley of Candon 20 taes for his 30 houses, Magayac of Umugan (possibly Umingan) 60 taes for his 140 houses, Amansacay of Potot 150 taes for his 300 houses, Bunaga of Salisay 50 taes for his 200 houses, and Atiban of Gabon (Calasiao) 3 taes for his 30 houses. See Santos 2004.

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