

RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE
OF LUMAD TRIBES
OF MINDANAO
1903-1935

by B. R. Rodil *

Introduction

In written works on the struggles of Filipinos against colonial America, one is lucky to find a single mention of the participation of the tribal peoples of Mindanao. Nothing is written about it in textbooks in Social Studies or in Philippine History, and we are not aware of any comprehensive study being undertaken about it today. This paper attempts to fill this vacuum. This is a product of a modest research on the resistance of the Lumad against the unwanted intervention of colonial America and on the lives of these tribal people.

As a name referring collectively to the indigenous peoples of Mindanao who are distinct from the Bangsa Moro, "Lumad" is fairly recent. Its use requires a brief explanation. At the Founding Congress of Lumad Mindanaw in Kidapawan, Cotabato in June 1986, fifteen out of the estimated eighteen tribes of the non-Muslim indigenous peoples agreed to use the collective name "Lumad."¹ This is a Cebuano word which means indigenous or native. Having no common word with which to call themselves, and since Cebuano was the *lingua franca* they used in their conferences, they readily agreed to adopt the name.

* The original of this paper was written in Pilipino. This English version is largely a translation by Don Pagusara. The author, however, has made revisions in the translation mostly for factual accuracy, and in some instances for style. Quoted passages which, unknown to the translator, were originally in English were accordingly restored.

¹ I was at the Founding Congress of *Lumad Mindanaw* as a resource person. It may be observed in the use of the name Lumad, they did not place much importance on one's being part of a "tribe" or a "sub-tribe". They also made it clear that they are distinct from the Bangsa Moro.

The following ethnolinguistic groups comprise the Lumad: Ata, Bagobo, Banwaon, B'laan, Bukidnon, Higaunon, Mamanwa, Mandaya, Mangguwangan, Mansaka, Subanon, Tagakaolo, T'boli, Tiruray, Manobo and Kalagan. Also excluded from these are indigenous peoples already integrated with the majority population such as the Surigaonons of Surigao, the Butuanons of Butuan, Misamisnons in Misamis Occidental and Oriental, and the Dapitanons in Zamboanga del Norte.

Today, the terms Lumad and Bangsa Moro are recognized by law, as provided for in Republic Act 6734, otherwise known as "An Act Providing for an Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao."² For the purposes of this paper, it will suffice to give a general indication of the various provinces where the different ethnolinguistic groups were settled during the first decade of the 20th century. We will use the present names of the provinces and their respective borders. Although there were only nine provinces in Mindanao³ at the end of the first decade of the 20th century and today there are twenty-two, the general locations of their settlements have not changed much.

The earlier provinces were Agusan, Surigao, Davao, Cotabato, Bukidnon, Misamis, Lanao, Zamboanga and Sulu. The only change has been their partitioning into: Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur; Bukidnon; Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur; Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur; Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao; Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Camiguin; Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur; Zamboanga del Norte,

² R.A. 6734 was signed into law by President Corazon C. Aquino on August 1, 1989. *Bangsa Moro* is found in Art. XI, Sec. 3(2). And what is referred to as Tribal peoples" in Art. XI, Sec. 3(1) is more specifically identified as *Lumad* in Art. XIII, Sec. 8(2). In the plebiscite held on November 19, 1989, only the four provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi opted to become part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

³ We are not concerned here with the political status of the Moro Province (1903-1914) as province. What we are interested in are the five constitutive provincial districts of Davao, Cotabato, Lanao, Zamboanga and Sulu which, with the dissolution of the Moro Province, graduated into regular provinces. As a region predominated by Lumad, the special province of Agusan was originally made of Agusan and Bukidnon.

Zamboanga del Sur; Basilan; Sulu, Tawi-tawi, and the chartered cities of Davao City, Iligan City, Zamboanga City and others.

Let us start from the east and proceed southward.

The *Mamanwas* inhabited the area around Lake Mainit where Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Norte are situated. From Surigao City they would filter down to the east coast, until the Tago River in Surigao del Sur.⁴ Next to the *Mamanwa* were the Mandaya, who had lived along Tago River in Surigao del Sur down to Mati, Davao Oriental; then westward until the head of Agusan River in Agusan del Sur and to Salug River in Davao del Norte.⁵

⁴ Data about the *Mamanwa* are drawn from three sources:

a) *Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901). Volume II, Part II, pp.14, 14.

b) Dr. David P. Barrows, "Population", *Census of the Philippine Islands*, 1903 (Washington: United States Bureau of the Census, 1905). Four Volumes. Volume 1, pp. 411-585. The article has three sub-headings: first, "History of the Population", 411-491; second, "Characteristics of the Civilized or Christian Tribes", 492-531; third, "Characteristics of the Non-Christian Tribes", 532-585. A chart with the heading of "Classification of Non-Christian Tribes" is on pp. 469-477.

c) Letter of Father Pastells, S.J. to his Father Provincial, Father Juan Capell, S.J., Manila, April 20, 1887. This is one of a collection of letters published in *Philippine Studies*, Volume 19, Number 4 (October) 1971, pp. 639-724 entitled "The Christianization of Davao Oriental: Excerpts from Jesuit Missionary Letters", by Jose S. Arcilla, S.J. The different indigenous groups in Mindanao are treated in pp. 651-658.

The above documents shall henceforth be referred to as ARPC, Barrows, and Pastells respectively.

⁵ ARPC-1900, Vol. I, Part II, p.13; Barrows, p.473; Pastells, p.653

In Davao Oriental and Davao del Norte would be found the *Mansaka*,⁶ *Mangguwangan*,⁷ and the *Dibabawon*,⁸ all close kin of the Mandaya. At the lower portion of Davao Oriental, particularly at Cabo de San Agustin, dwelt *Manobo*⁹ and *Tagakaolo*¹⁰ residents. In the island of Samal, which is now part of Davao del Norte,

⁶The Mansaka do not appear in the listing of Pastells. Barrows mentioned them but hastened to add that the correct name of the tribe is Mandaya. In his study, *The Manobos of Mindanao*. Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences, Volume XIII, First Memoir (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931), p. 6, John M. Garvan stresses that they do not constitute a distinct tribe from the Manobo and Mandaya; language-wise, Mansaka and Mandaya are sisters. Author of *The Wild Tribes of Davao District, Mindanao*. Field Museum of Natural History, Publication 170, Anthropological Series, Vol. XII, No.2 (Chicago, U.S.A., 1913), Fay Cooper-Cole points out on p. 165 that Mansaka signifies people inhabiting the forest clearings and are also Mandaya.

Garvan's work and Cole's study shall henceforth be referred to as Garvan-1931 and Cole-1913.

⁷Pastells merely said that the Manguangas or people of the forests were perpetual enemies of the Manobo and the Mandaya of Agusan, also of the Muslims of Hijo and of the Ata. A mere mention is made of this in ARPC, including a little information on where they live. For Barrows, they are also Mandaya. According to Garvan, their blood carries the Negrito strain.

⁸Other variations: Debaon for Garvan; Gibabaun for Barrows and also part of the Mandaya tribe, and Divavaoan for Cole and Mandaya as well.

⁹The Manobos were the most dispersed geographically. There was a large concentration of them along the entire stretch of Agusan River; a smaller group lived in the vicinity of Cape San Agustin; another large concentration inhabit South Bukidnon; a small group dwelt in Davao del Sur, still another in Sultan Kudarat, and another large concentration inhabited Cotabato. We shall not include in our discussion the Manuvu of Dr. Arsenio Manuel.

¹⁰The Tagakaolo are mentioned in ARPC, p. 13; in Pastells, p.654; by Barrows, p.476, and by Garvan, pp. 7-8. Cole has five pages about them. Barrows, Garvan and Cole all suspect that *olo* refers to the abode of this people at the head of the river, distinct from the Tagabawa where *bawa* refers to downstream.

resided the *Isamal*¹¹ who, in the accounts of Spanish missionaries, were a mixture of Samal and Mandaya, but not Muslim. In the western part of Davao del Norte approaching Davao City there lived the *Ata*¹², and from their territory downward to Davao del Sur would be found the *Guiangga*, *Tagabawa* and *Bagobo*. There were also Moros in Davao but they settled along the shoreline of Davao Gulf. More specifically, out of the seventeen communities noted in 1870, the Moros lived by themselves in seven and intermingled with the Mandaya, Bisaya, Bagobo and B'laan in the last ten.¹³

Let us return to the north. In Agusan del Norte and Agusan del Sur, especially along the entire length of the Agusan River, there was a great concentration of *Manobo* people. There were also the *Banwaon*¹⁴ in Agusan del Sur. The western part of Agusan del Norte was the starting point of the *Bukidnon*¹⁵ habitat, crossing the north of Bukidnon and the entire stretch of Misamis Oriental, up to Iligan City. To the southern part of Bukidnon the Manobo inhabitants formed a bridge settlement towards the

¹¹Within the context of Davao, we first heard of the Samal when Don Jose Oyanguren conquered the place in the mid-19 century. These people reportedly helped him against the Moros. According to Pastells, they were of mixed Mandaya and Muslim blood, p. 655; Samales is the name used in ARPC, p. 13, and Samal in Barrows, p. 475. We have no idea when "Isamal" first appeared in documents. What we do know is that Henry Otley Beyer used it in 1918: H. Otley Beyer, "The Non-Christian People of the Philippines", Census of the Philippines Islands, Volume II, Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1921, pp. 907-957.

¹²The Ata according to various authors: Pastells, p. 653, Atas, Itaas o Ataas, atas meaning dwelling in the upper portions; merely mentioned in ARPC, p. 13; Barrows, p. 469, Ata is the real tribal identity; very little known about them, said Cole. Garvan is not clear.

¹³Data taken from Estadística de Davao, 1870-71 (?). Bureau of Records Management, Manila.

¹⁴For Barrows, p. 469, the correct tribe is Manobo; for Garvan, p. 5, they seem to be an extension of the Bukidnon.

¹⁵Fay Cooper-Cole has an entire book on them, *The Bukidnon of Mindanao*. Fieldiana: Anthropology Volume 46, Chicago Natural History Museum, 1956. Did the research in 1910. Mentioned in the Preface that these people referred to themselves as Higaonan, although they were better known as Bukidnon, the name given to them by the Bisayans.

Manobo of Cotabato, and the Ata-Manobo around Davao City.¹⁶ There were no Lumad living in Lanao except some Higaunon (or Bukidnon) in Iligan City. At the Bukidnon-Lanao border area, particularly in the present municipalities of Talakag and Pangantukan, there were also *Maranao*¹⁷ residents.

Aside from the Manobo and the B'laan, the *T'boli*¹⁸ (South Cotabato) and Tiduray or *Tiruray*¹⁹ were also Cotabato inhabitants. It was also in Cotabato where the Maguindanao and the Iranun peoples were concentrated, especially in Maguindanao province. In South Cotabato and Davao del Sur were to be found Sangil settlements.

The entire Zamboanga peninsula, which now consists of the three provinces of Zamboanga del Norte and Sur and Misamis Occidental, has been referred to as the traditional territory of the *Subanon*²⁰, although Zamboanga del Sur has long been home to the Maguindanaon, Iranun and Sama, and the western part of Zamboanga del Norte, especially where the municipalities of Siocon, Sibuco and Siraway are situated, has become Tausug and Sama homeland. From the Sama and Subanon a mix has emerged, the Kalibugan ethnolinguistic group. They also consider themselves as Moro.

As a whole, the Lumad in the first decade of the 20th century lived in territories that now correspond to the seventeen provinces.

¹⁶This is a much larger group compared to the one mentioned above.

¹⁷Bukidnon tradition says that the Bukidnon and the Maranaw originated from two brothers, Balaoy at Belen. See the book of Mardonio M. Lao, *Bukidnon in Historical Perspective*, Musuan, Bukidnon: Publications Office, Central Mindanao University, 1965, especially Appendix K - An English translation of the "Klikat Hu nga Etaw Dini ta Mindanao", pp. 256-264.

¹⁸Tagabili o Taga-bulu in Pastells, p. 655; Tagabelies in ARPC, p. 13; Tagablis for Barrows, although he stresses that the real name of the tribe is Tagabili.

¹⁹Tedurayes o Terurayes in the list of Pastells, p. 655; Tirurayes in ARPC, p. 13 and Tiruray in Barrows, p. 477.

²⁰ARPC, p. 13.

No Moro mixed with the Lumad in Agusan, Surigao, Misamis and Camiguin. But they did in Davao, Bukidnon, Cotabato, Lanao del Norte and Zamboanga. Based on the 1903 and 1918 censuses, it is clear that the Lumads were not a minority in the provinces of Agusan, Bukidnon and Davao.²¹ If the Christians were a majority in Surigao, Misamis and Zamboanga, this had its beginnings during the Spanish period when the colonialists maintained their bases in these places and it was here that the missionaries attracted several natives, Lumad and Moro alike, to be baptized. In Cotabato, the Moro were clearly in the majority.

An Overview of Indigenous Resistance in Mindanao and Sulu, 1903-1935

The colonialists happened to be conscientious reporters of their accomplishments and one of the most detailed accounts of the past are the official reports of the Philippine Constabulary (PC). Foremost among these is *The Story of the Philippine Constabulary, 1904-1935* written by Harold H. Elarth.²² He was a veteran of what they proudly described as the Mindanao Campaigns. He started as a lieutenant and towards the end of his story was already a colonel. His book is a collection of reports from different parts of the Archipelago. Those about Mindanao contain his own experiences, or those of his friends and comrades in arms in the Constabulary. Although the bias was obvious in his write-ups, one can discern the role of their adversaries, whom they frequently engaged in combat. They themselves can serve as mirror in our analysis of the details we need.

²¹The Governor General noted in 1916 that the Census of 1918 was more reliable than that of 1903. In 1918, Agusan had a total population of 65,000. More than one half of this or 35,000 is listed under the Pagan classification. In Bukidnon, the total was 66,000. More than one half of this or 41,800 was listed as Pagan. In Davao, the total was 102,800. More than one half or 61,803 was classified as pagan.

²²Harold H. Elarth, Lt. Col., Ed., *The Story of the Philippine Constabulary, 1904-1935*, (L.A., California: Globe Printing Co., 1949).

The Philippine Constabulary was organized by the Americans in 1901 purportedly to maintain peace and order. Its regular constables consisted of indigenous Filipinos,²³ but its officers were all Americans, and remained so until 1935. In this matter, the colonialists were able to maintain their interests without having to employ Army Regulars or American Volunteers.

Let us first look at the summary of the events from 1903 to 1935, then discuss each of the more significant incidents of resistance. In the first decade alone of American occupation in Mindanao, until as late as 1914, there were already fierce engagements against the local people, an eloquent indication of the intensity of the indigenous peoples' resistance in Mindanao and Sulu against the new colonizers. There were hundreds of raids directed against forts and 26 uprisings occurred which, on account of their magnitude, the Americans categorized as "military campaigns." Most of the engagements took place in Sulu, Lanao and Cotabato. But uprisings also erupted in Davao, Agusan, Bukidnon, Misamis and Zamboanga.²⁴ The second decade was not as intense although sporadic fightings also occurred.²⁵

But in the third decade, especially towards 1928, the PC was busy again. Earlier, until 1914, Americans troops were very much involved in the engagements. But as soon as a sufficient number

²³ The Philippine Constabulary in Mindanao in 1905 was composed of 779 men coming from the different tribes all over the islands, as follows:

Visayans	252	Moros	315	Manobos	1
Tagalogs	17	Samboangans	112		
Ilocanos	4	Mandaya	39		
Ilongos	2	Subanos	14		
Malays	1	Bagobos	11		
East Indians		6 Yakans	5		

Data drawn from *Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1905, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906. Appendix A - Annual Report of the Chief of the Philippine Constabulary is in Part 3, pp. 27-129, and the distribution of enlisted personnel, p. 126

²⁴ Elarth the Story of Philippine Constabulary. p. 84

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 103, 119.

of Philippine Scouts had enlisted, it was they and the PC contingents who were employed to confront the uprisings. The years 1931-1935 went into the records of the Constabulary as "The Mindanao Pacification Campaign." There were also some eruptions in the Agusan area, aside from the usual hot spots — Sulu, Lanao and Cotabato.²⁶

In 1935, Elarth reported, Moro casualties lay between 15,000 to 20,000. ²⁷ They had no compiled statistics for the Lumad, but from Elarth's book we are able to collect no less than twenty nine incidents or engagements involving them, although details lacked consistency: Manobo (11 engagements); Higaunon (4); Tiduray (3); Bukidnon (2); Bagobo (2); Mandaya (2); Mansaka (1); Tagakaolo (1); B'laan (1). ²⁸ What we shall discuss are the significant cases of Lumad resistance: (a) the uprising that revolved around the assassination of Governor Bolton in Davao in 1906; (b) the Tungud movement that began in Davao and spread to Agusan and Bukidnon in 1908-1910; (c) the Subanon uprising in 1909-1914; (d) the rebellion of the Langkat in Cotabato in 1926-1927; and (e) the response of the Bagobo to the encroachment of the Japanese into their lands in 1918-1935.

Uprising In Davao, 1906-1908; Governor Bolton Was Slain

It was on June 6, 1906 when Governor Edward C. Bolton of Davao was killed. His head was cleaved by Datu Mungalayan, a wellknown Tagakaolo chieftain from Malalag, now a municipality of Davao del Sur. Mungalayan was then a recent appointee of Bolton as deputy chief of Tribal Ward No. 6 of the Tagakaolo, and he was to be responsible for the settlement of the Manobo people. Also slain with Bolton was Benjamin Christian, an American

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 129, 131.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 84.

²⁸ Summary of all engagements scattered in the book of Elarth, from pp. 83 - 132

planter. After a few months, on August 3, 1906, Mangalayan was also killed.²⁹

At first glance, there is no rebellion in the story. But investigation conducted by the authorities revealed some unexpected angles. But before we proceed let us first clarify the meaning of Tribal Ward No. 6.³⁰

Davao was one of the five districts constituting the Moro Province created in 1903. The others were Cotabato, Lanao, Zamboanga and Sulu. Agusan and Bukidnon were made the Special Province of Agusan because the majority of the people living there were Lumad. Surigao and Misamis were made regular provinces where most of the citizens were Christians. The status of special province was viewed by the colonial government as a preliminary step that would prepare the Moro and the Lumad to be citizens of a regular unit of the government's political structure. It must be pointed out here that the Americans considered them uncivilized, thus, the Tribal Ward was a step towards civilizing them.

There were six Tribal Wards in Davao: No. 1 was among the Ata, No. 2 the Bagobo, No. 3 the Guianggas, No. 4 the Mandaya, No. 5 the Moros and No. 6 the Tagakaolo. There were eighteen in Cotabato, thirteen in Lanao, nine in Sulu, and five in Zamboanga, and the sub-districts³¹ numbered fifty-six. The law establishing the Tribal Ward also provided for the district governor, like Bolton, to appoint his deputy or representative for every Ward. As much as possible, the appointee was a chieftain acknowledged as leader by his members. The district governor was also authorized

²⁹Annual Report of the Philippine Commission, 1906, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907, Part 2. A synopsis of the official report of the Governor of Davao is on pp. 298-301, containing the result of the investigation conducted by the PC regarding the slaying of Governor Edward Bolton and Mr. Benjamin Christian.

³⁰Ibid., Part I, pp. 369-372. The list of Tribal Wards in Mindanao are on pp. 370-372, including the identity of each tribe, the names of their respective chiefs as well as the deputy and the capital. A substantial discussion of the Tribal Ward and the Tribal Ward Court is to be found in *ibid.*, 1907, Part I pp. 392-396.

³¹ARPC-1906, Part I, p. 372

to create additional sub-tribal wards whenever necessary.³²

Governor Bolton was just beginning to establish Tribal Wards when he was killed. The investigation unearthed that on February 22 of that year, he had assembled the known members of the various tribes in Malalag, and formed many Tribal Wards. It was not at all hard for the Tagakaolo, Manobo, B'laan and Kalagan people who were close neighbors. He also induced them, including the Moro, Bagobo, and Mandaya, to permanently transfer their respective communities to the coastal areas and to plant abaca, coconuts and other crops, instead of practicing *kaingin* which was good only for one harvest of palay and camote. He explained that too many trees were destroyed by the *kaingin*.

He claimed to have earned the admiration and loyalty of the tribes because he went to their places alone and unarmed. He was able to persuade a Tagakaolo chieftain, Balawag, to descend from the mountains and to build his community near the shores of Malalag. In fact, in that February 22 conference, he appointed Balawag and Mangalayan to be the leader of the Tagakaolo Tribal Ward and his deputy, respectively, the latter being tasked to directly supervise one of the Manobo communities.³³

For a while, the situation among the Tribal Wards was manageable. But later, the planters said, tribals expressed their misgivings to the planters of Bulatakay, Padada, Malalag and Kibulan. Rumors had it that certain Americans would be killed, including the Governor and Mr. McCullough, a planter in Kibulan and the governor's real assistant who directly supervised the newly created Tribal Ward of the Tagakaolos. The rumors spread and snowballed. Now all Americans from Digos to Kibulan were to be assassinated. The planters immediately reported this to the authorities.³⁴

³²Ibid., p. 369

³³Ibid., Part 2, p. 298

³⁴Ibid., pp. 298-299

It was also learned that a tribal by the name of Simbanan had been doing healing work there for two years and this included the distribution of *anting-anting* or charms which would help ward off bad luck and cure illnesses, and so on. He was friend to both Balawag and Mangalayan and had tremendous influence over them. According to the investigator, he strongly suspected it was Simbanan who instigated Mangalayan to assassinate the Americans.³⁵

The testimonies of other tribal people revealed that Balawag, Simbanan, Mangalayan and his relatives and friends and many other tribals as well, and Sulutan and Kawag from Digos held a conference at Mangalayan's place at Daul. There they agreed that Mangalayan would kill and rob the Americans in Kibulan, Balawag would do his work in Malalag, and Sulutan and Kawag in Digos. It turned out that not all of the Lumad people there were agreeable to the plan. Those who opposed it conducted their own conference and swore to defend some of the planters.³⁶

More angles surfaced in the investigation. Five to eight months had passed when, it was said, a Moro fanatic named Sumalugpun initiated a dance in Sumlug, now barrio in the municipality of Lupon in Davao Oriental. Moro chieftains Datu Compao and Datu Tomaras learned the dance and propagated it, and soon it became fashionable among the Lumad in the Tagum River Sumalugpun initiated a dance in Sumlug, now barrio in the area down to Padada and Kibulan. From scattered reports the investigators were able to piece together a mystery behind the dance.³⁷

Compao and Tomaras were said to have discovered a new god called Lavi. It was believed that as soon as it arrived, Compao would be proclaimed king of the Moros, there would be bountiful harvests from the farms, the bolos and the axes would work the fields by themselves while the Moro people sat and watched, the

³⁵ Ibid., p. 299 73

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

fish catch from hook and line would be plentiful even if the poles were short, and illnesses would vanish, and so on. But all these blessings from Lavi would only be forthcoming as reward in exchange for the donations given in abundance. Those who did not give anything would receive nothing. And Lavi would pluck out the tongue of whoever would tell on the Americans. Finally, the Bisayans would be slaves to the Moros and the Americans and Spaniards would be banished or killed.³⁸

Compao and Tomaras were reportedly triumphant at Sumlug. The two sent word to Datu Macibelan of Lepandi (Lapanday?) to come with all his friends to meet them immediately with plenty of tribute, to meet with Lavi and learn the dance. The datu came with nine of his friends. They were taught the dance and afterwards Compao and Tomaras ordained them as Tataiyan (preachers). They built a school in Lepandi. Their students from Sarangani learned the dance and in turn taught those from Daron, Digos and Padada, who thereafter propagated it among the people. They received abundant contributions and half of these went to Compao and Tomaras. The B'laan and Tagakaolo also arrived, all bearing gifts. But the dance did not reach the southern part of Padada.³⁹ The nine people mentioned above testified that Compao did mention something about Governor Bolton's imminent death.⁴⁰

When Governor Bolton learned of the dance and its rapid spread, he personally went to Sumlug. He brought Compao and Tomaras back with him to Davao but did not imprison them. He allowed them instead to freely roam around the town and continue with their gift receiving activities. From there Bolton visited the place of Balawag and stayed for the night. The next day, he proceeded with Mr. Benjamin Christian to Mangalayan's house/place and also stayed overnight. The following day they all visited Simbanan. Mangalayan had his two brothers with him. Before sundown they passed by a fisherman's hut and Mangalayan and

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

his two brothers tarried awhile to chat with the folk. The story goes that about thirty minutes later, Mangalayan arrived, still with his two brothers, and was heard to have said: "I have regained my manhood; I just killed the two Americans."⁴¹ After a few days, Mangalayan and Datu Dauda, along with several Lumads from different tribes, looted the store of a certain Mr. McCullough.⁴²

It took the authorities two years to capture Bolton's killers and the other people involved in the killing. At this time a certain Datu Andas posed as some kind of god and induced his compatriots to follow him. They did, but abandoned him after a month⁴³ when he was captured and imprisoned. It was not mentioned in the report what Anda's connection was with the assassination of Bolton, but it is important to note that during the first decade of American rule in Davao there were many other incidents showing the indigenous people's opposition to foreigners staying in their lands. On January 31, 1903, for instance, four Mandayas slew William Sprague, a planter in Mapagba, the first American to fall on the hands of the Lumad. Since then, several other planters and their employees were reportedly slain.⁴⁴

Shortly after the Bolton incident, the authorities began the search for the culprits. In the raid at the house of Simbanan, one of his followers, Macumpa, was killed. The victim's father, Cadui, swore to avenge his son's death. His first victim would have been a certain Mr. Harvey, also a planter, but it was he who was killed instead by the PC.⁴⁵ In 1907, a Bagobo named Manga, was shot dead in prison by the PC. Earlier, Manga and his 27 followers had

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 299-300

⁴² Ibid., p. 300.

⁴³ Elarth, *ibid.*, p. 89

⁴⁴ Shinzo Hayase, "Tribes, Settlers, and Administrators on a Frontier: Economic Development and Social Change in Davao, Southeastern Mindanao, The Philippines" 1899-1941. Ph.D. Dissertation, Murdoch University, Western Australia, 1984, p. 98

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 104-105

been arrested for refusing to pay taxes and to work in a road-building project.⁴⁶

The Tungud: A Religious Movement in Davao, 1908-1910

Initiated by a Manobo named Meskinan (Mapakla in real life), this movement started in 1908 among the Manobos along Libuganon River in Davao. Stricken with cholera, so the symptoms indicated, and believed by relatives to be at the brink of certain death, he was abandoned by these same relatives. But after three days, he showed up, alive and well. He claimed that he was cured with the help of a benevolent diwata. More was added to the element of mystery since he trembled each time he finished telling his story. For his relatives, was sure proof that he was possessed by a good spirit. The story spread and by the time this reached the River Mawab, Meskinan had been transformed from an ordinary baylan to a god. He neither ate nor drank anymore.⁴⁷

Not long after, messages arrived in Mawab from Meskinan himself: The world would end after a month and the diwatas of the tribe would no longer assist the people wearing black. Meanwhile, he took it upon himself to help the people save themselves from the collapsing world. He ordered the following:⁴⁸

1. All chickens and pigs were to be killed at once; otherwise these would devour their owners.
2. No more crops were to be planted.
3. A good building for religious purposes was to be erected in each settlement.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 105 73

⁴⁷ Garvan, p. 229.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 230

4. In each settlement there was to be one priest, who must have received his power from Meskinan himself, and several assistants who were to help propagate the news and to perform the prescribed services in distant 'churches.'
5. The services were to consist of praying to Meskinan, performing sacred dances in his honor, and forwarding offerings to him.

The priests would be called *punoan*, or leaders, and the assistants, *taytayan*, which means bridge.⁴⁹ From the Manobo of Libuganon, the Tungud rebellion spread to the nearby Mandaya, to the Mangguwangan, to the Dibabawon, and to the Manobo at the head of Agusan River, even among those who had become Christians.⁵⁰

John M. Garvan, who investigated the Tungud movement from Compostela in Davao immediately noticed the changes in the lives of the Manobos and Mandayas. Lack of food was severe, since no one planted anything from the time the movement started. The people relied on root crops like *camote* and *gabi*. They lived in terror at all times, especially at night. But the best thing that happened was the cessation of quarrels and animosities. In the past, no Mangguwangan would visit Compostela but now they even did their worship there. Some even reached the remote places of the Mandayas who otherwise were their traditional enemies. The Dibabawons from Salug and Libuganon could, without fear, freely travel to Karaga, Kasauman and Manay and return unscathed. This was because God or Magbabaya allegedly forbade enmity and revenge.⁵¹

Unknown to the people, explained Garvan, religious rites were performed with deceit. The Punoan supposedly spoke to the Magbabaya, but in truth, one of his assistants would make his

⁴⁹ Ibid., Notes # 6 at 7.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 230-231

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 231.

presence felt in different voices which the *punoan* alone could understand. Aside from the regular contributions, which included cherished spears, bows and arrows and bolos, commercialization attended the rites. One could become a *punoan* or a *taytayan* for a fee of P30.00. Images and symbols were also on sale, or kerchiefs and what nots advertized as some form of cure-all for illnesses and other things.⁵²

The movement began to dissipate in December 1910. Nothing came of the supposed meltdown of the earth which had been postponed several times. The deceptions of the *punoans* and their *taytayans* were also exposed. Hunger stalked the land; nothing more could be spared for contributions, and it seemed that earlier forewarnings by the non-believing Bisayans had at last hit the mark. The frustrations of the people gradually turned into intense anger. Later, the Mandayas sent word that they were going to attack the Agusan people; the Manobos would raid the Dibabawon, and the Mangguwangan would terrorize the Mandayas in Tagum. The incidents never happened. What prevented the reign of terror was the existence of a government at the head portion of Agusan River, Garvan thought.⁵³

For Garvan, the Tungud movement was a movement of deceit and nothing more.⁵⁴ However, Fay Cooper-Cole, who was then undertaking research with the Mandaya near Mati, saw another angle. According to him, the movement reached the Mayo Bay area, but it hardly had any effect at all. It was the Moro dwellers in the place who saw an opportunity to propagate their plan to expel the American planters there, including the Christians. They were in an angry mood and rather restive then. They invited the Mandaya leader to the house of Moro Pandita supposedly where the *diwata* would make an appearance. And so the following night, the *diwata* appeared in a dark room and exhorted the people to rise up in arms and annihilate the Christians in the

⁵² Ibid., pp. 235-238.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 239.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 235-239.

place. A mixture of awe and confusion settled on the Mandayas who said that they were in fact ready to join the Moros. However, they were discovered by an American planter. Unknown to the Mandayas, Cole explained, the spirit was actually the son of the Pandita who appeared with his head and chest wrapped with white gauze draped with fireflies. Indeed, it was an awesome apparition in the dark. As soon as he would enter the room, the house would suddenly shake. Another brother did the shaking.⁵⁵

The official report of Lieut. Allen Walker, who took over from Governor Bolton, contained more details. He reported to General Bliss, Governor of the Moro Province, that in June 1908, 37 Moros were arrested by the PC in Mati due to alleged participation in the dances of Lavi, and that it was Datu Silatan and Pandita Latibao who had induced them. The two Moros were said to have told the people that they were serving the real god who would help them kill their enemies and who would help them plant and harvest without having to work. What they reported as their true god was actually a little child who was made to wear a transparent dress, fastened at the neck and waist to keep fireflies flying around inside. The god would make an appearance during moonless nights. The Moros and Mandayas in Mati were encouraged to dance and chant the child's name and kill the officials of the government. The 37 people mentioned earlier were part of the 44 who were said to have sworn to kill the municipal officials of Mati and other American planters.⁵⁶

The dance initiated by Compao and Tomaras was very similar to the dance of Lavi associated with the names of Datu Silatan and Pandita Latibao. The same is true of their aim to expel or annihilate the Americans and the Christians of the place. There was also the characteristic inducement of the indigenous peoples from different tribes to join with them. But there was no concrete evidence that could connect the two Moro groups. Perhaps we have yet to

⁵⁵ Fay Cooper-Cole. *The Wild Tribes of the Davao District*, pp. 179- 180.

⁵⁶ Peter Gordon Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland, 1899-1920*, (Quezon City: Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, University of the Philippines System, 1977).

discover such a relationship. But it must be noted that Sumlug and Mati are not far apart, and neither are the dates of the two stories. Cole added that the Tungud movement reached the border of Davao and Bukidnon. At this time, it was said, Governor Lewis happened to be urging the natives to build new communities over those which were recently abandoned. That was when he realized that this was part of a big movement.⁵⁷

Why did we consider the Tungud as an example of the Lumad's resistance against the Americans and their local agents? Because this was not the first such incident in Mindanao. It will be recalled that in a letter from Baganga by Pablo Pastells, S.J., to his superiors on May 2, 1877, he mentioned a reaction from the populace towards his efforts to build a *reduccion* among the Mandaya. The people told of an old woman who descended from heaven, and who exhorted them to return to the mountains after destroying their *kaingin* and killing their livestock. In the forest they could live without having to eat for a year, they were told, and they would all ascend to heaven together, body and soul. And if they would not obey her commandment, she would send soldiers in a sea vessel to Davao, and another one to Surigao, who would cut their heads off and take their children to Manila, there to be made into slaves for the Sultan of Jolo. Because of this, Pastells said, most of the Mandayas (in the *reduccion*) went back to the forests.⁵⁸

The Subanon Uprising in Zamboanga, 1909-1914

Elarth was Deputy Governor of Zamboanga and before long, within about a month, he had visited the tribes there, one after the other. He completed this in three weeks. But now he sensed

⁵⁷ Cole, *The Bukidnon of Mindanao*, p. 118.

⁵⁸ Letter of Father Pablo Pastells to his Father Superior, Juan Capell, S.J., Baganga, (2 May 1877), in *Philippine Studies*, pp. 670-673.

something strange about the people; they seemed to be in a fighting mood. He noticed that as the dialogue continued, the warriors became more restless, and he could hear shouts. Noting this, he conveyed to the Timuays that, under the circumstances, it was difficult to continue with the conference and that it would be best if the warriors positioned themselves some distance away. The four Timuays briefly convened and then ordered the men to move back, and they obeyed.⁵⁹

Leading fifteen constables, Lieut. Elarth then conducted a conference among the Timuays (chieftains) of the Subanons in the mountains of Malindang, inland from Dipolog Bay. This was supposed to be a peace conference between two big feuding Subanon groups. But the tension was great. A thousand men were present and they did not like the government's intervention.⁶⁰ The constabulary were positioned on a hill, in rally formation, firearms fully charged and with fixed bayonets. The soldiers, however, seemed relaxed. Some were conversing among themselves, others were smoking their cigarettes. One step away stood Elarth, in front of whom the Timuays were seated. Here they held their conference. They were all surrounded by one thousand men armed with bows and arrows, spears and bolos. Corporal Mira Leon whispered to Elarth: "*Muy peligroso, mi Capitan*". (It is very dangerous, my Captain).⁶¹

Elarth felt a little relieved but all so suddenly, a tall Moro warrior screamed: "Don't, don't! Stop, you fools!" At the same time, he rushed to the attack, wielding his *kampilan* in the direction of Elarth. With two of his comrades following, he screamed again: "Kill him!"⁶² Elarth fired. Three times. Three dead Moros fell at his feet. Spears flew from the tribal warriors, and they started to assault. The sky darkened with spears. Five soldiers were killed, falling even before they could fire their guns. One

⁵⁹ Elarth, pp. 100-101

⁶⁰ Elarth, p. 100

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., p. 101.

more was pulled out from formation and was hacked to pieces. The remaining ten riflemen fired without ceasing. Elarth was saved when a certain Sergeant Bernardo Ames shielded him with his own body against a lance flying towards the officer. Then the warriors suddenly stopped and ran away, leaving behind their 68 dead. After quick assessment soon after the engagement, the soldiers discovered that only 60 shots had been fired by them and they were already out of ammunition!⁶³

A few weeks later, some of the fugitive warriors were captured by the constabulary and, when asked why they ran in retreat, they replied that the incessant firepower shocked them; they could not stand it.⁶⁴ It took another five years of hot pursuit before the remaining rebels surrendered. Of the four Timuays present in the conference, only one remained. He surrendered together with his men at Margosatubig on October 14, 1914. They numbered 5,000 at the inception of the rebellion. In the end, only Timuay Romualdo was left and 75 of his followers.⁶⁵ The fact about the exhausted ammunition was never revealed to them.

The investigation further disclosed that the uprising was instigated by certain Moro datus from Lake Lanao and assisted by Christian and non-Christian bandits from Misamis. News spread that two Misamis folk predicted the earth's destruction by fire and water. They urged the Subanons to gather at Mt. Boburan from which they would ascend to heaven. Thousands responded to the call. At Boburan, the Moro leaders assumed defense positions. Around 175 houses were built. The warriors were armed with lances, *kris* and *kampilan*. There were no firearms.⁶⁶

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ It must be mentioned that General John Pershing, Governor of the Moro Province in 1909-1913, recounted a version different from that of Elarth. He said that not one Subanon chieftain participated in the uprising. In fact, he said, they were the ones who tried to dissuade the rest.

*The Langkat Rebellion
in Cotabato, 1926-1927*

Manobos of the present province of Cotabato were the ones involved in this rebellion and this is the only story that has an indigenous version from the people themselves. In 1926-1927, according to the Americans, Datu Mampurok, a Manobo, led an uprising in Cotabato which consisted of Manobo warriors, Tirurays, and Magindanaos. From the upstream region of the Pulangi River, it spread to Awang and Upi, the traditional territory of the Tirurays. There was a fundamental difference in the viewpoints of the colonialists and the Manobo. We shall look at both. First, the Manobo version.⁶⁷

The barrio of Palakat was officially established by a certain William Manyon in 1920. This formed part of Banisilan of Carmen municipality. Today, it has become a barrio of Pikit, another municipality of Cotabato. Manyon was a District Supervisor of the Banisilan school, and when he created Palakat he also built the school at the same time. All the children of age, including the 20-year olds, were obliged to enroll, starting from first grade.⁶⁸

Manyon appointed the barrio leaders, all Manobo. He did the same in Palakat which was a Manobo barrio. One of the headmen was the son of Datu Sapalaw, a Kerentekan, known by the name of Mampurok, some forty years of age.⁶⁹ Some of the barrio leaders reported to Manyon that several children of Mampurok's barrio were not attending classes. Manyon promptly sent the police who apprehended Mampurok and brought him to Banisilan. When asked to explain why the children were not in school, Mampurok replied that the children were afraid to go to

⁶⁷Juan Sabares, "The Conquest of Mindanao", *The Commonwealth*, (March 1937). The Manobo version is contained in Elena G. Maquiso, *Prologue to the Ulahingan*, Manobo Epic, (Dumaguete City: Silliman University, 1965), Mimeo edition.

⁶⁸Langkat, p. 110

⁶⁹Ibid.

school. Manyon gave him a dressing down, stressing that the children must go to school, or else, he, Mampurok, and the parents of the children would be jailed.⁷⁰ Mampurok relayed the ultimatum of Manyon to the parents. As a result of this, the young men went into hiding in the forests. Only the children were left to attend school. But everybody knew those who were in hiding, and their hiding places, too. These were not far away and they always came home by stealth for their secret meals.⁷¹

Himself afraid of imprisonment, Mampurok also fled into the forest with his family. Two of his children were supposed to be in school. His two sisters and their respective families, whose six children were all of school age, also joined them. They went to Mt. Kitubod. While there, Mampurok started to become a *patutulus*, someone who believed that he was a chosen one. This eventually spread among the people who consequently began to visit him. Before long, he became famous as leader of Langkat.⁷²

Among those who received the tidings were his relatives in Palakat, Barongis and Balogo. He was then already residing in Bintangan and his kin, young and old, went there. The one who narrated this tale, Demetrio Bangkas, was among them. There they discovered that Mampurok indeed displayed strange behaviour. He would not eat for several days, yet, he remained healthy. He sang their stories in Ulahingan fashion and he never tired no matter long. The stories all told of their lives and exploits in the forests, where they had no dwellings, hardly any food clothing. Whenever the spirit entered him his body would smolder and turn red. (Bangkas said he never saw this; he just heard about it).⁷³

Like Mampurok, the people felt that the government was cruel. Besides forcing them to send their children to school, the parents were also put in prison. They were further compelled to pay the

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid

⁷²Ibid., pp. 110-111

⁷³Ibid., 111.

imposed by the government, and the hated schools. When they became members, they, too, were possessed by the *diwata*, although they chanted their stories, epic style, in their own language. They translated their stories from the Ulahingan language into their own tongue in a manner that suited their tune and cultural tradition.⁸³ The other Muslims who decided to join diverted from the precepts of Mampurok. They raided and fired at the cattle in Manyon's ranch, they cut the telephone line between Pikit and Banisilan, and they robbed and killed the people.⁸⁴ As these happenings reached the knowledge of the government, Bisayan soldiers, disguised in Muslim attire, were immediately sent to infiltrate the group. The government suspected it was Mampurok who was leading the Muslims. Mampurok's group knew the newcomers were soldiers but welcomed them as members. They were merely asked to give a bottle of coconut oil and a *tubao* for Mampurok and these were readily given. The Manobos and the Muslims were delighted; they interpreted the soldiers' gesture as a sign for the joining of many more.⁸⁵ When, not long after, the soldiers returned to Pikit, they placed landmarks en route to the place of Mampurok.⁸⁶

At this time, there were more Muslims than Manobos and Mampurok could not control them anymore. It was they who benefited from the little harvest of the remaining Manobos in their *kaingin*. This was why the Muslim datu of Pikit felt pity for Mampurok and the Manobos. They advised Mampurok to return to his former abode and do what the government wished. This was also what the PC officer in Pikit wanted to happen because there were already many incidents seeded in the name of Mampurok. A reward was posted for anybody who could induce Mampurok to go back to normal life. The Muslim datu of Midsayap sent word to Mampurok for the latter to return to his former place.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Mampurok did not listen. The Muslim chieftain of Balogo also sent the same message. Mampurok refused. He was waiting for a message from the supreme *diwata*.⁸⁷

The soldiers tasked to finish off Mampurok finally arrived. Gunfire started bursting. Mampurok was hit on the breast and on his two legs. Many Muslims were killed. Many drowned while crossing the river to escape the carnage. All the people in Bintangan left. Members of Mampurok's family who survived were brought to Balogo, there to be taken care of by the Muslim datu. The latter was apprehensive that these people might be attacked by the relatives of the Muslims who were killed in Bintangan.⁸⁸ The Langkat disintegrated. But they continued, Manobo and Muslim, in their Langkat worship, even in their hideouts. Inevitably, they had to obey the wishes of the government: attend classes, pay their *sedula*. The *walian* returned to their *walian* activities, but the dance disappeared from their rituals; only the song remained.⁸⁹

We accept the government version of the story from the book of Elarth. But we shall not repeat the details, only the points that support their particular viewpoint. Take note that they always refer to the "Alangkat tribe of the Manobo." And it was supposedly because Mampurok referred to himself as god that thousands of "hill people" rallied to him. There were "pilgrimages from distant parts of Mindanao" which came to pay homage to him. Also, Colonel Stevens and Major Gutierrez, the governor of Cotabato, came to talk to him, courtesies which Mampurok bragged about to his followers. But it was when Mampurok reportedly established his own government, formed his own army, and started to collect taxes that the constabulary was compelled to enter the scene. Mampurok and thirty of his men were slain on March 23, 1927. Some firearms and more than a thousand bladed weapons were confiscated. In another source, it was reported that the Muslims believed that their revered Datu Ali, who led the struggle against

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 113-114

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 114 73

⁸⁹ Ibid.

the Americans in the first decade of the latter's occupation, came back in the person of Mampurok.⁹⁰

*Bagobo Response to the Entry
of the Japanese in Davao, 1916-1935*

Before the *Second World War* broke out, *abaca* was already known in the international trading world, among big shipping companies, and others, as "Manila Hemp." *Abaca* was a product of two regions in the Philippines, the Bicol area and Davao. It was the Japanese planters who made Davao famous as *abaca* country. The Japanese came to Davao as early as 1905. The first group consisted of workers who helped in the construction of Kennon Road to Baguio, the famous zigzag trek to the country's summer capital. From 340 people in 1905, the Japanese who settled in Davao grew to 17,888 in 1939.⁹¹

Of the overall list of *abaca* plantations in Davao in 1918, which totalled 164, sixty-nine were Japanese, thirty-seven were American, forty-two were Filipino and sixteen were of other nationalities. The combined total of more than 50 thousand hectares, occupied by all the Japanese plantations, constituted fifty-seven percent of the total in Davao. Twenty of these Japanese plantations were in the central portion of Davao, which were Bagobo lands. This does not mean that only the Japanese entered into the territories of the Bagobo. There were also Americans and Filipinos, except that now we have more data about Bagobo response to the Japanese planters than to any other.⁹²

⁹⁰ Vic Hurley, *Jungle Patrol*, (E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc, 1938), Filipiniana Reprint Series, Book 4, pp. 367

⁹¹ Hayase, pp. 116-142.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 160. See Table 4 entitled "Davao Plantations Owned by Different Nationalities 100 Hectares and Over in 1918".

In 1910, just five years after the arrival of the first batch of Japanese, the opposition of the Bagobo was already evident. For example, five Bagobo chieftains formally lodged their opposition to the program of the Mindanao Development Company to expand the landownership of a certain Saburo Akamine. According to them, they had long been owners of the lands being claimed by the company. In fact, they said, more than one-third of the lands were occupied by the Bagobos.⁹³ They were forcibly ejected by a combined contingent of Japanese nationals, government officials, and Philippine Constabulary troops. The first confrontation resulted in the drawing of a gun by Furukawa, one of the most influential Japanese in Davao at that time. After this, the PC and the inspectors from the Bureau of Public Lands entered into the scene, until finally the case reached the office of Governor Causing of Davao. The Governor persuaded Angalan, one of the *datus* Furukawa threatened with his gun, to sign an agreement. Much against his will, Angalan signed.⁹⁴

To those who understood the Bagobo custom of land ownership and the land laws of the government, the agreement was both a joke and a mockery. Angalan was supposedly allowed by Saburo Akamine to retain the ownership of 24 hectares within the lands leased to the Mindanao Development Company. Angalan would also allow the company to plant *abaca* in his land. He also agreed that neither he or anybody else would build a store within his land. Lastly, it was agreed that the company would not claim ownership of Angalan's 24 hectares.⁹⁵

Angalan's case was one of many. The Japanese employed various methods in possessing Bagobo lands. On the part of the Bagobo, the loss of their land was the most compelling reason for their opposition to the Japanese. It is important to understand how a Bagobo felt at that time. In 1930, a *datu* remarked that they used to be wealthy. They had cattle and horses. They had lands

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 253-254.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

which gave them food and clothing. But now they were impoverished. Foreigners had encroached into their land; they were brought to court for them to prove their ownership; and then the lawyers collected their animals for fees. It was much better during the period of the American governors as they could still ride on horses. Now, they lamented, they had to walk in order to reach Davao.⁹⁶

The laws did not respect the Bagobo's communal ownership of lands, and the Japanese normally employed lawyers the lands for their abaca plantations. Fruit trees that naturally grew on Bagobo lands like *durian*, *lansones*, betel, coconut, *abaca* and others were never respected by the foreigners as landmarks of the indigenous peoples' ownership. And so, when the small pox and influenza epidemics occurred in 1917 and 1918, respectively, at the Guianga district, many Bagobos left and transferred to other places. These mass migrations were exploited by the foreigners to possess large tracts of land. Events like these which in Bagobo custom were cause for war, intensified their anger.⁹⁷

The foreigners had no inkling of the intensity of the anger that boiled in the Bagobo's breast on account of the inordinate felling of trees such as *lansones*, *durian* and others. Between 1918 and 1938, around 600 Japanese were slain by the Bagobos. These killings followed a periodic pattern. In times when the Japanese aggressively needed more lands for their *abaca*, many were killed. But during production lags, the killing subsided. The first boom in *abaca* production in Davao was in 1918-1921. Some 100 Japanese were slain then. The next boom occurred in 1928-1930 and in 1934-35. The first boom coincided with the occurrence of the small pox and influenza epidemics, which contributed to accelerating the landgrabbing activities of the foreigners. But there was a cultural dimension to the explanation given to this situation. For among the trees felled by the Japanese were the big trees believed by the Bagobos to be the abode of spirits. The epidemic for them was a manifestation of the spirits' wrath, and this was reason for them to

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 256.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 254-260.

act to appease the spirits.⁹⁸

The Bagobos relied on the fruits of the forest. When the plantations expanded, the felling of forest trees became uncontrollable. Several springs dried up; forest animals vanished; and the *lansones*, *durian*, betel and other fruits likewise disappeared. And so they retaliated against the Japanese who were destroying their sources of livelihood before their eyes.⁹⁹ The Japanese lodged a diplomatic protest on account of the many killings. The government responded by ordering the PC to confiscate the weapons of the Bagobos: firearms (shotguns) which they used for hunting (if they were allowed to keep these, they were prohibited from buying ammunition); lances and other bladed weapons, including their decorative knives. Only those items which barely had functional value were allowed to be retained.¹⁰⁰

Still, the killing of the Japanese continued. It stopped only when the expansion of the plantations also ceased. Here was what a Bagobo representative expressed in 1935 about their slaying of the Japanese nationals:

I wish to narrate to you how the Japanese came into our lands. In 1917 (sic), many Japanese were slain in our place. I can not remember how many killers were arrested by the government because it was hard to identify the culprits. When the situation worsened, Director Guingona came to our place, together with Deputy Governor de la Pena and officers of the Constabulary and we were disarmed. They took away our shotguns, *bolos*, lances and *kampilan*, including our *tubaws*. After we were disarmed, they came back and told us that we should not kill the Japanese. Instead, we were told, they should be allowed to build their stores and to live peacefully in our midst. The Deputy Governor also warned us that if we did not stop slaughtering the Japanese, the government would burn

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 257-260.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 259-260

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 260-261.

our village. This was the reason we decided not to disturb them anymore.¹⁰¹

We still have to ask why we included this phenomenon of the Bagobo's reaction to the planting of *abaca* by the Japanese in the category of resistance. A straight answer is that we were still in the period of American colonialism and it so happened that the Japanese were actual intruders. It was the Americans who established the Moro Province of which Davao was part and where the organization of the Tribal Ward was also implemented. They were the ones who permitted the Japanese and other nationalities to open plantations in Davao. They were the ones who enacted land laws which were the weapons of the foreigners to easily obtain the ancestral lands of the Bagobos. They owned the Philippine Constabulary that ran after the "violators" of the law, among the more celebrated of which were the Bagobo assassins of Japanese landgrabbers. The slaughter of the Japanese was a direct defiance of the colonialists' law. The Bagobos may not have been conscious of this detail, but it was clear to them that the presence of the Japanese destroyed their life. And they merely acted according to their level of awareness.

Some Preliminary Analysis

There is no denying the fact that the uprisings launched by the Lumad were insignificant, even the supposedly major ones. They were mere pinches, so to speak. And this need not be debated upon. When we speak of smallness, it is only because, in comparison, there were big ones that occurred. And when we speak of pinches, it is because something happened that constituted a blow or even more. There is no need to split hairs over this, the supposed "smallness" of the Lumad resistance against colonialism calls for an explanation.

What was their experience in confronting their adversaries? Those they considered as enemies need not be another tribe. They could be tribal compatriots but from another community. It was

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 261.

customary for the Lumad to have a *bagani* (*magani* to the Bagobos, *lebe* to the B'laan), tribal warriors whose manhood was measured in terms of the number of people he had slain. But these warriors were accustomed mainly to single, man-to-man combat, because big battles were rare. And it was not necessary that the adversary be defeated or killed frontally. Fatal blows could be executed treacherously from behind. Or it could be done by poisoning. What was important was that he could bring back to the village the evidence of his victory, like the head or a lock of hair.¹⁰²

We must note the conformance of the level of livelihood to the social organization and to the level of experience in their manner of dealing with the enemies. And if we juxtapose these to the size, great or small, of their resistance to the Americans, then immediately we can see the appropriateness of the latter. In short, the resistance and struggle displayed by the Lumads adequately suited their internal and external capacities. Here lies the shining jewel, the greatness of their struggle.

¹⁰² Garvan, pp. 145-155; Cole, Bukidnon, pp. 81-86; Cole, Wild Tribes, pp. 92-98 for Bagobo, pp. 141-143 for B'laan, and pp. 187-189 for Mandaya.