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THE JAPANESE COLONY IN DAVAO, 1904-1941

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Long before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores[1] Japanese traders had been visiting the *Nan-yo* islands[2] in specially built ships called *Go Shuin Sen* or "ships with red seal."[3] Professor S. Iwao of Tokyo Imperial University estimated that the number of Japanese residents living in the Southern Islands in the first three decades of the 17th century totalled about 10,000. On many occasions small groups of Japanese fishermen had been driven by tropical storms and marooned on the northern coast of Luzon. At one time a few hundred Japanese sought refuge in Manila from religious persecution in their homeland. When Martin de Goite lay anchor in Manila Bay, he reported that there were about twenty Japanese settlers living in Dilao,[4] at the outskirt of Intramuros. Fifty years after the establishment of the Spanish colonial rule by Legaspi, an appreciable number of Japanese settlers estimated at 3,000 lived in Manila.[5]

Even during the Tokugawa period when Japan was virtually isolated from the outside world, trade continued and as many as eleven voyages were made with the authorization of the Shogunate officials.

During the early period of Spanish colonial rule, the *Dilao* Settlement became a sort of Japanese "ghetto." About 3,000 Japanese artisans and laborers were employed by the Spanish colonial administration in the construction of the walls of Intramuros. Antonio de

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[1] Don Miguel Lopez de Legazpi captured "Maynila" or Manila in 1571, and became the first Spanish governor-general of the colony. See Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, tr. by James A. Robertson & Emma H. Blair, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XVI (*Cleveland*, 1903), 135-136.

[2] The term "Nan-yo" means "Southern Seas." See Professor Shigetaka Shiga, "*Japanese Residents Abroad*," *Japanese Yearbook*, 1916, ed. by Y. Takenobu, p. 35.

[3] From 1592 to 1627, about sixty small vessels traded with Sumatra, Java, Cambodia, Borneo, Luzon, and Formosa. See Ipei Fukuda, "Japan in Southeast Asia," *Far Eastern Review*, Vol. 37 (February, 1941), p. 44. See also V. Posdneff, "Wanderings of the Japanese Beyond the Seas," *Asiatic Society of Japan Transactions*, Vol. VI (December, 1929), p. 24.

[4] There used to be a place in Paco district bearing that name.

[5] Joseph Ralston Hayden, "China, Japan, and the Philippines," "*Foreign Affairs*, Vol. II (July, 1933), p. 712.

Morga described the Japanese settlers in Manila as "a spirited race of good disposition and brave",[6] wearing their native costume made of "colored silk and cloth".[7] Commenting further on those who embraced Christianity, he went on to say that they were "very polite and honorable".[8] However, Japanese residents in Manila were not as numerous as the Chinese *sangleys*. One explanation for this may be ascribed to the provisions of the *Leyes de Indias*[9] limiting the number of Japanese immigrants to the Philippines. Another explanation is the stringent isolation policy of the Tokugawa Shogunate prohibiting the Japanese to leave their homeland without authority under the penalty of death. Japanese expansionists had cast their ambitious eyes on the Philippines as early as 1593. In that year, a certain Japanese trader named Magoshiro Harada[10] who knew much of the conditions of the Islands conveyed his plan to Toyotomi Hideyoshi to annex the country. But at this particular time, Hideyoshi had his hands fully occupied with the preparations for the invasion of Korea. Again in 1630, the Tokugawa Shogunate approved Sigemasa Matsukara's petition[11] to launch an expeditionary force designed to take the Philippines. This ambitious scheme was never carried out. Towards the later years of the Spanish rule, Japan made several proposals to purchase the Philippines. In diplomat Francisco de Reynoso's report to the Spanish government, he mentions instances wherein Japan had shown a great deal of interest from 1894-1898 in acquiring the Islands either through purchase or outright annexation. Actually, it took Japan three and a half centuries, from the time of Hideyoshi to the heyday of Tojo, to turn Japan's old-age dream concerning the occupation of the Philippines (1942-1945) into a reality.

With respect to the institution of a model contract-labor system in the Philippines to be worked out by Japanese laborers similar to

[6] Morga, tr. B & R, *op. cit*, p. 198.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 199.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] The Laws of the Indies which regulated the Japanese immigration to the Philippines were enacted by the Council of the Indies in 1606 and reissued in 1620 and 1622. Consult James A. Robertson and Emma H. Blair, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XXII (Cleveland, 1903), pp. 157-158.
[10] Magoshiro Harada, a Japanese trader, made a careful study of the existing conditions in the Islands under Spain. See Y. Mikamie, "Negotiations between Hideyoshi and Dasmariñas," *Revista* (Manila, 1916), p. 59.
[11] James K. Eyre, Jr., "Early Japanese Imperialism and the Philippines," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 75, (July, 1949), p. 1269.

the one followed in Hawaii or Peru,[12] many high Japanese officials including Count Okuma, heartily expressed keen interest in such a project in 1899. This plan, however, failed to materialize due to the vigorous protest of the ecclesiastical leaders in Manila.

Immediately after the American occupation of the Philippines, Japanese emigrants started to come in small but steady numbers.[13]

When the construction of the zig-zag road leading to Baguio was in full swing, the American engineers, after having unsuccessfully utilized the services of the Chinese coolies and Filipino laborers, hit upon the idea of employing Japanese workers. Accordingly, a total of eight hundred Japanese laborers, mostly from Okinawa, were recruited, the first group of which arrived in northern Luzon in July 1903.[14] After the completion of the Baguio zig-zag road, a group numbering five hundred became the pioneers of the colony of Davao and the nucleus of the Japanese retail trade in Manila.

A few found means of livelihood in Baguio as truck-farmers or gardeners. Some took up minor contsruction jobs at Fort McKinley, Makati, and at Camp Overton in Lanao province; while others engaged themselves in many independent businesses in Manila and became bakers, restauranteurs, barbers, coffee-shopkeepers, general merchandisers, ice-cream cone makers, carpenters, laundry men.[15] Through sheer industry, patience, and honesty on their part, they were able to build up their own establishments with surprising success.

A batch of Japanese laborers, some 150 of them led by Kyozaburo S. Otha,[16] were hired as contract laborers to work on the hemp

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 1275. Consult Hilary Conroy, *The Japanese Frontier in Hawaii*, 1868-1898, University of California Press (Berkeley, 1953), Chapter VII, pp. 65-80; Misha Titiev, "Japanese Colony in Peru," *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, V (May 1951), 227-247.
[13] There were 2,270 arrivals in 1904, and in the following year the number of emigrants had considerably dwindled. In 1906, only 227 came to the Philippines and 371 returned to Japan. See Russell Story McCulloch, "Oriental Immigration to the Philippines," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science*, XXXIV (Philadelphia, July, 1909), 170.
[14] K. Watanabe, "History of Japanese Trade in the Philippines, *The Philippine-Japanese Yearbook and Business Directory*, Vol. I (Manila, 1938), p. 324.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] Kyozaburo S. Otha, a Japanese merchant from Kobe, had visited Hongkong and Australia, before he established his small retail store in Davao.

plantations—the Libby,[17] Juan Awad, and Sanchez Plantations[18]—in the vicinity of Davao. Otha went into retail trade, setting up a small shop in the Talomo which catered to the needs of the Japanese workers. Then he diversified into the abaca industry. Many of these Japanese plantation workers never intended to stay permanently in Davao. After saving a little, they planned, as many did, to return home. They were imbued with the simplistic philosophy of life common to many a Japanese emigrant: "to go, make money, and return to Japan".[19] Some, however, saw the rich potentialities of the Davao soil, and decided to stake their claims therein. Davao offers many natural inducements to settlers tempered with the pioneering spirit. It is relatively free from destructive typhoons; the climate is comparatively mild and moderate with an annual rainfall evenly distributed throughout the year. Moreover, Davao's climate is oftentimes considered as "Mindanao's eternal June" and that "every season is growing season."[20] The province has an agricultural area of 1,322,687 hectares, 68.55% of which is arable land.[21]

When the first Japanese contract worker set foot in Davao, it was just an overgrown fishing village, built on the edge of the marsh bordering at the head of the gulf. Upon his arrival, he found the non-Christian Filipinos settling there still making use of primitive agricultural methods. It was mainly the efforts of the Japanese that made possible the gradual ecological transformation of the town of Davao from a sprawling village into an up-to-date community.

The Otha story typifies the struggle and success of a Davao Japanese colonizer. Otha organized a corporation known as the Otha Development Company of which he was the majority stockholder. In 1904, the company was granted 1,015 hectares of arable land by the Civil government. In line with his plan to make a model plantation in Davao, one of the first things he did was to order the trans-

[17] Later on, the early American hemp plantation owners were thrown out of business on the ground that "they received neither new blood and new capital from home." See Joseph Ralston Hayden, *op. cit.*, p. 714.

[18] Albert Von Kolb, "Die Japanische Ackerbau Kolonie Davao-Philippinen," *Koloniale Runschau*, XXIX (1938), 209.

[19] Conroy, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 85, 94. See also Toraji Irie, tr. by William Himmel, "*History of Japanese Migration to Peru*," Part I, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, (August 1951), p. 443.

[20] Williard Price, "Japan in the Philippines," *Harpers*, CLXXII (May, 1936), 610.

[21] See *Statistical Handbook of the Philippine Islands*, Published by the Department of Agriculture and Commerce (Manila, 1937), p. 20, and also *a Pronouncing Gazetter and Geographical Dictionary of the Philippine Islands*, prepared by the Bureau of Insular Affairs (Washington, D..C., 1902), p. xvii.

planting of young coconut trees along the seashore. Afterwards, about 700 abaca plants[22] were planted inland in rows at proper intervals. In its initial stage of development, the company solicitiously asked the help and advise of two Americans, Libby and Burchfield. Soon, the Otha plantation was criss-crossed by a network of irrigation canals. Improved techniques of cultivation and chemicals to exterminate harmful insects, use of fertilizer, and seed-selection were introduced. Modern machine strippers finally replaced the antiquated method of hand stripping.[23] These innovations were accompanied by the establishment of the Otha Experimental Station at Bago-Oshira near the city limits. Subsequently, the Furukawa Corporation and a few other minor corporations formed their own Research and Experimental Stations,[24] each of which had a staff of technicians and specialists. Soil, temperature, atmospheric pressure, humidity, and other natural phenomena affecting the life of the abaca plants were carefully examined and analyzed. In addition, scientific hog and poultry raising as well as fish culture was introduced. Other detailed and meticulous studies of physical and natural factors that influenced the growth of crops were carried out.

The Japanese laborers[25] were carefully screened and properly indoctrinated by a specially created agency of the Japanese government; they had to meet certain minimal requirements in health, moral character, and youth. Hayden observed:

[22] *Musa textilis* is the scientific name given to abaca; Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

[23] Otha Development Company and the other Japanese corporations which were organized at a much later date adopted the "spindle system of stripping," thus greatly improving the old method of "decortication." Ichitaro Shibuta, "Japan's Contribution to Davao's Development and Progress," *Philippine-Japan Yearbook and Business Directory*, Vol. I (Manila, 1938), p. 331.

[24] Several varieties of plants were introduced to Mindanao such as Liberian coffee, Peruvian cotton, Bornean pepper, and vanilla, Japanese beans, Siamese seedless pomelos, Majorcan oranges, Australian passion fruit, to mention but a few. In 1931, the Otha Development Company, experimented on ramie with successful results ,and it has been the major source of the province's prosperity since liberation. Catherine Porter, *Filipinos and their Country*, Pamphlet No. 13, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1944, p. 52; Price, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

[25] Almost all of the emigrants and laborers who settled in Davao came from the poverty-stricken areas of Okinawa, southern Honshu, and Kyushu. The most noted recruiting areas were Niigata-ken, Yamaguchi-ken, Hiroshima-ken, Okayama-ken, Tokyo-ken, Ibaraji-ken to mention but a few. One of the Japanese recruiting officers who came to the Philippines in 1904 "to play an important part on immigration to this place" was an agent of the Morioka company, whose name was Genkichi Fujisawa. The Morioka company was one of the colonization agencies authorized by the government to handle the immigration of Japanese farmers and laborers. See Toraji Irie, *op. cit.*, pp. 659, 661, 443, 442, 437.

> the Japanese pioneers in Davao are closely organized, amply supported, ably directed. In the selection of immigrants, the transportation of them to the colony and their placement on the land, the collective welfare of the groups is guarded by close cooperation between private interests concerned and the Japanese government.[26]

A few years before the outbreak of hostilities in Europe in 1914, many western observers already predicted that Davao would in a short time rival Manila in prosperity. The progress made by the Company encouraged the steady flow of emigrants [27] to Davao during the first World War. The number of residents considerably increased from 488 to 10,000 by 1918, and to 12,000 by 1933.[28] A sudden drop in the price of hemp during the depression of 1931 forced many Japanese laborers to leave the plantations for home.

There were about 60 Japanese corporations formed prior to the outbreak of World War I under the existing Philippine Laws. Since 1919, however, no new corporations were organized.[29] By 1926, only forty-six corporations continued to run their business. After the enactment of Commonwealth Act 141 known as the Public Land Act, at least 60% of the capital of corporations dealing in public lands must be owned by Americans or Filipinos. Many Filipinos allowed themselves to act as "dummies" of the Japanese corporations in order to circumvent the law. Another device used to go around the nationalistic laws was the "sub-leasing" [30] of lands by a Japanese farmer from a Filipino homesteader. The Filipino owners received as high as 10% [31] of the net profits earned by the Japanese tenants annually. After the expiration of the term of the lease, it was an easy task on their part to take over and cultivate the land which had already undergone considerable improvements. Most of the public

[26] Hayden, *op. cit.*, p. 714.

[27] Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 211; Concerning the Japanese settlers abroad, the Japanese government made it a point to look after their interest and welfare. The Japanese government enacted "Emigrant Protection Law" essentially intended to prevent to victimization of the Japanese living in foreign lands. See Henry Satoh, "The Past and Present of Japanese Emigration," *The Overland Monthly*, LV, (June, 1910), p. 158; Toraji Irie., *op. cit.*, p. 442.

[28] Joseph Ralston Hayden, *The Philippines, A Study in National Development* (New York, 1942), p. 713. See *Census of the Philippine Islands*, Vol. II (Washington, D.C., 1918), p. 901; Hayden, *op. cit*, p. 714.

[29] W. O. Oort, "Japanners op de Philippijnen-Davao." *Kolonial Tijdschrift*, (Jaargang de Haag, January, 1938), p. 343.

[30] William H. Anderson, *The Philippines* (New York, 1939), p. 281. See also Catherine Porter, "An Independent Philippines and Japan," *Far Eastern Survey*, VI (April 14, 1937), p. 87; William C. Forbes, "Japan in the Philippines," *Review of Reviews* (April, 1937), p. 95.

[31] Many Filipino homesteaders found it more profitable to lease their lands to the Japanese than to till them actually. Porter, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

lands which the Japanese corporations placed under cultivation were acquired through the aid of Filipino lawyers and other influential citizens. Williard Price calls the Japanese "lawyer-abiding people".[32]

According to an official report of the Japanese government in 1934, the Japanese controlled corporations held about 25,086 hectares of agricultural lands, 19,072 hectares of which were leased by private individuals, 4,716 hectares purchased from the Philippine government, and 1,298 hectares acquired by outright purchase from private citizens.[33] In addition, about 22,000 hectares [34] were tilled by Japanese contractors of which approximately 19,000 hectares of public land were held under lease from the Philippine government and 3,000 hectares from private individuals. The surge of nationalistic feeling which swept the Filipinos after the inauguration of the Commonwealth brought to the fore the question of Japanese land holdings. It was not so much the economic domination of Southern Philippines that caused fear and suspicion among government officials as the acquisition of numerous land leases either lawfully or otherwise that led to the loss of public lands. This "land-grabbing" stampede in Davao stirred a wave of antagonism and apprehension not only in government circles but also among the general populace. The then Secretary of Agriculture and Commerce, Eulogio Rodriguez, and other highly-placed officials discovered many leases which were contracted in violation of the Philippine land laws,[35] and threatened to cancel all illegal sub-leases. But the Japanese planters, through their official spokesman, Consul General K. Uchiyama, hurled a vigorous protest against the proposed move of the Commonwealth government. Finally the controversy was temporarily threshed out when President Quezon conducted a personal investigation of the situation to ascertain the true state of affairs in Davao. After a meeting with

[32] Price, *op. cit.*, p. 611. See also Joaquin M. Elizalde, "Japan Takes Over the Philippines," *American Mercury*, XXIX (January, 1940), p. 125.

[33] Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 213; cf. Hayden, *op. cit.*, p. 717.

[34] The number of plantations owned by different nationalities listed by the Provincial Treasurer of Davao as of 1930 was as follows:

Filipinos	106
Japanese	62
Americans	24
Chinese	13
Spanish	1

The figures stated above were taken from Pedro P. Paguio, "Who is to blame about Davao?" *China Weekly Review*, LII (March, 1931), p. 39; See also Shibuta, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

[35] For a detailed study about this question of illegal leases, consult: Porter, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-88; Robert Aura Smith, "Problem of Japanese Land Leases." *New York Times*, May 4, 1936, p. 3; November 19, 1935, p. 8; April 11, 1936, p. 7; February 9, 1935, p. 2; February 18, 1935, p. 2.

Consul General Uchiyama, President Quezon surprisingly made the pronouncement that there was no "serious Davao problem." [36] Apologists in government circles claimed that many of the contracts would soon expire anyway. At any rate President Quezon's inspection trip greatly eased the mounting tensions; his diplomatic gesture was in line with the policy of the Commonwealth government not to mar the existing cordial relations between Japan and Philippines. Nevertheless, the Commonwealth government launched a two-pronged attack on the creeping menace of Japanese economic interests in the Davao area. Accordingly the Colonization Act of 1935 called for the immediate construction of good roads and surveying of government lands in Davao and Cotabato so as to encourage Filipino immigration into those areas. To counteract the strength of the Japanese settlers in Davao, young reservists were given special preference to acquire homesteads in "strategic locations".[37] The National Land Settlement Administration (NLSA) carried out ambitious colonization projects, setting aside valuable agricultural lands for enterprising farmers as well as for government use, and encouraging Filipinos in thickly populated areas to move into virgin lands in Cotabato, Lanao, and Davao.

The Japanese corporations with the sympathetic cooperation of the home government arranged the free passage of the settlers to Davao.[38] They worked first as volunteers in those Japanese plantations for a period of one year—a period sufficient to acquaint themselves with the techniques and methods of raising and cultivating the abaca plants before they could actually work as tenants. Each received from the corporation, in addition to a grant of ten to twenty hectares of land, a liberal farm loan without interest, modern tools and machines, and even technical and legal assistance. In return they were required to deliver their produce to the corporation. This was systematically done in order to do away with the Chinese middlemen. Such a kind of close circuit that ran between the tenants and the corporations was carefully maintained. The corporations hired

[36] For further information about the nature of the "Davao Problem," see S. P. Vak, Jr., "Third Conquest of the Philippines," *Pacific Affairs*, XIV (September, 1941), 287-299; Catherine Porter, "Alien Scare in the Philippines Minimized," *Far Eastern Survey*, VIII (September, 1938), 227-228.

[37] Karl Pelzer discusses thoroughly the various steps taken by the Commonwealth in the colonization of Davao and Cotabato. See Karl Pelzer, *Pioneer Settlement in Asiatic Tropics; Studies in Land Utilization and Agricultural Colonization in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1945), p. 134.

[38] The *Osaka Shosen Kaisha* was in charge of bringing the Japanese emigrants to Davao and other regions in the Philippines.

trained plantation foremen or warehouse superintendents. The Otha Development Company employed 670 laborers, of which only thirty were Japanese. The corporations had a total of 21,000 Filipino workers according to Ichitaro Shibuta, the former Japanese consul at Davao, and only 2,100 Japanese workers. The Yoshizo Furukawa Corporation, backed with a heavy capital investment, became the most enterprising company in the whole province; it had for its labor force 400 workers, mostly Ilocanos, and 25 Japanese overseers. The Japanese corporations as a rule preferred Ilocanos because of their "peaceful disposition and perseverance".[39] On the other hand, Visayans, particularly the Cebuanos, were relegated to the warehouses for the simple reason that they were not as efficient field workers as the Ilocanos. Before the outbreak of the second World War Davao was noted for its "high wages" [40] in terms of Philippines purchasing power. The monthly pay roll of the corporations was in the neighborhood of ₱7,000,000 annually. [41] The Filipino plantation workers were relatively over-paid; wages had risen to ₱2.50 against ₱1.20 in Manila. The inexperienced Filipino worker in Davao earned a daily wage of ₱1.20 and the more skilled worker received as high as ₱2.50 a day.

Aside from this, the Japanese employers tried to entice the Filipino laborers with fair treatment, free medical care, hospitalization services, Christian gifts, bonuses and sick leave with pay. Hygienic and sanitary living quarters, cockpits, dance halls, billiard pools, and other recreational facilities were provided for them at the expense of the company. When their contracts expired, the corporations provided also free transportation or its "equivalent in cash".[42] Such inducements continued to attract the influx of Filipino workers and provided enough incentive to deserving ones.

The twenties was a period of economic prosperity for Davao. From 1927 to the outbreak of the undeclared Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the Japanese population had steadily increased.[43] The entrance

[39] Paguio, *op. cit.*
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] Shibuta, *op. cit.*, p. 333.
[42] Paguio, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
[43] The following is an estimate of the population of Davao in 1936:

Christian Filipinos	79,902
Non-Christian Filipinos	68,346
*Japanese	12,244
Chinese	1,285
Americans	75
Spaniards	46
Britishers	10

of fresh emigrants mostly women was noticeable after 1927 when prices for hemp increased. Albert Von Kolb claims that there were 400 women in 1920 but in the early thirties, the volume of migration had prodigiously increased almost eight times, particularly after the Manchurian Crisis. The Japanese, unlike the Chinese, had not intermarried extensively with the Filipino women. There is no sizeable community of Filipino-Japanese mestizos. A few of them, however, married women of the "Bogobo tribes".[44] The types of emigrants in Davao can be classified in the order of their importance into four classes: (1) entrepeneurs, (2) merchants, (3) settlers, and (4) laborers. The majority of the settlers[45] were concentrated in spotlessly clean, segregated areas in contrast with those depressed communities whose inhabitants lived close to poverty. Conservatively estimated, more than half of the Japanese settlers lived in Guianga and Mintal. Married workers were housed in clean white bungalows in contrast with the laborers who were assigned to live in tidy bunkhouses.[46] The Japanese plantation owners had their own handsome, comfortable residences surrounded by overgrown gardens that attained an effect of careful naturalness.

The new settlers were engaged in a variety of jobs such as planting, farm contracting, field labor, lumbering, fishing, carpentry, pho-

Indians	5
Syrians	5
Russians	5
Frenchmen	3
Swiss	2
German	1

*According to the report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan dated October 1, 1937, 13,528 Japanese residents were living in Davao. *Japanese Yearbook, 1938*, ed. by E. Inahara, p. 56. The above figures were taken from V. Estuar, "Davao Economic Potentialities," *Philippine Journal of Commerce*, (December, 1937), p. 11. See also William C. Rivers, "Philippines and Japan." *Christian Century*, LVII (February, 1941), 251-252.

[44] The Bogobos are non-Christian, many of whom were befriended and taught how to improve their crude methods of agriculture. James C. Wingo, "Japan in the Philippines," *Review of Reviews*, LXXXXV (February, 1937), 41. Cf. Oliver Bruce, "Japan Takes Over the Philippines," *American Mercury*, XXXXVIII (November, 1939), 257.

[45] The Japanese settlers clustered themselves in various neighboring towns and their distribution as of 1934 was as follows:

Guianga	10,493
Tagum	1,916
Pantukan	738
Santa Cruz	684

These towns are located in a favorable altitude. See Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

[46] When the former Japanese Foreign Minister K. Nomura paid his visit to Manila in July 1940, he "inquired after the health" of the Japanese in Davao. The United States High Commissioner Francis B. Sayre informed him that the Japanese community was "pretty healthy." *New York Times*, July 5, 1940, p. 5.

tographing, teaching, house painting, and other gainful occupations. Approximately two thirds of the settlers were dependent for livelihood on the abaca industry, the main source of the prosperity of the province. Economically speaking, they ranked second in the whole province as evidenced by the impressive amount they invested in agriculture, commerce and industry.[47] More and more Japanese merchants naturally gravitated to the abaca and retail trade as a consequence of the widespread movement sponsored by the Chinese to boycott Japanese goods[48] in the Philippines and other countries in Southeast Asia. About 150 Japanese merchants in the city alone catered to the day-to-day needs of the Filipino consumers. Dry goods and food commodities were sold at very low price by Japanese bazaars and stores, thus placing the Filipinos and the Chinese at a disadvantage in the retail trade. Not long after that, small Japanese retailers had caught up with their closest rivals to the point of forcing them into bankruptcy. Furthermore, the so-called Filipino corporations were merely Filipino in name only, with the exception perhaps of the Bungabung Development Company, but actually were managed and owned by the Japanese financiers. For the 1937 domestic taxes, the Japanese paid ₱375,000 or 59% of the total government revenues collected for the entire province. In addition, the

[47] Below is an estimated capital invested in agriculture by different nationalities taken in 1936.

Filipinos	33,000,000*
Japanese	31,771,700
Americans	2,853,700
Chinese	2,201,800
Spanish	856,200
British	342,900

* In all probability, many of the Filipino investors were mostly "dummies" of the Japanese corporations.

In other commercial enterprises the distribution is as follows:

Japanese	35.19%
Chinese	29.33%
Americans	26.39%
Filipinos	3.51%
English	2.35%
Spaniards	1.71%
Other nationals	.47%

(Quoted from V. Estuar, *op. cit.*, p. 18).

[48] The widespread boycott was launched by the Chinese as early as 1931. The bulk of the Japanese export to the Philippines passed thru the hands of Chinese merchants, but the boycott of Japanese goods had an adverse effect on foreign trade, thus disrupting the role which perfectly fitted the Chinese well in the Japanese market system all over Southeast Asia. Hayden, *op. cit.*, p. 713; Miriam S. Farley, "Boycott of Japanese Goods", *Far Eastern Survey*, VII (December, 1938), pp. 284-286; also *London Times*, October 15, 1936, p. 16a.

city customs house collected customs duties to the tune of ₱220,000 or 48% of the total city revenues for that given year.[49]

Nearly thirty years after the arrival of the first immigrants, Davao had been transformed into a prosperous, bustling commercial center in southern Philippines. Actually the Japanese had a big hand in the transformation of the region and started the Filipinos on the way to making abaca as the principal export crop. There was plenty of justification to the statement made by many writers, observers and newspapermen that the Japanese had built a "little Japan or Davao-kuo".[50] The place was really a well-organized community provided with the amenities peculiar to Japanese life including a plethora of low and high status stores. Branches of the *Mitsui Bussan, Ltd.*, and the *Osaka Boeki Kaisha, Inc.* were set up in the center of the shopping district of Davao. Along the lines of public improvement, the Japanese corporations had constructed and maintained more than 500 miles of first class roads, of which 240 miles were transportation roads.[51] The Furukawa Development Company with a heavy capital investment, ordered also the construction of a pier, docks, and several godowns. The Japanese community of Davao contributed money to cover the costs of building a naval plane, christened "Davao",[52] which was sent to the China Front on June 18, 1938.

Among the dominant institutions introduced in Davao that tended toward maintaining a high consciousness of Japanese way of life were the Japanese Association of Davao, the Japanese primary schools, the Japanese language school, Japanese newspapers and the Davao Buddhist sects.

The Davao Japanese Association was the nerve center of the entire Japanese colony. It coordinated the day-to-day activities as well as the furtherance of the economic and social interests of the Japanese settlers. The purposes for which this organization was organized were: (1) to assure better living conditions for all its members and their families; (2) to protect the individual member as a business partner; (3) to provide financial or medical assistance to those who are in need of it, and (4) to extend educational benefits

[49] Shibuta, *op. cit.*, p. 333.
[50] William Henry Chamberlain, *Japan over Asia* (London, 1938), p. 160. See also James C. Wingo, "The Philippines under the New Regime," *Contemporary Review*, CLI (January, 1937), 73.
[51] Robert Aura Smith, "Mindanao Treasure Chest," *Asia*, XXXIX (December, 1939), 712.
[52] Harutsuga Tahara, "Japanese in Other Countries," *China Weekly Review*, LXXXVII (December, 1938), 11.

to the children of the settlers. The multifarious duties of the association were handled by five committees or departments, namely: (1) administrative, (2) financial, (3) educational, (4) informational, and (5) social.

In 1938 the association with its 7,000 members[53] had its own building where meetings and festivities were held.

One of the most powerful agencies that stressed closer ties with the homeland were two primary schools, ran and maintained by the Japanese Association. The Japanese schools, patterned along lines similar to the prevailing system in Japan, had 12 Japanese teachers and an adviser from Japan—all of whom were financially backed by the Japanese Association. With the Japanese language as the medium of instruction, the curriculum, saddled with strong nationalistic undertones, emphasized the teachings of Code of Ethics and Morals, reverence for the Emperor, loyalty to the country, love of beauty, and obedience to parental authority.[54] The Japanese children at about seven years of age, underwent formal indoctrination in schools and hence patriotic ideals were inculcated in their young minds. The percentage of literacy among the residence according to the *Census Report of 1939* was relatively high (80%). Another influential agency which helped to wield the settlers into a well-knit group was the Japanese language school also financed by the Japanese Association. The chief social merit of the Association lay in its relief work as well as in the promotion of cordial relations with other nationals. The Japanese consul wielded enormous influence in the whole community. He sported the most sleek, fast-moving limousine in the city and won the reputation of being too generous to let foreign guests and visiting Philippine government officials, use it. It goes without saying that the Japanese consul had a big say in the establishment of all sorts of organizations that all tended toward the betterment of the social status of the members.

With regards to the religious background of the colony, the settlers were affiliated to various Buddhist denominations, the Davao Hongwanji,[55] of the *Shin* (True) sect, and the *Nantenzi* of the *Jodo*

[53] Catherine Porter, *Crisis in the Philippines* (New York, 1940), p. 102. See James G. Wingo, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
[54] See Vicente G. Sinco, "A View of Japanese Thought of Education," *Philippine Social Science Review*, IX (March, 1937), p. 102; Joseph Weschberg, "Japan's Fifth Column in the Philippines", *Travel*, Vol. 77, (October, 1941), p. 9.
[55] Junichi Ohtani, "Present Condition of Japanese Journalism in the Philippines," *Philippine-Japan Yearbook*, I (Manila, 1938), p. 314.

(Pure Land) sect. Buddhist priests presided over religious ceremonies, solemnized marriage rites and performed death and crematory rituals.

The Japanese colony was regularly fed with information concerning contemporary events and other matters of particular interest by two Japanese newspapers, the *Davao Mainichi* and the *Manila Nichi Nichi*. Besides these two powerful vehicles of Japanese thought and ways of life, there were several bulletins like the *Nippi Shinbun Sha,* and *Davao Shimpi,* and the *Japanese Association Bulletin. The Journal of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce* and the *Nanshin Jiho* of the *Koseikai* were also published in Davao.[56] Notwithstanding the fact that the press carried a considerable amount of propaganda closely geared to lines current in the homeland, it was a very important agency that linked the great physical gap between the colony and the homeland.

In conclusion, the southward movement of the Japanese settlers to Davao was done at a slow pace in contrast to the general influx of immigrants to Hawaii, Peru and Brazil. Actually, too, it was from worse land to better environment. Economic motive seems to be the propelling force behind such migrations. Other emigrants were attracted to Davao because its climate is similar to that of southern Honshu.

The Japanese miniature colony played a vital role in the economic development of Davao; its colonization was *per se* one of their methods of wrestling the control and domination of the economy of Southeast Asia from the Chinese. Since the early part of the 1910's, abaca had been the main source of Davao's mounting prosperity. In the midst of prosperity which the Japanese abaca plantations had enjoyed unparallel earnings, more and more Japanese immigrants set out for Davao. Upon their arrival, they did not solely confine themselves to the hemp industry, they also engaged in a variety of independent businesses. They had demonstrated how well the spirit of mutual cooperation, proper energetic leadership, effective organization, and adequate government financial assistance would work in an underdeveloped area. A close circuit cooperation ran smoothly between the tenants and small businessmen and the corporations on one hand, and the corporations and the home government on the other hand. And such was a laudable policy calculated to shield the

[56] *Ibid.*

tenants and small retailers from the clutches of the Chinese middlemen.

Aside from the other factors mentioned above, the success of the Japanese in Davao should also be attributed to the unflagging assiduity of the Japanese laborers, combination of sound economic policy, the superiority of technical skills, and efficient methods of production and distribution.

From 1904 to 1935 there were more Japanese immigrants that had lived in the Philippines than in any other country in Southeast Asia. Of the entire Japanese population in the Philippines, totalling about 19,000, almost three fourths were concentrated in Davao.[57] The noticeable migration trend fluctuated from time of time and was considerably affected when the prices of abaca suffered the most severe drop, and later on by the implementation of the Philippine Immigration Law of 1939. Moreover, the economic collapse in the thirties reluctantly forced many of the Japanese settlers to return to Japan. Still many of them had gone home after the outbreak of the second undeclared Sino-Japanese war in 1937.

In spite of a relatively long period of relations there was that tendency among the Japanese not to intermarry extensively with the Filipinos.[58] This impression is clearly given by Hayden. Principally for this reason there is apparently no sizeable community of Filipino-Japanese *mestizos.* At present, it is very difficult to distinguish or "identify those types that have been culturally assimilated".[59] As indicated before, there are no positive indications whatsoever that the Japanese colonists desired to be assimilated into Filipino culture. The colony strongly tended toward adhering to the whole fabric of Japanese customs and traditions, modes of dress and movement, of speech and manner.

From the standpoint of area and population, the colony was comparatively small when compared with those in Hawaii, Peru, and Brazil.[60] However, the prime fact about the colony is that the early settlers demonstrated a high degree of adaptability in undergoing

[57] Hayden, *op. cit.*, p. 713.

[58] Marcelo Tangco, "The Christian Peoples of the Philippines," *Natural and Applied Science Bulletin*, XI (Jan-March, 1951), 98.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[60] After the termination of World War II, some 17,802 Japanese civilians who did not acquire Philippine citizenship were repatriated to Japan. The figures were the total number of Japanese civilians repatriated as of September, 1946. *Japanese Yearbook*, 1946-1948, p. 38.

the rigors of tropical climatic conditions. Hayden, summarizing the role of the Japanese in Davao, writes:

> Modern Davao is indeed primarily a Japanese achievement. In this great frontier region, the Japanese have caught the torch of progress from the hands of the Americans pioneers. If they have created a little "Japan" in Mindanao, they have done it by means within the law and by methods that have benefited all settlers in the region.[61]

The initial development of the region was, therefore, essentially a feat attributed to those Japanese pioneers who had wended their way thru Davao's tropical wilderness in search for a better life.

[61] Hayden, *op. cit.*, p. 714.

AN INTERPRETATION OF REINHOLD NIEBUHR'S THEORY OF SOCIETY AND POLITICS *

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Niebuhr is the type of thinker who combines within himself a preoccupation with what is theoretical and unempirical and what is concrete and commonplace. His thinking is characterized by a process where the most common social problems are radically connected with what traditional philosophers commonly call "that which is ultimate." An ardent admirer calls him: "Right wing in religion and left wing in politics." [1] If this appellation is correct, then it is due both to his exposition of a theological system based on Christian principles and his subscription to certain socialist programs. Such an individual is liable to be labelled by various contradictory appellations. He has been called "orthodox" and "unorthodox"; "rational" and "anti-rational"; "optimist" and "pessimist," etc. But a careful and sympathetic analysis and interpretation of his thinking demonstrates that it is not so much that his thinking is confused but that these labels refer only to certain fragmentary aspects of his teachings that have been isolated from the general structure of his philosophical and theological system. Actually a definite pattern of thought has consistently guided his views for the last twenty years. Slight modifications of his theory have not essentially affected the validity of its former applicability, but have rather only served to make his theory more comprehensive. This observation refers to his theory of Man, Nature and Society. R. Howell writes: "We may... venture the hypothesis that Niebuhr has not once seriously altered his grounds from the publication of *Moral Man and Immoral Society* in 1932 to the publication of *The Irony of American History* in 1952; for although his thought has since gained maturity and clarification, there remains throughout all his writings a consistent attitude towards life." [2]

* Grateful acknowledgement is due to Professor Clinton Rossiter of Cornell University who first introduced me to Niebuhr's ideas.—C.A.M.

[1] D. R. Davies, *Reinhold Niebuhr: Prophet from America* (New York, 1948), p. 28.

[2] R. F. Howell, "Political Philosophy on a Theological Foundation: An Expository Analysis of the Political Thought of Reinhold Niebuhr," *Ethics*, LXII (January 1952), p. 80.