

This conclusion is correct and typical. This is precisely the situation of the Chinese in the Philippines since colonial times until quite recently. What is informative and of historical significance here is the revelation about the Chinese *gremios* and Chinese *gobernadorcillos* elected by the Chinese in Guagua, San Fernando, and Angeles about which we should do further research to dig out the necessary historical documents and materials.

Before I wind up my presentation, I want to cite two more excerpts from the book *The Pampangans*. The first one is:

In 1603 they not only took a major part in what amounted to a Spanish-led massacre of the Chinese population around Manila but also joined the looting of Chinese quarters afterward... and participated in another massacre of the Chinese in 1640 (p.27).

It is sad to disclose that the Pampangans had participated in the massacre of Chinese in 1603 and 1639. But that is history. The sad lesson of colonial divide and rule against the natives and the Chinese must never be forgotten and allowed to happen again. We should unite and fight our common enemy instead.

The second is:

...the discovery of burial sites in Porac containing Chinese pottery from the late T'ang, Sung, Yuan, and Ming periods would indicate only that Pampanga harbored Chinese settlements from the late ninth or early tenth century (p.17).

Note that based on the Chinese potteries discovered in Porac, the history of the Chinese in Pampanga had begun much earlier — as early as late ninth or early 10th century, not just in 1603 after the first massacre of the Chinese. It is also five to six hundred years earlier than when Magellan supposedly “discovered” the Philippines. This fact itself is also of great significance.

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THE ETHNIC CHINESE IN CAMARINES NORTE

Geography and Pre-Spanish History

Camarines Norte is one of six provinces comprising the Bicol Region, the others being Camarines Sur, Albay, Sorsogon, Masbate, and Catanduanes. Except for the last two island provinces, the Bicol Region is a peninsula. However, as late as the first decade of this century, it is physically more of an island because the dense, tropical virgin forest between the region and the Tagalog region made access and egress into the peninsula difficult by water.

Camarines Norte is rich in natural resources: fishing grounds, coral reefs, mangrove swamps, lakes, rivers, alluvial plains for agriculture, forests, and minerals. The Paracale district is rich in gold which Chinese mined before the coming of Spain. This fact is confirmed by ancient mine workings of unmistakable Chinese imprints and excavated Chinese ceramics. Just three years ago, small miners dug by chance an ancient Chinese burial ground that yielded celadon wares.

The Advent of Spain

1571-1800

Camarines Norte first entered recorded history in 1571, when intrepid *conquistador* Juan de Salcedo came to Paracale to verify its gold mines which he heard about when pacifying the Laguna lake settlements. Salcedo returned a few years later, conquered the whole province and left Captain Pedro de Chaves with 80 soldiers to administer the place. Captain Chaves founded Nueva Caceres or Naga City as the capital of Camarines province, which included what is now Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur.

Successful evangelization of Camarines and the whole region by Franciscan missionaries completed the initial conquest of the Spanish soldiers. The Spaniards established permanent settlements with churches and a functioning local government system. They improved traditional agriculture by introducing many

useful Mexican plants, imported horses and cattle, and the plow. The Spaniards also improved gold mining technology by introducing the *arrastra*, a stone mill for grinding gold ore. By 1600, there were 87 tribute-paying Chinese in the province trading in gold dust and sea cucumber, a Chinese delicacy.

Progress in the region from the time of Salcedo until 1800, however, was slow and difficult because of the harsh climate with its yearly typhoons, the dense tropical jungle, and most of all, Muslim piracy which devastated many coastal settlements many times. Nevertheless, a trickle of Chinese came to trade, some settled down and married native girls. The number of tribute-paying Chinese reached 154 in 1735.

An interesting point in the history of the Chinese in Camarines during this period was the decision of Governor Jose Basco and the Economic Society of Friends in the Country to make the Philippines self-sufficient in silk. A million mulberry plants were planted in Camarines and the technology for silk production was introduced by Chinese workers. Good silk was produced but the project failed because it was more profitable to raise other crops like *camote*.

1800-1900

By this time, the local militia and the puny Spanish navy had become more effective in containing Muslim piracy, and by 1830 this problem was no more. A lively trade ensued between Tayabas and Camarines bringing Chinese traders into the province.

It was, however, Fr. Pablo Espallargas' abaca stripper which contributed most to the growth of the Chinese population in the region. Invented in the 17th century but popularized by the Economic Society of Friends early in the 18th century, the abaca stripper removed the drudgery of abaca stripping, improved the quality of the fiber, and increased the volume of production.

By 1830, American sailing ships from Salem, Massachusetts were docking in Legaspi, Albay to take in abaca or Manila Hemp, the best marine cordage in the world. Chinese mestizos from Iloilo and Binondo Chinese flocked to Albay to cash in on the very lucrative abaca trade, which expanded into Camarines and other neighboring provinces.

In 1829, Camarines was divided into two provinces, Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur, but was rejoined a few years later. The *Guía de Forastero 1860* (or the government's guide to travellers) lists 28 tribute-paying Chinese in Camarines Norte: three in Daet, one in Labo, and 24 in Paracale. By 1874, the number had grown to 142 due, no doubt, to the growth of abaca trade. Among these Chinese was the Lukban family from Binondo. Church records for those times show baptisms of adult Chinese and their marriages to local girls.

By 1890, steamships from Manila regularly docked into the new port of Mercedes, a barrio of Daet (the capital of Camarines Norte). At that time also, gold mining became a serious and big business in the towns of Paracale and Mambulao. These developments resulted in the influx of more Chinese into the province. It is interesting to note that Binondo Chinese mestizos invested capital in the gold

mining ventures, and some wealthy Binondo Chinese even owned real estate in Daet. But the Katipunan revolution erupted, followed by the Filipino-American War. The promising gold mining industry in the province collapsed.

1900-1944

With the end of the Filipino-American War and the restoration of peace and order, local governments were re-established, a nationwide road-building program was begun, a new public school system was instituted, many schools were built, and commerce was promoted. Abaca business continued its growth, coconut began to be a big commercial crop, and placer gold mining boomed in Paracale beginning 1905. All these developments promoted the coming of more Chinese into the province to work in the gold mines, to engage in abaca and coconut trading, to put up retail stores, and to escape the harsh economic conditions in China. By 1919, the final separation of Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur was effected.

Below are some observations regarding the Chinese community in the province in the first quarter of the century:

- Intermarriage between Chinese men and native girls were common, there being very few Chinese women.
- Politicians of Chinese descent, like the Lukbans, were dominant in local elections.
- Chinese families usually sent male offsprings to China for Chinese education. A few came back with the opium habit, some with companions.
- Chinese vegetables were introduced into the province.
- Chinese merchants were fluent or conversant in Spanish.
- By 1920, Chinese women started coming to the province.
- In 1922, a school for Chinese girls was opened in Daet, which became the co-educational Chung-Hua Academy.
- Lee Seng Giap exchanged his steamship for Vicente Madrigal's land in Daet. Thus began the rise of Don Vicente Madrigal to be the richest Filipino by the 1930s.
- The Chinese were well accepted by the people.

In 1932, President Theodore Roosevelt raised the price of gold from \$21 per ounce to \$35 per ounce, triggering the gold boom in the country. By then, the interprovincial roads system and the Manila Railroad Bicol line were near completion. Paracale and Mambulao became big gold boomtowns. The former was the richest town in the country with all known luxuries then available to its residents. The Chinese population in both towns and in the whole province zoomed to new heights.

During this period, Wenceslao Q. Vinzons, a Chinese mestizo, was elected Constitutional Convention delegate, governor, and representative of the province and was being considered a future Philippine president.

World War II ended the gold boom and the province's prosperity abruptly. All

the mines closed and the Japanese carted away much of the mining machineries to Japan. Many Chinese fled to the hills and to the barrios with their Filipino friends. The few who remained in the town were not molested by the Japanese. Instead, they were forced to provide the Japanese-occupying force with needed provisions.

Post-war to the Present

With the end of the war, many Chinese left the gold towns of Paracale and Mambulao because only a few of the mines reopened. But many Chinese remained to resume their prewar business in retailing, abaca trading, and coconut trading. The abaca and coconut traders performed a valuable service of extending cash to farmers without collateral save for an oral promise to sell their abaca and coconut produce to the trader at harvest time, the price of the produce being the prevailing market price.

During this period, Chinese businessmen branched out into the trucking, transportation, construction, and lumbering businesses. The old ones returned to either China or Taiwan, others migrated to more economically promising provinces or to Manila.

At present the descendants of early Chinese traders in this century went into local politics, a process started by the Lukban and the Vinzons families. Don Fernando Vinzons, a pure Chinese, was elected to the 1971 Constitutional Convention. In 1922, a *Tsinoy*, Manuel Tee, was elected mayor of Mercedes and effectively stopped the illegal fishing in San Miguel Bay, which unhappily, was discontinued by the *Tsinoy* mayor who succeeded him. The present Camarines Norte congressman, Emmanuel Pimentel, is a *Tsinoy*.

Perhaps the most surprising development in Camarines Norte Chinese history is the nationwide growth of the devotion to the Black Nazarene of Capalonga by Chinese, whether Catholics or non-Catholics. This devotion, started by Camarines Norte Chinese before the war, has resulted in an annual pilgrimage of Chinese all over the Philippines to the isolated town of Capalonga on its fiesta. The Chinese attend mass and perform a ritual from which they divine omens whether their businesses that year will prosper or not.

It is a promising development to see all Chinese and Filipinos unite in prayers and in good works to end all animosities, distrusts, and prejudices between Chinese and Filipinos in this land.

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THE WORD *PARIAN*: AN ETYMOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ADVENTURE

Introduction

This paper is an overall view of a word as well as a system. The origin of the term *Parian* so well used in standard texts of Philippine history has not been adequately explained. One purpose of this research is to explore its possible beginnings and to examine its various usages. Recommended sources are Chinese, Mexican, Indian, and even Greek. Any contention that there is a relationship with the low caste *Pariahs* of India is contested.

The second part of this work deals with the coming of the *Parian* system itself — its history from earliest foundation to the present day. It can be noted that there were many *Parians* — not only the one in Manila but also in other Philippine cities, as well as in Mexico where an Oaxacan town bears the same name. Special mention will be given to pre-liberian settlements in Mindanao and adjacent Southeast Asia. The economic activity rose to its height in Ming times (1368-1644) and diminished with the coming of the Europeans in 1511 and the advent of a new *parian* system within a colonial and national framework.

The Romance of a Word

It is sometimes implied that the term *Parian* is of East Indian origin and may relate to the low-caste *Pariahs* (Untouchables) of India. The word bears no primary resemblance to *parian* coming as it does from the Sanskrit *parayatta* meaning to be under submission. The Chinese are not the same kind of people as the Indian *Pariahs*, and the bristling and prosperous *Parian* of 16th century Manila no way resembled the squalid *Pariah* villages of the subcontinent. The Spaniards had little contact with