Exploring the Pangasinan-Cordillera Connection: The Pangasinenses and the Ibalois

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The history of ancient Pangasinan peoples is yet to be written. Rosario Cortes has written what has been regarded as groundbreaking narrative of Pangasinan history consisting of three volumes (1974, 1990a, 1990b). Nonetheless, its chapter on the period before 1572, titled "Prehispanic Culture," is rather sketchy and draws much of the data from the work of Diego Aduarte who was more interested in recording the successes of the Dominican missionary efforts to convert the stubborn Pangasinenses than in noting the latter's customs and traditions.

Recent scholarship, ranging from linguistic to anthropological and folkloric materials, has yielded significant amount of new insights on the culture and history of the Pangasinenses before Spanish colonization. In 1962 Keesing came out with his book on the ethnohistory of the peoples of Northern Luzon, including the people of Pangasinan. Surprisingly, Cortes did not consult this seminal work when she wrote her history of Pangasinan. She could have produced a more credible account on the Pangasinenses if she had included in the picture the relationship between the Cordilleran and lowland peoples. Though she tried to "uncover the beginnings of the Pangasinanes as a people" (1974, ix), her account was circumscribed by the limited resources that she used.

However limited those sources are, it is up to the historian to reconstruct the configuration of the early society and civilization of the Pangasinan peoples based on available evidence. It is to be admitted that the use of Spanish sources is weighed down by their authorial biases. Yet looking at the Pangasinenses through the lens of Spanish friars does not necessarily mean accepting hook, line and sinker the prejudiced interpretations of precolonial practices and customs that one is likely to encounter in their works. In the interstices of biased accounts, it is still possible to spot the hazy image of a chieftain resisting the Catholic religion, to listen to the silenced voices of a *manag-anito* (indigenous priestess), or to visualize a prosperous settlement and a vibrant port in the eyes of Juan de Salcedo and his men. In short, looking at the same set of facts but using new perspectives, one could get a clear view of early Pangasinan prior to colonial contact.

To achieve this, one has to view the history and culture of the Pangasinenses as inextricably linked with the people of the Cordillera, particularly the Ibalois. By looking at the web of relationships between these two peoples and by comparing their customs and traditions, what has been forgotten and overlooked because of Hispanization—the result of colonialism—can be recovered and used as basis for knowing and understanding further that rich past.

Keesing managed to demonstrate in a convincing manner the validity of his hypothesis on the affinity of Pangasinenses and the Ibalois. As shown by William Henry Scott (1994), the lowland and upland interactions in the dynamics of history and culture in Northern Luzon were affirmed by ethnographic and documentary records. In the case of the Ilocos and the Cordillera, Arnold Azurin (1995) has pointed out the close ties, whether commercial or familial, forged between the Ilocanos and the Igorots as horsetrails and rivers such as the Amburayan and Abra became primary conduits of trade.

Unlike the case of the Ilocanos and Igorots, the ethnic knot that binds the people of Pangasinan with the Ibaloi could go back to the days when they were one people.

Search for a Homeland

Pangasinenses have no memory of where they came from. Their origin is not recorded in their legends, myths and songs (Jose 1974; Nelmida 1982). Marcelo Tangco (1951) had postulated that perhaps they migrated from southern Celebes in present-day Indonesia to southwest Mindanao. From this island, some went to Cuyo Island while in due time others left for their present homeland along the coast of Lingayen Gulf. Others say they came from Borneo through Lanao and Cotabato (Gleeck 1983). All these were in support of Henry Otley Beyer's much discredited "waves of migration" theory which was at one time in vogue.

There are two persuasive theories that explain the origin of Filipinos, thus of Pangasinenses and Ibalois, by Bellwood (1984-5, 1995) and Solheim (1984-1985, 2006). I will not deal with the archaeological underpinnings in support of each theory for each articulates their views on two different homelands. Bellwood believes that the ancestors of proto-Austronesians came from south China before coming by boat to Taiwan around 4000-3500 BC. From Taiwan, these boat-people would expand to Northern Philippines circa 3000 BC. Less than a millennium would pass when some of these people would spread to Mindanao, later moving down to the Indonesian archipelago and across the Pacific. Blust (1984-85) provided the linguistic basis for Taiwan or mainland China as the homeland, citing topographic, climatic, floral and faunal, and maritime terms, suggesting a tectonically

unstable region located within the Pacific typhoon belt (as cited in Reid 1992). On the other hand, Solheim proposes Bismarcks Archipelago as the probable origin of Pre-Austronesia developed around 12000 B.P. Proto-Austronesian-speaking maritime people would trade and ply the routes in and around the Philippines and eastern coastal Indonesia to the coast of eastern Vietnam and south China. Before 5000 BC, these people whom he called Nusantao, developed a maritime trading and communication network that encompassed Northern Luzon, Taiwan, south China and the coasts of Vietnam.

Although endorsing Bellwood's south China thesis, E. Arsenio Manuel (1994) proposed the Tonkin Gulf area, the so-called Bacsonian culture, as the possible point of origin of ancient Filipinos. Subscribing to what he called "East Asian rivers systems theory," he said that the proto-Asians from Central Asia followed the course of the Red River and settled along the coasts, becoming the Bacsonians who would manufacture Mesolithic stone adzes and axes similar to the artifacts found in Luzon by Beyer. These proto-Austronesians or proto-Philippineasians would bring with them rice and boat-building technologies including rice-terracing to the Lingayen Gulf area around 5000 to 4000 B.C. Manuel believes that crucial to his theory is the presence of rice terraces in the Cordillera and Majayjay-Lukban in the Philippines and southwest China and its absence in Taiwan.

Based on the glottochronological studies by David Thomas and Allan Healey (cited in Llamzon 1978; Scott 1984), all Philippine languages belonged to one ancestral tongue, separating from the other Malayo-Polynesian groups about 1100 B.C. In the case of Pangasinan and Ibaloi and other Northern Philippine languages like Ilocano and Kapampangan, they separated as a distinct group of languages around 700 B.C. Meanwhile, the Meso-Philippine languages, which included Tagalog, Bikol and Bisaya gradually evolved into a separate language family about 100 BC.

Although much of the basis of their assertions are now considered outdated, some of their findings can still provide a framework in so far as Pangasinan and Ibaloi languages are concerned. For sure, these two languages did not develop from the Proto-Southern Cordilleran prior to 700 BC, the date being a heuristic device. The development of proto-South-Central Cordilleran out of Northern Luzon would take perhaps centuries after 700 BC. Then, a division would occur resulting in the development of proto-Central Cordilleran and proto-Southern Cordilleran. Ilongot would diverge from proto-West Southern Cordilleran "very shortly" after the split (Himes 1998, 147). Meanwhile, Pangasinan would eventually separate from proto-nuclear Southern Cordilleran. From this would emerge Ibaloi, Karaw, and Kalanguya. Lexicostatistics done by Himes on shared cognates between Pangasinan and Ibaloi shows 61%; between Pangasinan and Karaw 58%; between

Pangasinan and Kalanguya 62%; and between Pangasinan and Ilongot 43%.

Like other ethnic groups, Pangasinenses do not remember the place where they came from except that they consider the coasts along Lingayen Gulf as the birthplace of their civilization. Ibalois however recognize Kabayan as their homeland (Picpican 2003). As suggested in the preceding paragraphs, Pangasinan and Ibaloi might have belonged to the same linguistic group before they separated. How did this happen?

This can be partly explained by folklore.

Folklore as Source of History

Citing Keesing (1962), Himes wrote of an Ibaloi oral account "that their ancestors migrated northward along the Agno River from Pangasinan to present-day Kabayan" (1998, 174). I could not find this piece of oral tradition that speaks of migration, but there is an Ibaloi creation myth that provides a clue on the origin of the Pangasinan and Ibaloi peoples. In *Chiva ni Pulag*, Kabunian, the God and creator of the world, sent a deluge to punish the people because of their sins. Murders and violence were common occurrences. He warned a couple in their dream of the impending flood. The couple heeded Kabunian and built a boat. Rains came for days and nights until a great flood inundated the land. When rain stopped and the water receded, the tip of a mountain surfaced where the couple eventually settled. They are said to be the ancestors of the Ibalois (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985).

Missing in the sequence of events just given is an important part, the beginning, which I would like to interpret. The story begins: "A long time ago, mountains and hills did not exist in this world. People lived in a flat and level land. They moved from place to place. They were also frequently engaged in quarrels among themselves" (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985, 33). If I may venture my inference, which could be correct or wrong, "the flat and level land" refers to the coasts and plains of Pangasinan where the ancient people led a nomadic existence. If this was so, the couple, the ancestor of the Ibalois, belonged to the same stock as the Pangasinenses who were obviously survivors of that same flood.

This fits well with the account given by an old man in San Manuel, Pangasinan in 1981, particularly the reference to "quarrels." Reacting to the popular tale foisted by a group of Ibaloi engineers he was listening to, this respected old-timer interjected: "That is what you say but what my fathers [sic] say is this: while it is true that we are related, our origins of movement have often been mistold; it is you who came from here, and not the other way around. The reason is: those were *the times of wars* and those who chose peace left Pangasinan; those who fought and later

survived, remained in Pangasinan" [italics added] (quoted in Pungayan 2002, 12). The story referred to suggests that Pangasinenses were descendants of Ibalois who were swept away by the great flood down the Agno River, which would go against current linguistic evidence.

The frequency of wars during that time agrees with the popular description of the Pangasinenses as warlike people. The early Dominican friars who had great difficulty in converting them to Christianity in contrast to the Tagalogs and Kapampangans saw them as "hostile, obstinate, barbaric—an unruly, untamed and bloody race…" (as quoted in Cortes 1974, 20). Melchor Baeza, a conquistador, described them as a "rebellious and indomitable people… very warlike and free, and fond of human blood" (quoted in Scott 1994, 249). Bishop Domingo de Salazar was more explicit on this as he declared that they were "really the worst people—the fiercest and cruelest in the land—an unconquered tribe whose fiestas were cutting off one another's heads" (quoted in Scott 1994, 249).

The earliest Pangasinan dictionary lists down several words relating to war common to other ethnic groups. One is *tagam*, a war dance and another *dakep*, which means to capture one's enemies, while *ngayew* means "to go to war" or "to go out seeking for anybody they wanted to kill" (Cosgaya 1865, 139, 225, 304). The latter has an equivalent in Ibaloi, *ngayo* (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985). Scott (1994, 259), although subsuming the diverse mountain peoples under the term "Igorot," must be referring to the Ibalois and other mountain dwellers when he wrote that Igorots "took heads in war—and sometimes captives for slave labor in the mines—and handed down the skulls as heirlooms." *Bindiyan*, a victory war dance by the Ibaloi after a successful headhunting expedition, is perhaps the nearest parallel to *tagam* (Cordillera Schools Group 2003).

In any case, Pangasinenses and Ibalois differ in a lot of ways as a result of adaptations made in their respective ecological niches after their separation. The most striking can be seen in their burial rituals. If an *anacbanua*, i.e., a member of the ruling class, dies, one or two slaves have to be buried next to him. Mourning ends only when a slave is beheaded or someone is killed after which a great feast is celebrated (Cortes 1974). The Ibalois seem to have forgotten this gory practice. They might have seen its impracticality in the highlands as they needed more hands to tame the wild as well as to extract gold from the mines. Instead, an elaborate ritual is invented starting with seating of the dead on a death chair. The funeral rites last from two to nine days; the corpse is placed in a coffin and buried on the fourth or seventh day (Cordillera Schools Group 2003).

An evident marker to the dichotomization between the Pangasinenses and the Ibalois would be the arrival of Philippine syllabary. Only a few groups in the archipelago, which included the

Pangasinenses, were able to adopt the Indic-inspired scripts. Juan Francisco (1973) placed their appearance in the Philippines around the tenth to eleventh century AD. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the Pangasinenses already had the script by that time, for Indian influence in the archipelago via Champa extended until the 15th century AD (Wade 1993). On the other hand, the Ibalois did not possess any art of writing. Scheerer (1905, 148) attributed it to memory loss ("they forgot it") but he called attention to an inscription on a board found by Sinibaldo de Mas while engaged in a military expedition in 1837. The eleven graphs that make up the inscription deserve further study to determine if they compare well with Pangasinan and Iloko scripts or are merely unintelligible scribbles.

The story told by the old man from San Manuel, mentioned earlier, coincides with the reconstruction of the migration routes of the ancestors of the Ibalois to the mountains. From Lingayen and Ilocos coasts, three routes were taken: Aringay-Galiano tributaries to Chuyo and Tonglo in Tuba; Amburayan River to Darew and Palaypay in Kapangan; and Agno River from Lingayen first to Baloy then to Imbose in Kabayan and Amlimay in Buguias (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985; Prill-Brett et al. 1998). Other routes were through the river systems of Naguilian and Bued/Angalacan (Prill-Brett 2009). These movements occurred prior to 1500 but not after the introduction of the syllabary.

Lowland-Upland Relations

Keesing intimates that Pangasinenses may have been diverse in the beginning but the introduction of wet-rice agriculture and the participation in external trade might have led to a "leveling out of custom and language" (1962, 325). Nevertheless, ethnic differentiation between lowlanders and highlanders would begin to unravel. For instance, lowlanders differentiated themselves from the people from the mountains calling them with appellations such as *Igolot* in the same way that Ibalois called them *Ikaptangan*, "people living in the hot lowlands" (Scheerer 1905, 99). Notice that the terms denote topographical features of places where they both live. Only in modern times would *Igorot* have racist overtones. Meanwhile, Pangasinenses would use the term *Bugkalot* to refer to unbaptized peoples, marking the advent of Catholicism and their subsequent conversion to Christianity. The term is also the other name of the Ilongots (Cosgaya 1865).

Nonetheless, intermarriages and trade relations between upland and lowland peoples inevitably took place. Chogen, in one source Shogen, was a Pangasinense hunter who married into an Ibaloi family. In one of his hunting trips, he lived for a year in a cave in the vicinity of Buguias and Kabayan. At his deathbed, he instructed his kin to bury

him in that said cave (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985; Picpican 2003). Most probably, the marriage was made as a sort of alliance forged between lowland and upland settlements to facilitate hunting and trading activities.

This is supported by the proto-historical account of Tublay. The people of Darew were said to have access to the plains including Lingayen. "[T]hey traded, intermarried, forged alliances and came to recognize as kin those who lived in the more populous settlements of Tagudin, Agoo, Tubao, Ambangonan (Pugo), Lingayen, Dagupan, Binalonan, Tayug, Safid (San Manuel), Imogen, Ituy, Tinok and Ahin" (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985, 42). The close alliance between the Pangasinenses and Ibalois reached the point where the latter were allowed to tend ricefields in Binalonan and cultivate saltbeds in Lingayen.

A tale that speaks of early trading relationship between Pangasinenses and Ibalois is the story of Balao and the origin of gold trade. A poor man from Kabayan, he was always despised in the community, but one day he went to fish and instead of a fish he got a huge lump of solid gold. He decided to trade in Pangasinan in the company of some Kabayan traders who ridiculed him. Alone, he met a Pangasinan trader named Pantom, described by Picpican (2003, 14) as a "sly businessman." Pantom offered all his silver coins in exchange for the gold, going to the extent of also offering all his work animals plus a magic harmonica. The agreement was that the value of the gold should be equivalent to all the silver coins that could cover the glint of the gold. In the end, Balao returned to Kabayan where he was accorded the stature he was earlier denied.

From this account, one can glean the importance of gold among the Pangasinenses. Its importance in mourning customs could be seen in the wearing of a gold necklace by the bereaved (Cortes 1974). It was also a principal trade item. It was made into jewelry worn by both men and women. Juan de Salcedo and his army obtained much gold from the natives, suggesting its ordinariness in the lives of Pangasinenses prior to the Spanish conquest (Cortes 1974). On the other hand, Ibalois used to go down the coast to exchange gold for clothing, pigs and carabaos, iron, blankets, agricultural products and salt in a so-called "dumb barter" or "silent trade" (Prill-Brett et al. 1998; Brett 2009). Gold was bartered for salt, thus the salt trade, because salt was necessary for health reasons, and for food preservation and burial ritual, i.e. mummification, among the Ibalois (Picpican 2003).

But this Ibaloi tale about Balao's gold reflects a fairly recent memory of the trade that happened when Pangasinenses and Ibalois were gradually differentiated from one another. Gold extraction through panning in Agno River where gold particles were washed downstream was known to the Pangasinenses (Cortes 1974). This tradition agrees

with the number of gold-related terms in the language (Cosgaya 1865). *Kali* means a gold mine while *panagkalian* is the place where the gold was found. *Panday na balitok* refers to the goldsmith in contrast with *panday na balayang*, blacksmith. The quality of gold is expressed in the following terms: *balitok a pinpolo* (gold of great quality), *yadiarin balitok* (gold made in great perfection), *dalisay a balitok* (pure gold), and *masurin balitok* (gold of high quality).

The search for the gold mines might have been the reason behind the settlement of the ancestors of Ibalois in the highlands (Canilao 2008, 2009). These settlements, however, might have been temporary so that they could always go back to the lowlands when they needed provisions. This search for gold could have been stimulated by the growing demand for gold in the lowlands. Migration to the Benguet mountains would intensify when Pangasinan chiefdoms engaged in international trade with the increasing demand for gold and other raw materials (Reid 1999 and Miksic 2008, as cited in Canilao 2009).

The Rise of Pangasinan Chiefdoms

This inter-ethnic relationship between the ancestors of present-day Pangasinenses and the Ibalois would further deepen as the former participated in the long-distance trade not limited to porcelain. Small chiefdoms would rise along the coasts of Pangasinan like Lingayen and perhaps Agoo. Agoo would become a port of call for Japanese ships while Bolinao would be frequently visited by the Chinese (Scott 1994; Legaspi 1974). Around the archipelago, Butuan (Putuan) and Mindoro (Mai) would emerge as polities in the eleventh to twelfth centuries, recognized as trading partners by the Chinese Sung dynasty (Scott 1984; Junker 1999). The emergence of Pangasinan chiefdoms was partly in response to the growing international long distance trade in northwestern Luzon as they tried to compete with polities down south.

By 1373 A.D., tributary missions from "Luzon" (Malilu, which is Manila), Pangasinan and Soli were listed in Ming court records (Junker 1999). Apparently, Pangasinan chiefdoms consolidated their position to gain the upper hand in the lucrative trade by strengthening alliances with the Ibalois, Zambals and other ethnic groups in the interior. Asingan, a town nestled in Agno Valley, was said to be, according to folklore, a wilderness home to the nomadic Negrito (Castro et al. 1970).

Another tributary mission by a Pangasinan chiefdom was sent to the Ming court on September 23, 1406 led by Chieftain Kamayin. Two years later, another Pangasinan mission went to China headed by Taymey. The following year, it was Liyu who presented himself before the Emperor of the Middle Kingdom. Finally on December 11, 1411, the Pangasinan party was tendered a state banquet perhaps in recognition

of the efforts to improve the ties between the two polities. Pangasinan was recorded in Chinese as Feng-chia-hsi-lan (Scott 1984).

In the Chinese records, as noted by Scott,while Sulu and Maguindanao rulers were designated as "wang," the Chinese term for monarch, Pangasinan rulers were called "chiefs" (Scott 1984). This would indicate the scale and type of political consolidation of the former compared with the latter because in the next five centuries, Sulu would gain ascendancy while Pangasinan would be nowhere in the map of significant polities participating in the international trade.

Nonetheless, the capacity of Pangasinan chiefdoms to send tributary missions was a reflection of the strength in alliances between the lowlanders and the people upstream of the Agno River, i.e., the Ibalois and other highlanders. Junker (1998) explains the reason behind the tributary missions:

> The northern polities of Ma-li-lu, Mao-li-wu, and Pangasinan were probably attempting to consolidate their positions along the eastern (Maluku-Borneo-Luzon-Fujian) maritime trade route. Similarly, the southern Philippine polities of Sulu, Magindanao, and Kumalalang were competing for dominance along the southern (Maluku-Java-Melaka) Southeast Asian trade routes (218).

The Urduja Paradox

Having stated the foregoing, where is the place of Urduja in Pangasinan history? Princess Urduja is said to have ruled Pangasinan at the time Ibn Battuta, a Moroccan Arab traveler, visited Southeast Asia in 1345-1346. Battuta wrote an account about this visit to the Kingdom of Tawalisi on his way to Zaitun (Quanzhou) coming from Mul-Java (Java) (Gibb and Beckingham 1994). Tawalisi, according to Jose Rizal, might be located in Northern Philippines, which by extrapolation Austin Craig (1916 as cited in Cortes 1995), an American professor at UP, specified as Pangasinan. Subsequent historians and writers including an encyclopedist, holding only to these claims, believed them to be historical facts and thus made Urduja a prominent personality in Philippine history (Benitez and Benitez 1923; Galang 1935-37; Zaide 1935; Del Castillo 1986, all cited in Cortes 1995).

Urduja, a warrior-princess who could wield a sword just like any man, became a figure revered in Philippine history. Along with Gabriela Silang, she is venerated by women groups as symbolizing female power and emancipation from patriarchal ethos. The residence of the Pangasinan governor and a hotel are named after her, a popular brand of jewellery carries her name, and films including a recent error-ridden

animation were made about her life. Referring to the dissenting study by UP historian Nicolas Zafra (1952), Cortes (1995, 69), however, has concluded based on her careful study of the Ibn Battuta text that Urduja should not be considered "as a genuine and authentic character in Philippine history or in Pangasinan history…." Citing geography and faunal inconsistencies (elephants and horses, not found in Pangasinan, were abundant in that kingdom), she said that Tawalisi was probably located in Indochina particularly the Kingdom of Champa, not Pangasinan. This assertion tallies with the assumption that Kaylukari —the city where Battuta met Urduja as the governor—corresponds with the Cham name Po Klaung Garai, a late 12th century-Cham temple complex at Phanrang, Ninh Thuan Province in today's Vietnam (Yamamoto 1936).[3]

Yet, Urduja as a text had generated multiple readings and would produce and reproduce herself as texts (paintings and other media included) contrary to the proclamation of her beleaguered status (Icagasi 1992).[4] Operating within a feudal matrix that is subverted by her anti-patriarchal presence, Urduja's legendary story is seen as native response and transgressive counterpart to Eurocentric narratologies that articulate superiority and civilization (Flores 2001).

Again, who is Urduja? According to the Ibalois, she is Daboxah "the granddaughter of Udayan, an outstanding warrior of Darew" (Bagamaspad and Pawid 1985, 45). It is said that during her reign alliances between the lowland and highland peoples reached their zenith. The Ibalois, it is said, are able to trace their ancestry to this woman who was noble and strong in character (Gutierrez 1999).

Is Daboxah a proto-historical figure? Is she molded out of the mythic personality of Urduja? Is there a real "Urduja" by the name of Daboxah in Pangasinan-Cordillera history? These irreverent questions deserve to be answered by going back to the Tublay informants. That is, if they are still alive or if the requisite memory has been passed on to the next generation.

Conclusion

Writing the early history of Pangasinan people requires the writing also of the history of the Ibalois and other ethnic groups. The history of early Pangasinenses is linked with the movements of their kin to the mountains as well as the maintenance of trading relationships with other ethnic groups like the Zambals, Negritos and Ilokanos. The rise of Pangasinan chiefdoms demonstrates a complex level of political consolidation among the various groups under the loose dominion of a paramount ruler. This article only looks at the interactions between Ibalois and Pangasinenses, and marginally discusses the Zambals and

Negritos. To capture the larger picture of the early history of Pangasinenses, there is an obvious need to include connections with the Zambals, Negritos and other ethnic groups as well their interactions with external actors, the Chinese and the Japanese. This enlarged perspective could contribute to a holistic approach particularly in engaging in archaeological investigations of the Pangasinan-Cordillera region.

In recent years, the provincial government of Pangasinan has been trying to establish the founding date of Pangasinan. The province currently celebrates its foundation day on November 13, the birth anniversary of the late Speaker Eugenio Perez who hails from San Carlos City. The question remains whether they wanted to know its establishment as a province under Spanish dominion or its earliest appearance in written records. The present governor created a study group to determine the said date while local historians debated and put forward two dates as possible choices: July 22, 1898, the date when Pangasinan declared independence from Spain and December 11, 1411 when a Pangasinan delegation was tendered state banquet by the Ming court in China (Cardinoza 2009). The latter, cited earlier, would stretch by less than two centuries the rich past of Pangasinan peoples prior to the advent of colonialism. It would also highlight the connection between lowland and highland peoples in the development of an Agno river civilization. This brings me to my second point.

Colonialism and state formation shaped the present state of alienation between Pangasinenses and the Ibalois, between lowland and highland peoples who had forgotten the linkages and alliances between them. The introduction of Catholicism and the policy of divide and rule deepened the geographic rift that divides the lowlanders from the uplanders. American colonial policy and the subsequent creation of the Philippine nation-state contributed to the loss of memory about these ancient ethnic ties coupled with the changing contours of regional boundaries. In the past Pangasinan was grouped with Central Luzon. It is now lumped together with La Union and the two Ilocos provinces to comprise the Ilocos region. This regional grouping perpetuates the mistaken notion that when one is from Pangasinan, one is an Ilocano when in fact the province is named after a group of people called Pangasinenses. While changing the region's name to Pangasinan-Ilocos region would correct the error in due time, recognizing the historical, cultural and economic ties between Pangasinan and Cordillera peoples from the past up to the present would constitute the proper criteria for a regional grouping in a future federal setup.

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NOTES

1. There is another tale similar to this. According to the people of Bokod, Benguet there was a strong typhoon that swept away some of their kin down the Ambuklao River and settled them in the lowlands. They became the Pangasinenses. See "Lolo Ramon's Story," http://myracounteurattempt.blogspot.com/2007/06/lanog.html (accessed February 8, 2008).

2. Besides Pangasinan, Tagalogs, Bisayans, Ilokanos, Pampangos, Mangyans, Bataks, Palawanos and Tagbanwas knew the script (Llamzon 1978).

3. Regarding Urduja and her city of Kaylukari, scholars are still divided where to place it on the map but to Ross E. Dunn (2005, 264 n34), the particular account on Urduja "reads as though it were a pastiche of legends, misplaced anecdotes, and garbled geography."

4. See, for example, Jovellanos (2002) and Burton (2006)

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