

Chapter 17. Christianity and Austronesian Transformations: Church, Polity and Culture in the Philippines and the Pacific

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The Christianization and colonization of the Philippines and the Pacific Islanders under Spanish and American rule took divergent paths. Under Spanish rule, the Philippines was Christianized to a high degree, yet the Spanish Crown did not regard the colony as a primary income source. Under American rule, the conversion to Protestantism was primarily secondary to America's global civilizing role throughout the world in which enlightened democratic liberalism was the keystone to the modern rational nation/state.

In the Pacific similar processes occurred but on a smaller scale. Furthermore, given the absence of hegemonic Catholicism, European and American Protestant churches and sects flourished throughout Pacific Island societies. The impact of Protestant churches in the Pacific is still critical and has far-reaching consequences wherever Micronesians and Polynesians relocate.

Christianity in its many forms and expressions came into insular Southeast Asia and the Pacific with the colonial expansion of European states. In more specific terms, the Austronesian portion of Southeast Asia went through various phases in which Christianity and colonialism worked in some contexts within a common and unified framework, while in others the Church and the State diverged in separate directions. For instance, early Dutch colonial rule in Indonesia was primarily a political and economic venture, and it was only in the nineteenth century that Dutch versions of Protestantism and Catholicism became active forces within the colonial regime. However, whereas the Dutch domination of Indonesia was primarily economic, the Philippines and other parts of the Austronesian world represent a different ensuing pattern in which the Church played a much stronger and more lasting role.

Within this comparative framework I plan to focus on the kinds of interactions which took place in the Philippines between Christianity and "native" Philippine culture(s) during the period of Spanish colonial rule (1520s to 1900), and on the kinds of changes expressed through Christianity during the American regime from 1900 to 1945. Some of the issues also have a bearing on conversion to Christianity in Micronesia and Polynesia, though the scale of the conversion process, its impact on native cultures and its time duration were markedly

different in Oceania in comparison to the Philippines. Furthermore, the commercial and economic aims of Spanish policy in the Philippines were not comparable to what happened in the Pacific Islands under German rule, nor were they congruent with what American and English interests envisioned as economic ends.

Spain and Catholicism in the Philippines

Spanish rule in the Philippines, which lasted for almost 400 years, was in many ways a departure from Spanish policy and domination in Latin America. By definition, Spanish colonial rule always involved a close linkage between the aims of the Crown and the Church, not only in terms of their own particular ends but also in how they understood each other's roles. Moreover, the bloody conquest in Mesoamerica, the Caribbean and Peru were to be avoided at all costs in the Philippines. Thus, pressure on the Crown to curtail the disastrous policy of human carnage on native peoples came from within the Church as well as through the writings of colonial church historians. Consequently, the Philippines were colonized in a more harmonious manner than Latin America, primarily because the Church was allowed to take the initiative.¹

Throughout the initial 300 years of Spanish rule in the Philippines it was apparent that the colony was not going to render the quick and vast wealth which was found in Mexico and Peru. Thus, by the 1680s if not sooner, the Crown realized that the Philippine colony had to be sustained from the Iberian and Mexican treasuries and that it would be a costly as well as a long-term negative economic venture. As early as the 1660s the Crown wanted to withdraw from the Philippines, but the linkage of Crown and Church meant that if one party desired to pursue its ends, the other also had to take part. It was only in the 1820s that the Spanish colony received an economic boost through the galleon trade which linked Mexico with China and later in the 1850s, after gold was discovered in the northern Luzon cordillera. Both ventures came too late and could not turn the colony around from its situation of economic stagnation and fiscal demise.

In a unique way, the spread of Christianity throughout the lowlands of Luzon and the Bisayas was initiated without the kind of violence which occurred in Latin America. Different parts of the archipelago were allocated to different Church orders; thus, the Augustinians, Franciscans, Recollectos, Dominicans, Jesuits, and others were allotted certain areas and spheres of social action in which the local peoples would not only be converted to the teachings of the Church, but would also become part of the civilizing process. However, the policies of the religious orders, apart from the general framework of religious conversion, differed from one another in many important directions. Just as one still finds remnants of a utopian social framework based on the writings of St. Thomas More among the Tarascans of Michoacán, Mexico, similar processes also

occurred in the Philippines. These local social variants not only initiated the civilizing process, but also promulgated each order's vision of an ideal society as isomorphic with the teachings and dogma of the Church.

Furthermore, the use of local languages or dialects was basic to the priesthood and was widespread. Virtually all of the Church orders conducted masses, baptisms, weddings and other holy functions in the local Austronesian languages. Thus, Spanish did not become a *lingua franca* as it had throughout Latin America, and even after 370 years of Spanish rule (ending about 1900), only ten per cent of the population could speak Spanish fluently. Although this policy and practice did have the virtue of maintaining local societies and cultures, it also limited social mobility. For example, local administrative officials were Spaniards, and it was only in the nineteenth century that a segment of the Spanish bureaucracy was penetrated by the Spanish mestizo class or by *indios*.

The conversion process throughout the lowlands and the plains of the Philippines required the sedentarization of the population into barrios, villages and towns. Like Mexico and Latin America, the plaza complex became the centre of local government, Church administration and economic activity. Major forces which attracted people to move from hinterland to the population centres were the pageantry of the mass, the sacredness of local festivals named after patron saints, and the existence of daily and weekly markets. Yet, throughout the first 200 to 300 years, an *indio* could only attain inclusion in Spanish cultural, religious, and political institutions by becoming baptized, for it was through this pivotal act that one became not only a Christian, but also obtained the status to work within the framework of Spanish institutions. As late as the 1960s and 1970s, this pattern of religious conversion still existed among the upland Mandaya of southeast Mindanao. Baptism was interpreted by some of the Protestant denominations and their missionaries as the beginnings of spiritual rebirth; however, the Mandaya saw baptism as the beginnings of being a Cebuano who occupied the coastal areas of eastern Davao. Baptism along with the cutting of hair and wearing Western clothing were all markers of the shift to being a Cebuano (Yengoyan 1966:324-327).

Throughout the western Bisayas, missions spread from the major towns and the *poblacions* to small towns. In their concern to baptize the population as well as to keep count of individuals and groups, missionaries attempted to systematize the population in various ways. Thus, in Capiz, which is located on the northern part of the island of Panay, the Dominicans not only baptized in large numbers, but each individual and each family was provided with a surname which was commonly of Spanish origin. Small towns and villages were also named by the missionaries, and, in most cases, all individuals and families from one town would have surnames starting with the letter A, the next town with B, the next town with C and so forth. Even today this pattern is still evident, and one can

always note the degree to which individuals migrated from the town of their origin or have married into neighbouring towns. In many of the Tagalog speaking areas of central Luzon, this pattern of naming did not exist, or, if it was implemented, it did not have a lasting impact. To this day, a great majority of Tagalog and Zambal surnames are native pre-contact names which were not changed to Spanish.

The missionization of the coastal plains not only created a stable population which was linked to the Church, but it also created economic inducements which gradually attracted inland populations. This pattern is quite evident when one reads Alcina's (1960) account of how Catholic missions operated in Cebu in the 1650s.

The form of civilization which was embedded in the conversion process also meant that certain "native" customs and institutions had to be changed in accordance with the missionaries' criteria for producing ideal Christians. For instance, almost all existing forms of communalism were rendered obsolete in the "new order". Thus, the rules of collective land tenure, including institutions such as the *barangay* and *bayanihan* which stressed collective work activities, were gradually replaced through the introduction of concepts embracing private property in land, commodities and labour. In this way, rational action became the foundation and an expression of the "new order".

Nevertheless, missionization could not prevent the emergence of syncretism in religious expression between Christian and native beliefs. The experience from Latin America indicated that many aspects of Church dogma and practice had been violated or rendered obsolete through contact with local and native beliefs. These not only persisted but also corrupted dogma and practice in ways which were difficult to control, much less eradicate.

One of the best examples of this kind of religious syncretism, which the Church attempted to control, was the widespread belief in witchcraft. Throughout the Bisayas, especially in Panay and Negros, and in Bicol, witchcraft beliefs are still widespread and integral to local religious belief and thought. The common belief, still current, is that witchcraft represents a pre-Christian system which still lingers as part of magical as well as religious thought. In reality, the opposite is more nearly the case.

Prior to Spanish contact, most local cultures had a belief system of benevolent and malevolent spirits which inhabited various parts of the environment, most often dark areas such as forests and caves, or remote areas such as the sea and sky. This spirit world, commonly labelled *anito*, *asuwang* or *diwata*, occurred in lowland societies as well as among upland groups such as the Kalinga, Ifugao, and Mandaya. In all cases where we have accounts of such spirits they often have a corporeal existence, although never in an anthropomorphic form. Even now, the spirit-world of the Mandaya is divorced of anthropomorphism.

However, among the lowland groups malevolent spirits do have an anthropomorphic expression which can have the form of a whole human, or the lower half of the body with a head placed on the torso, or a severed body with each half travelling in different directions to different localities.

This conjunction of malevolent spirits with humanized bodies first appears in missionary accounts from the Bisayas in the early 1600s; as the basis of witchcraft, it was part of seventeenth century Spanish culture in Iberia. After the introduction of witchcraft to the Philippines, the emerging syncretism evolved into a complex set of relationships which are now dominant throughout the Bisayas. To this day, the Church has attempted to argue that witchcraft in this form is a pre-contact pagan custom which must be erased.

In the Philippines, native attitudes and actions towards Spanish political hegemony and Catholic policy and practice were not passive. Throughout various areas of the Bisayas, such as Bohol, and parts of Luzon, the historical record indicates a number of regional and local armed uprisings against Spanish policy and Church abuse. Most of these rebellions, which might have lasted from a few weeks to about a year in some cases, were suppressed and controlled by the Crown and the Church. However, in numerous cases one finds that a miracle or a divine event occurred shortly after the uprising was suppressed. The exact nature of these divine events is difficult to assess, for the descriptions are either vague or poorly recorded. What is of particular interest, however, is that, once these "miracles" occurred in the locality of the previous rebellion, one seldom or never finds another uprising occurring in that specific locality. By invoking the mystical, the creation of these "miracles" denoted that the specific vicinity had become sacred due to divine intervention and that future political action in that area might bring forth irreparable harm or even death.

Although Catholic conversion in the Philippines was not passively accepted, the Church had a fairly free reign in accomplishing its ends. The Crown, economically crippled throughout this period due to the fact that quick wealth never resulted from the discovery of precious metals nor vast profits realized from commercial export crops, expressed its presence as the arena which embraced religious restructuring with the hope of minimal involvement and cost. The indigenization of the clergy only occurred during the latter part of Spanish rule, since the Spaniards thought Filipinos could not master the Latin liturgy, let alone the various mysteries of the faith. Although the indigenization of the faith gradually occurred in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century as a native Church, in reality, as the Filipino Jesuit Horacio de la Costa (1972:119) cogently argued, it was "not a native church, but a church staffed by natives".

By 1900, and on the eve of the coming of American Protestantism, the Catholic faith was the dominant religious structure in the northern and central Philippines

and was well implanted throughout most of Luzon, the Bisayas and parts of Mindanao. The Church canons were also the canons of the social fabric and thus the civilizing influence which ideally would fashion and refashion Filipino culture.

America and Protestantism in the Philippines

American Protestant beliefs at the turn of the century expressed the American worldly mission based on nationalism, a sense of patriotism and what was described as benevolent imperialism. The politics of Protestantism in the American Philippines were closely linked to the idea that the enemy was not only Spain but also the Catholic Church, which had corrupted local peoples through a misguided sense of dogma and superstition. Thus, the conviction was that Protestantism would bring forth the best of Christianity combined with another type of civilizing process, one linked to Euro-American liberalism and democracy.

In the early stages of American missionary activity in the Philippines, the feeling was that, although the Filipino was already a Christian, the form of Christianity as expressed in Catholicism was a corruption from a decadent context (i.e. Spain) so that, in theory, the whole conversion process to Christianity might have to be redone. Furthermore, American attitudes at the beginning of the twentieth century were probably more anti-Catholic as well as being anti-Spanish. Thus, many Protestant Churches argued that baptism, as expressed in terms of what the various American Protestant Churches had to offer, was the start of "true" Christianity. Yet, after forty years of work, the impact was quite limited. Conversion of Catholics to Protestantism occurred, but the scale and intensity were minuscule in comparison to what had happened under Spanish rule. In some cases local élites did convert with the inducement that they would be educated in Church-run colleges in the United States, since most higher education in the Philippines was under the auspices of the Catholic Church.

Furthermore, the American Board of Missions continuously pressured the American colonial government through the Governor General's office, as well as the home government in Washington, to place restrictive measures on Catholic Church landholdings, to alter taxation policy towards the Church, and to create other limitations which would curtail the role of the Catholic Church. Although some restrictions were implemented, in most cases they failed to pass due to Catholic pressure in the United States.

By the 1910s a fair segment of Protestant missionary activity shifted from the Catholic lowlands to the non-Christian, "pagan" groups who inhabited the mountainous areas of northern Luzon as well as the interiors of Mindanao and some of the islands in the Bisayas. Non-Christian minorities had the virtue of not being contaminated by Spanish culture and Catholic belief; thus, they could

be incorporated into Protestantism with less trouble, and they could also be acculturated into the American mould of democracy and liberalism. The prestigious Brent school was established in Baguio, where the colonial summer capital was located, and missionary activity moved north towards the Kalinga, Igorot, and Ifugao. Uplanders were brought to the United States as show pieces in the great international exhibitions (St Louis, Seattle, San Francisco, etc.) between 1900 and the 1920s. It was the American experience which would provide the guiding and divine hand to these people as they moved from loincloth to democracy.

Where conversion among the uplanders did occur, however, a number of forces worked against missionary efforts. Partly due to limited resources from the United States as well as a dire need for Church personnel and ordained ministers, the various Protestant denominations devoted their efforts to medical benefits through the creation of hospitals and medical staff who could minister to the health needs of the uplanders. To this day, most of these small field hospitals and infirmaries still operate, though the personnel are now primarily Filipino. Thus, the legacy of American Protestantism in the Philippines is essentially not religious, but lies in the establishment of medical facilities and schools through which Protestantism and Americanism combined to offer the fruits and benefits of Western civilization.

Yet, the conversion of the Philippines was not really the ultimate goal of the American Mission Board. Although the Philippines had to be secured for Protestantism, this was only the initial phase in the process by which American Protestantism moved on to the Asian scene. Laubach's (1925) invocation that "...unless the Philippines are saved we shall lose Asia" meant not only to save it from the Catholic Church, but also to use it as a springboard for practices and methods to be perfected in order to move towards India and China. A vast number of missionaries in these countries received their first taste of the Orient in the Philippines, yet the real gems for Christian conversion were the high civilizations of the Asian mainland.

In a broader perspective, Protestantism's major impact was through its role in the transmission of American values and institutions to a society which had just fought for its independence from Spanish rule, only to lose it again through American intervention. If the American military conquest of the Philippines was in part brutal and even uncalled for, it was Protestantism which restored the dignity of American humanitarian efforts through a benevolent form of imperialism which focused on mass education as the vehicle of cultural progress.²

Christianity in the Pacific

The impact of Christianity in the Pacific must be understood in terms of the initial contact situation and the kinds of changes which ensued soon after contact.

Population decimation in both the high and low islands had a drastic and dire influence on social structures and also on local populations. European introduced diseases moved faster than actual contacts with Europeans, thus in most cases by the time local cultures were encountered by the Europeans, the negative toll of population decline and decimation had already rendered a context of vulnerability.

The extent to which this massive population reduction influenced social and cultural institutions is difficult to determine. Yet, one is reminded of Kroeber's (1948:403-405) classic discussion on how cultural fatigue brought forth internal changes and cultural breakdown in religious structures in Hawaii even prior to the onslaught of European missionary activity. The causal relationships between population decimation and cultural fatigue are not well understood but one can surmise that the influences might have been critical.

For instance, a parallel case is seen on the Micronesian atoll of Nukuoro. According to Vern Carroll (pers.comm. 1980), once the Nukuoro religious leaders were told by German missionaries that their gods were false and had no power, the local religious leaders dumped their religious paraphernalia into the lagoons and thus virtually ended the traditional belief structure and religious system. Events of this type occurred throughout many Micronesian islands from the 1860s to the 1880s. In some cases, the destruction of the native religious structure was simply effected by defecating on the paraphernalia, thus breaking all forms of cultural taboo.

The breakdown of these local cultures throughout the nineteenth century made them vulnerable to quick and partial conversion to Christianity which in most cases was rampant and had a lasting impact. At the same time, Protestant denominations and the Catholic Church operated in a way which was quite different from the Philippine experience. Whereas Spain and the United States provided a hegemonic canopy for Catholic and Protestant activity in the Philippines, this situation was different in Polynesia and Micronesia. Orders and denominations operated throughout the last 150 years in a relatively open context though the imperial powers could be sought for assistance if needed.

As noted by Hezel (1978), Protestant Churches were established early to be self-financed, self-governed as well as self-propagating. This form of self-support followed the American model of local self-rule in which churches were to be established and soon afterwards they were turned over to the people. Ideally, religious symbols, ceremonies and prayer would fit into local custom and tradition which would sustain the impact of the Church. Local congregations would provide pastors, contribute food staples and labour, and would not be a financial drain on the American Board of Foreign Missions. Native clergy was encouraged though they were never fully accepted.

Catholicism was fundamentally founded on saving as many souls as possible. The paganism of local belief was recognized as a debilitating force in the conversion process, thus the Church took an active role in destroying anything which they perceived as deleterious for conversion. Furthermore, a native clergy was created as an ideal aim, but in reality the common feeling was always that local people could never intellectually comprehend the mysteries of the Mass.

Both Catholicism and Protestantism were very critical of local custom, though Catholics were somewhat more tolerant. If Micronesian culture was subversive to evangelicalism, the use of the native language was even more so. Whereas in the Philippines, the various Catholic orders dealt with the mass and ceremonies in the native vernacular, in Micronesia this was not encouraged. Furthermore, communalism in regard to land ownership and private property was opposed by both Catholics and Protestants in a most vociferous way. Just as in the Philippines, a virtuous Christian morality could only be developed and propagated by and through individual worth and responsibility which was only expressed through private property and the commoditization of goods and services.

Christianity did not arrive in a vacuum. The conversion of "heathens and pagans" to a world religion was one issue, the other was the civilizing influence which was actively pursued by the agents of conversion. When the results of civilizing are viewed comparatively between the Philippines and the Pacific, it is apparent that its impact was far greater and deeper among the various cultures in the Pacific. In part due to the encountered situation, Micronesians and Polynesians were more vulnerable to these direct and indirect messages of change and cultural/political domination. The Philippines went through the same process but the consequences were less direct and much more problematic, thus in part explaining how and why local cultures in the Philippines have maintained their own reproduction.

On reading the missionary history of Micronesia and Polynesia, one quickly notes that the number of Protestant denominations were very diverse, especially in Polynesia. This form of diversity did exist among the various Protestant Churches in the Philippines but the range and scope of the diversity is much more limited. Almost all of the major Polynesian islands are characterized by this diversity and probably Tonga is one of the best cases of the multiplicity of these denominations. Korn (1978:398) notes that at least seven denominations of Protestantism existed in a village of 494 individuals of which seventy were Roman Catholics. Individuals have shifting affiliations which appear to fit well with social mobility or more precisely an upward mobility (Korn 1978:417).

What is of interest in the Tongan case is that culturally Tonga has been heavily missionized and most of the cultural and symbolic institutions have rapidly declined or no longer exist. In fact, many anthropologists and historians

who have worked in Tonga could conclude that Protestantism (Methodism and now Mormonism) have historically reworked Tongan culture into a missionary framework. However, the idea of rank and hierarchy which is pivotal to Tongan social structure and social interaction is probably even more buttressed and anchored now, especially since it has been reinforced by Protestantism. Korn (1978:419) notes that the “social system is conducive to the proliferation of denominations”. One could also turn this around by arguing that the social system based on rank and hierarchy is pushed to new cultural complexities and involutions as a result of Protestant religious diversity. Consequently, Tongan culture might have collapsed due to Protestantism, but Tongan social structure and its nuances have pushed rank and hierarchy to new pinnacles of diversity and dominance.

Christianity in the Pacific is still the dominant idiom and expression for cultural reproduction both within the homelands of Pacific Islanders as well as in their overseas communities. The creation of Samoan communities in Hawaii and California is premised on the political and religious conjunction between the Church and local Samoan élites. Throughout California, the Samoan community is nearly always established through the initial creation of a church with its own minister. Ministers are invited (some Samoans say imported) from Samoa. The role of the Church is not limited to matters of the spirit, but also the creation of a political force through the establishment of bingo parlours, which are an important source of revenue. By law, bingo parlours, as tax free institutions, can only occur under Church sponsorship except on federal lands such as Native American reservations. Thus, over the past twenty years there has been a proliferation of Samoan Churches and attached bingo parlours throughout California. Although the bingo complex is only one idiom of Samoan cultural reproduction and community unity, it is a critical focus through which Samoan politics and culture are sustained in a new context.

Conclusion

The transformation of local cultures in the Philippines and the Pacific presents a range of historical and theoretical issues. The lasting impact of Spanish rule in the Philippines was a religious transformation which had a vital impact on local cultures as well as on the growth of national culture over the past fifty years. It was only in Mindanao and in the presence of Islam that limitations occurred on the spatial spread of Catholic influence throughout the archipelago. To a certain extent local social institutions were modified, but in the transformation from Spain to the United States and to nationhood, Philippine culture was maintained both in terms of interpersonal relationships and cultural institutions. The American presence left its legacy in a widespread public education system, which had both positive and negative influences.

In the Pacific, the effects of religious changes have had a more lasting influence on Micronesian and Polynesian cultures. If education was the means of enhancing oneself in the Philippines, the religious domain was as important in Polynesia as witnessed by the way that overseas Polynesian community activity is created and perpetuated.

Social engineering was also a by-product of religious transformations in both cases. Whereas much of this type of social utopianism did not materialize in the Philippines due to the limited number of Church personnel and the lack of interest on the part of the Crown, in Micronesia and Polynesia the long-term political influences had a drastic impact on cultural institutions. Civilizing the Pacific under the guise of religious change meant that whole institutions were in jeopardy of disappearance. The contemporary interest and concern for cultural creation in Micronesia is another expression of the cultural quest to establish tradition by small-scale societies which were demographically and culturally altered through Western imperialism, be it political and/or religious.

Theoretically, Christianity in the Philippines and in Oceania is also a system of thought and action which works primarily at the level of the individual. Furthermore it does not render any particular form of a social totality. In the spread of Christianity, one finds the spread of Christian teachings as expressed through the Bible, the tenets based on Christ, the Pentecost, the conception of the Resurrection, and a dedication to certain teachings in the New Testament. Consequently, the negation of encountered social orders takes the form of comprehending sources of indigenous "evil" or "falseness" which are gradually replaced by new sources of "goodness" and "truth". Although the totality of a new social order need not emerge — as Burrige (1978:19) notes, Christian communities are expressed in and through a wide range of types of social organization — another form of totality must occur within a dynamic Christian context. In this new totality, the individual is expressed as a distinct and responsible unit who bears rights, obligations and responsibilities towards fellow humans as well as to an evolving social order.

However, the evolving social order may take different social forms. Some forms are more compatible with Christianity, others are less so; yet, in each case one finds individuality as one feature which is constant. As Burrige (1978:15) concludes, the concept of individuality, a hallmark of Christianity, is generalized throughout the society in some cases. This in turn may create new social forms in which the cultural logic is based on individualism, thus forming social structures which are, in theory, harmonious with the way in which individualism has re-emerged. New social orders and new moralities would in turn create what Burrige (1978:15) terms the "new man", a conception of the individual closely linked to Christian visions as expressed through the Resurrection.

All societies depend on the activity of individual agents, mediating social structural, religious and philosophical tenets in the course of dealing with daily contingencies. From this process there also emerge new cultural and moral imperatives. However, cultures differ in terms of the depth of the constraints which are imposed on individuals. The dilemma for Christian conversion is not simply the question of substituting one set of religious tenets for another, rather, it involves the development of new forms of individuality from the complex matrix of social structural rules through which all individuals are intricately related.

Burridge (1978) notes that once Christian conversion has created the individual and individuality is expressed through rights, duties, obligations and responsibility, this form of individuality can only be sustained in and through the emergence of money as the medium of exchange. As Simmel (1978 [1907]), followed by Burridge, stresses, it is money which establishes markers between individuals as well as between groups, statuses, interest groups and eventually classes. In some sense, the individuality which is so vital and essential to Christianity is based on money since "Christianity was founded in a moneyed environment" (Burridge 1978:18). Money is the initial opening to the gradual evolving of new political relationships, for once the value of money is recognized, participation in a foreign political economy inevitably follows, thus embedding the initial adherence of a monetary economy to individualism.

Spanish Catholicism in the Philippines was always premised on the conviction that the teachings of Christ through the Church were the sole basis of conversion to Christianity. Whatever emerged as a by-product in terms of economy and society was another issue, though it was recognized that this byproduct might not be ideal. Direct cultural tampering with the encountered social fabric was only done if the missionaries saw it as a hindrance to the conversion policy. Thus, the civilizing process was present, but only tangential to religious dogma and practice.

American forms of Protestantism were always linked to a coterminous connection between God's mission and America's mission. The civilizing role of America at the turn of the nineteenth century was expressed as a necessity and as a virtue, a sense of truth and reason which was manifest in what the American Enlightenment could offer the world. Religion was subsumed under the civilizing process. As a totalizing social experience based on the emergence of the "new man", American Protestantism in the Philippines and the Pacific was the moral equivalent of imperialism, or to put it in another way, Protestantism was the "happy face" of the new social order. In an ironic and sardonic way this has not changed, for the whole of the Protestant movement since the 1850s is still intact, reconfirming Arnold Rose's recent comment to an American missionary "Don't apologize. All Americans are missionaries."

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Yengoyan, Aram A.

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Notes

¹ This was not the case, however, in California where the Church totally controlled the colonization and missionization process. Local indigenous populations died in enormous numbers due to the introduction of Old World diseases. There were also a number of rebellions against the missionaries and border wars grew in strength from the late 1820s through the 1840s.

² One should consult Achutegui and Bernad (1961) and Clymer (1986) for interesting overviews of how Protestantism operated throughout the Philippines and how Filipinos reworked certain aspects of both Catholicism and Protestantism in the formation of native Philippine Churches such as Aglipayanism.