Clash of Spirits

THE HISTORY OF POWER AND SUGAR PLANTER HEGEMONY ON A VISAYAN ISLAND

Filomeno V. Aguilar, Jr.

University of Hawai'i Press
Honolulu
A Clash of Spirits:
Friar Power and Masonic Capitalism

The Historical Construction of Capital-as-Evil

Occurring as part of an Asiatic pandemic, the outbreak of a cholera epidemic in October 1820 claimed thousands of lives in Manila and the nearby towns following a devastating typhoon that ravaged the colonial capital. Because the epidemic was particularly fatal in the villages along the Pasig, the Spanish authorities decided to prohibit the use of river water. They also mounted a relief operation to which the medical personnel of the non-Spanish ships anchored at Manila Bay volunteered their services. In the midst of these extremely unsettled conditions, an invidious rumor began to circulate that the *extrangeros* or “foreigners” (also “strangers”) intended to annihilate the *indios*. They allegedly had perpetrated the cholera by poisoning the water and air of the capital, a scheme they were said to have furthered when their medical personnel administered poison, instead of medicine, to the victims of the epidemic. The evidence adduced for this supposed plot were the specimens of insects, reptiles, and other creatures found in the collection of a visiting team of French naturalists.

The *indios* sought to avenge their grief. As the Russian consul at Manila, who happened to have been in Macao at that time, later reported: “On the 9th of October about 10 or 11 in the morning they collected, to the number of about 3,000 Men armed with pikes knives and bludgeons and proceeded coolly and deliberately to plunder and Massacre all the
Strangers on whom they could lay their hands” (Dobell 1907, 41). Two detachments of troops failed to quell the tumult, which left twenty-eight persons dead: twelve French, two Dutch, and fourteen English and American merchants and seamen—the only pogrom of Caucasians in recorded Philippine history. The following day about eighty-five Chinese were also killed, having been accused of aiding the foreigners in spreading the poison.2

On 20 October 1820, the Spanish captain-general issued a decree to the natives of Tondo Province. In it he rebuked them for their credulity and blamed “certain malicious persons” in authority for having disseminated erroneous ideas that provoked the natives to rise against the foreigners.3 Though only obliquely blamed in the decree, members of the friar community, according to later accounts, were deemed responsible for the macabre episode (Pardo de Tavera 1905, 345; Regidor 1982, 5). That friars were the instigators of the massacre had a strong logical basis, however.

Although an isolated incident, the 1820 carnage encapsulated the primary tensions of colonial society in the early nineteenth century, created by the long-standing dominance of the religious orders and their opposition to the entry of foreign merchant capitalists, who had been quietly admitted to the colony by liberal-minded governors/captain-generals from around the late 1780s. The admission of foreigners was a drastic reversal of Spain’s ancient policy of sealing off colonial possessions from rival Western powers, particularly in the islands Spain had called Las Islas Filipinas, where for centuries international commercial intercourse had been restricted to the galleon trade between Manila and Acapulco.4 The strain in the relations between ecclesiastical and certain types of civilian authorities in the colony reflected the mounting challenge that confronted Catholicism in Spain itself. As their statement against the liberal drift of colonial administration, the clergy apparently exploited the 1820 cholera epidemic and succeeded in doing so owing to the profound influence they exerted upon the indio.

In contrast to the civilian authorities, the friars, as Captain-General Rafael Aguilar wrote in 1804, possessed “el arte de dominar el espíritu del Yndio.”5 In an Englishman’s concurring opinion of 1820, “The degree of respect in which ‘the Padre’ is held by the [native], is truly astonishing. It approaches to adoration, and must be seen to be credited” (Anon. 1907, 113). Given their unique “art of dominating the indio spirit,” the friars would appear to have been the most plausible instigators of the massacre. In Cebu, a rebellion by natives in 1814 “may have been staged” to thwart wealthy Chinese mestizos from penetrating areas claimed by the Augustinians; if anything, the incident proved the friars’
capacity, if they wanted to, to contain indio wrath and persuade them to lay down their arms (Cullinane 1982, 259, 262). During the two-day rampage in 1820, the friars were nowhere visible as a voice of temperance. On the contrary, on several earlier occasions prior to the massacre, the clergy had made public denunciations of foreign merchants as "Protestants" and "Masons," sometimes as "Jews," at all events as enemies of Catholic Spain (cf. Myrick 1969, 123; Regidor 1982, 4–5). Conjoined with the negative image of the Jew in the pasyon and related Holy Week dramatizations of the crucifixion, the Protestant label would have created an overall anti-Christ imagery. These labels and imageries were potent tools that prepared the natives for mobilization by the friars.

However, the friars' name-calling stratagem, which relied upon medieval inquisitorial labels, was rather anachronistic for the 1820s. Not only was the record of the Holy Office of the Inquisition against Heretical Perversity and Apostasy largely uneventful in the Spanish Philippines, but as early as the opening of the eighteenth century the threat of Protestant ideas had diminished and political coexistence with Protestant states had become the norm in Europe (Greenleaf 1966; Lea 1908, 299–317). In Mexico, whence Filipinas was ruled by the metropole, the Inquisition had been moribund. By the eighteenth century, Mexico's Holy Office had become lenient, eventually losing interest in sexual magic, witchcraft, and pacts with the devil, "base superstitions" the Inquisitors by this time had fully equated with the lower classes (Behar 1987). The earlier racial and caste categories (mestizos, mulattoes, blacks, pardos, etc.) that guided the Inquisition—from whose strictures the natives were exempted—had given way to sociocultural differentiation along class lines. Contrary to earlier ideas about race, the dregs among the Spaniards in Mexico could already be lumped together with the gente vil.

The resurgence of a new type of inquisitorial mentality, however, was triggered by the rise of Freemasonry in Europe, a movement whose rites were cloaked in secrecy. From the 1720s the Spanish Inquisition began to sense the potential dangers of Masonry, which had spread to Mexico where the movement recruited members of the nobility and the professional and commercial classes (Fisher 1939; Greenleaf 1969). In Filipinas, the inquisitorial mood was heightened by the British occupation of Manila in 1762–1763 in conjunction with the Seven Years' War. As attested to by Mexican soldiers stationed in the colony, lodges belonging to the Scottish Rite were formed in Manila, which was not surprising as British Masons of this era zealously vied among themselves in creating lodges in whatever part of the world they found themselves (Fay 1955, 120–122, 216). In all likelihood, the natives were excluded from those.
lodges, but this did not stop the friars from publicly denouncing the
British as Jews and heretics (Greenleaf 1969, 99; Myrick 1969, 129). By
the 1780s, secret lodges affiliated with French Masonry, the dominant
strain in the Peninsula, had become active in the colony, coincident with
the incipient liberalized entry of foreigners.

That there was an inextricable association of Catholic Spain’s enemies
with merchant capitalism and political agitation was evident from the
moment the metropole took formal notice of Masonry’s presence within
the empire. In 1754 the Spanish Inquisition warned Catholic bishops to
guard against Freemasons who might be in their sees “for reasons of
commerce” (Greenleaf 1969, 94). Foreign merchants were envisaged as
engaged not simply in trading goods but in peddling dangerous ideas as
well. All over Spanish America, Enlightenment ideas that fostered na-
tionalist sentiments drew further inspiration from the American War of
Independence and the French Revolution, two historic social movements
with links to Masonry (Fay 1935; J. Lynch 1973, 24–36). In condemning
a book published in Philadelphia, the Mexican Inquisition in 1794
derisively referred to the writer as “a bankrupt merchant” who traded in
“sublime goods” that consisted of “impiety and insolence” toward both
“royal authority” and “divine will” (Greenleaf 1991, 258). The resurgent
inquisitorial mood engendered the blurring of conceptual boundaries:
foreign merchants, religious heretics, and treasonous agitators became
intertwined and indistinguishable.

With disloyalty to the Crown becoming a new canon of the General
Edicts of Faith in 1752, the Holy Office in the viceroyalty of Mexico was
increasingly used for political repression. Over a decade later, there was
a marked increase in politically motivated inquisitorial charges falling
under such rubrics as criticism of the king, materialism, republicanism,
Freemasonry, and heretical propositions against the state. As the eigh-
teenth century drew to a close, numerous Frenchmen were so arraigned
(Tambs 1965). But the Inquisitors knew their battlefield, for Masonic
influence did have an intimate link to the revolutionary ferment in Span-
ish America. From the Hidalgo Revolt onward, Masonic organizations
provided inspiration and support to the wars of independence in Mex-
ico and played a crucial role in the immediate postindependence period
(Fisher 1939, 198–214), presaging the Masonic influence in the late-
nineteenth-century nationalist campaign by native elites in the Spanish
Philippines.

The turbulent viceroyalty’s Holy Office, however, could not enunciate
a policy toward Freemasonry for fear of treading upon the toes of pow-
erful colonial officials and creole priests, many of whom had Masonic
ties. Thus, despite the royal edicts of 1812 and 1814 proscribing Ma-
sonry in the Spanish realms (particularly in light of Masonic collaboration in Napoleon’s 1808 invasion of Spain), the Mexican Inquisition treated offenders, especially insurgent clergymen, with leniency. Moreover, the Holy Tribunal restored by Ferdinand VII had become emasculated following its earlier abolition by the Cortes in 1813 (Greenleaf 1969). In all, Mexican Masonry was not stemmed.

Precipitated by such factors as the disintegrating empire in the Americas, liberals allied with Masonic lodges were suddenly, in 1820, returned to power in the Peninsula, dashing hopes of clerical revival nurtured by the monarchy’s restoration in 1814 (Callahan 1984, 110–118). The disappointment over this turn of events, I would think, was widely shared by the colonial Philippine church where, unlike in the Americas, the peninsular-dominated ecclesiastical hierarchy remained staunchly opposed to Masonry and liberalism. Friar emotions leading to the October massacre were also conceivably intense, as that year marked the beginning of the final phase in Mexico’s war of independence, the consummation of the creole-led dream of an autonomous Spanish America. It must have been gravely painful for the churchmen in Filipinas to countenance the loss of Mexico, the last blow in a series of revolutions that gradually shattered the empire.

Producing two-thirds of the world’s silver by the end of the eighteenth century, Mexico, through the Bourbon policy of *comercio libre*, generated revenues that amounted to a staggering fourteen million pesos a year, four million of which were used to subsidize other colonies, while six million represented pure profit for Madrid’s royal exchequer (J. Lynch 1973, 301). As for the church, which controlled the real-estate market and interest rates, its vast financial reserves had formed “the principal lubricant of the Mexican economy” in the wake of currency deficits and excess of imports over exports (Farriss 1968, 164–172; J. Lynch 1973, 302). Despite the belated cessation of two centuries of Manila’s dependence on Mexican subsidy, made possible by the profitable tobacco monopoly, the separation of Mexico, the empire’s most valuable possession, was a loss of gigantic economic and psychological proportions.

In seeking to understand the empire’s fragmentation, Spaniards in Filipinas came to the conclusion that the process of generating wealth, which inevitably pulled countries into the international arena, then rife with libertarian ideas, was responsible for the ultimate debacle that was Spanish America. Even in the early 1800s the friars, along with some civilian officials, equated the presence of a foreign commercial body with political unrest and revolution. Acting on that belief, the religious in Filipinas, whose brethren had led the crusadelike resistance to Napoleon’s invasion of the Peninsula and the earlier British occupation of Manila.
(Callahan 1984, 85–91; Myrick 1969), militantly opposed the accelerating pace of the colony’s economic liberalization.

The growing presence of English, American, French, and other European merchants in Manila began to be perceived by Spaniards in markedly negative terms. An English visitor in the 1820s described conditions at the time as follows:

Foreigners have been . . . gradually admitted since 1800; and they have supplied the wants of the country by introducing European articles, and carrying off the surplus produce, when a sufficient quantity could be procured to employ their capital, which rarely happens without much delay. So rapid has been the augmentation of this trade, that though in 1813 only 15,000 pekuls of sugar were exported, it had increased in 1818 to 200,000, at from 6-1/2 to 9 dollars per pekul. (Anon. 1907, 152–153)

Spanish reaction to this changing economic landscape was one of resentment, founded on the axiom that “a dollar gained by foreigners was one taken from the pocket of a Spaniard” (145), a sentiment that deepened the already existing animosity toward foreign merchants.

Finally, on 17 September 1820, the French commercial ship Orion arrived in Manila Bay. On board was the newly designated intendant general, who brought a copy of the liberal constitution to which Spaniards, including all religious, were required to swear allegiance. While the issue of oath to the constitution was a mere “irritant” to the peninsular church (Callahan 1984, 119), the situation in Filipinas was far different. The document that demanded loyalty extended broad privileges to foreigners who wished to settle for an extended period of time in the colony and conduct business not only in the colonial capital but in provincial areas as well. News of more liberal reforms triggered what the Russian consul described as the “envious disposition, on the part of Spaniards, [which] increased daily, against the Strangers, until an opportunity presented itself of gratifying their malignant hatred . . . and without themselves appearing to have any thing to do in the business” (Dobell 1907, 41). Seeking to preserve Filipinas for Throne and Altar, the friars who were in the best position to ignite the events of October 1820 must have felt completely justified in launching a crusade against a policy of economic change they believed was fraught with devastating political consequences.

In waging their resistance against the foreigners, the friars succeeded in disseminating a system of cultural categories in which the capitalist-cum-heretical-cum-political enemies of the Spanish empire were viewed as the evil opponents of the Catholic Church. The terms of opprobrium “Protestant,” “Mason,” and even “Jew,” became synonymous with the he-
retical and the diabolical (but also monied and seditious), in contradistinction to the “Catholic” (and supposedly loyal, though not as wealthy) Spaniards. Diverging from the pattern in Mexico, the new theocratic terms in Filipinas became surrogate concepts of class. Although ethnicity and race had reconfigured the colony’s sociolegal classification scheme by the early 1800s (Wickberg 1965, chap. 1), informal religious categories emerged to delineate an inchoate capitalist stratum. As a result, foreign traders who set foot in Filipinas (and the sugar-planter class that would later arise in Negros) were apprehended from within the inquisitorial matrix.

As late as the 1860s, “economic reasoning” was condemned at a Catholic university in Manila as a “science of the devil” (LeRoy 1968, 116). As enemies of the friars, the merchant capitalists were made to personify an evil to be shunned: “it is necessary to keep the people away from every point of contact with foreigners,” as even a peninsular official counseled in 1827 (Bernaldez 1907, 208). Ostensibly, the friars’ labeling technique was aimed at preserving religious purity. However, there was also an important pragmatic consideration: to drive an economic wedge between natives and foreign merchants. The export business was dependent upon native middlemen, primarily Chinese mestizos, for the distribution of imported goods to and the collection of exportable produce from the countryside. From 1760 to 1850, the Chinese mestizos dominated the local trading networks after the ethnic Chinese were expelled from the colony in view of their collaboration with the British occupation of Manila. The native mestizos were therefore crucial to the nascent foreign commerce. What better way of disengaging the local population from external trade links than by dramatizing the maleficence and treachery of foreign merchants as purveyors of poison who wanted to gobble up the islands and seize all of their riches?

Death, therefore, would seem to be the just reward for the foreigners’ heinous intent. Death was also the occasion for the final sociospatial segregation dictated by the logic of the colonial society’s classificatory system. Because heretics were seen as polluting the hallowed perimeters of a Catholic cemetery, it was the church’s policy to deny non-Catholics the rites and locus of a religious burial. The fate of natives who resisted Spanish rule, a non-Catholic burial was accorded to the foreigners who fell during the October 1820 massacre. Although most of the dead were Roman Catholics, as the Russian consul averred, their corpses were simply dumped into a mass grave. They were, in the consul’s words, “thrown into a hole together without the shadow of a ceremony or a stone to mark their graves” (Dobell 1907, 42).

As suggested by the 1820 cholera episode, the negative coloration
of capital was forged in the context of the colonial church’s political economy that crystallized in response to the shattering experience of a chaotic, crumbling Spanish empire. Drawing upon inquisitorial categories framed in relation to the social revolutionary ideas of the time, the ecclesiastical battle against saboteurs of what in the friars’ minds ought to be an indissoluble unity of church and state, itself fiercely disputed in the Peninsula, led to the equation of merchant capitalism with heresy and sedition. The purported truth of the inquisitorial labels, in turn, acquired an immediacy to the natives through palpable events that converged in the 1820 cholera epidemic.

The mental construct of capital-as-evil was thus fashioned in the dialectics of a specific historical and structural conjuncture in which merchant capitalism was intertwined with the activities of multiple actors across the globe engaging in rumors, rituals, and revolutions the consequences of which were mediated in the colony by the Catholic establishment. The association of capital with evil was not intrinsic to the commodity form, as Michael Taussig (1980) has argued in the Latin American case, as though commodity relations could be abstracted from their historical embeddedness. Indeed, having been woven in history, the meaning of capital-as-evil was also transformed as Philippine history changed in ways that made possible the eventual triumph of capitalist trade. The intractable economic misfortunes of Spain led to a modification of colonial practices, at the same time that aggravation of the political turmoil in the Peninsula led the Catholic orders to redefine their relationship to the state and their role in the colony.

Capitalist Penetration and Its Mythic Ascendancy

Recurrent economic troubles forced Madrid to pursue a pragmatic continuity in policy within a colonial framework replete with contradictions. The events of October 1820 made the Peninsula realize the urgent need to pursue two goals simultaneously: (1) preserve Filipinas within the Spanish realm, and (2) further promote its economic development. Of all the measures considered—notwithstanding apparent prevarications and a long history of conflict between state functionaries and ecclesiastics—the deployment of more priests and missionaries to the colony was identified by both Manila and Madrid as the key to the attainment of both ends.

The dictum that the ability of one Spanish friar to control the indio was unmatched by even a hundred soldiers was felt to be more pertinent than at any other time since the conquest of the islands in the 1560s. The whole world, it was said, was under agitation. Hence, the friar’s art of domination had to be instrumentalized even more. But only friars
from the Peninsula were to be involved in the new imperial thrust, a lesson the metropole decided it would learn from the involvement of creole and mestizo priests in the Spanish-American liberation movements. Designed to keep in check the native clergy's influence, the fielding of more peninsular priests was seen as strategic to achieving Spain's twin goals.10

Concomitantly, however, the definitive triumph of liberalism in Spain after 1833 saw the dismantling of the absolutist ancien régime church, leaving its remnants the difficult task of adapting to new political realities (Callahan 1984). Among the state-directed measures to restructure the church was the exclaustración of 1837, which led to the closure of seminaries for the regular clergy. This move, however, would have thwarted the strategy of sending more priests to the colony for an explicitly political goal. The solution was found in the retention of three schools, which were placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministerio de Ultramar (Ministry of Colonies), exclusively to train missionaries "for Asia."11 Recruitment to the mission schools at Valladolid, Montaagudo, and Villa de Ocaña was stepped up, with quotas fixed by the Ministerio de Gracia y Justicia (Ministry of Grace and Justice). Imbued with patriotic zeal for one of the very few mission fields available—indeed, virtually the only religious (and monetarily rewarding) activity open to the Spanish, mainly rural, youth at the time—many enrollees from the countryside eagerly joined the Ultramar's mission schools.

In addition to theology and philosophy, the curriculum of the mission schools was modified to impart skills in agriculture, engineering, and the sciences in order to fulfill the economic dimension of the new colonial strategy. The religious who would henceforth embark for Filipinas were to pursue the multiple tasks of winning souls, pacifying the indio spirit, controlling the native clergy, and enlivening the treasury through their participation in the colony's economic progress. Although the antagonism directed at Protestants, Masons, and other enemies of Spain's Catholic empire remained, economic liberalization itself was no longer to be dreaded. Friar opposition to foreign capital was tamed: at least, the heinous scheming behind the October 1820 catastrophe would not be repeated.12

Running parallel to the reconsideration of the Catholic Church's strategic role in the colony was a more candid reappraisal of Spain's colonial economics. Indicative of Madrid's desperate financial strait was the creation in November 1832 of a separate, elaborately named Ministerio de Fomento General del Reino (Ministry for the General Promotion of the Kingdom), the imperial arm dedicated to the "general development" of what remained of "the Kingdom."13 Two years later, the application filed
by Jonathan Peele, an American businessman, for a residence permit in Manila impelled the Section on the Indies of the Consejo Real (Royal Council) to issue a memorandum that served, in effect, as a lengthy form of self-criticism.\(^{14}\)

The memorandum stated that the defunct Council of the Indies had misinterpreted past prohibitions concerning the business and residence of foreigners in Filipinas, as the restrictions contained in the voluminous Law of the Indies were meant to be applied only to the Portuguese. Even more significant was the admission of error in the official view (informed by a mineral-extraction concept of wealth) that foreign trade siphoned off the colony’s riches to the detriment of Spain. Facing their ignorance of capitalism, the memorandum admitted that Spanish officials “had no exact idea about the nature of capital, neither about the role of commerce in the formation of wealth.” Foreign commerce, it was argued, had to be seen in a new light. Far from being piratical, it was generative of new wealth in the country where foreign capital was invested, to the mutual advantage of the foreign capitalist and the host country. The deepening financial crisis pressed home the conclusion that only foreign trade could ensure the colony’s “salvation.”

Quite typically, the reappraisal of Spain’s long-held international trade doctrine met with stiff resistance in official circles, and a protracted period elapsed before policy reforms could be introduced. Notwithstanding official impediments, however, the new economic perspective that had begun to sway Madrid resulted in progressively more liberal, if vexed, colonial policies and practices. For example, a tariff system was imposed to stimulate the economy and raise customs revenue, but the schedule of duties was lopsidedly protectionist, as it exempted Spanish ships but raised the fees on foreign vessels.\(^ {15}\)

Despite such difficulties, Manila was opened to world trade in 1834,\(^ {16}\) an event that pulled the colony deeper into the global arena. The colony’s assimilation to the international capitalist system was signaled a decade later by the synchronization of the Philippine calendar with that of the West through the suppression of the last day of 1844.\(^ {17}\) Ushering in business confidence, the opening up of Manila brought some of the biggest commercial houses to the colony. To overcome the unpredictable supply of local produce that characterized the Manila market, the merchant houses instituted a system of cash advances to middlemen and producers.\(^ {18}\) With the merchant capitalists acting as commission agents, bankers as well as commodity speculators, the import–export trade was raised to unprecedented levels. Sugar production, for example, though largely confined to parts of Luzon and to Cebu and Panay Islands, almost doubled, with export figures rising from 11,602 tons in 1835 to
21,529 tons in 1844, about 70 percent of which went to England and the British colonies.19

The foreign business community eventually became a force to reckon with, its relations with colonial society reaching a climactic turning point at mid-century. Although barred from owning land owing to a fusion of Spanish commercial and ecclesiastical interests (Fast and Richardson 1979, 14), “Protestant” merchant capitalists came in increasing numbers. In the late 1820s, at least seven British and American merchant houses were doing business in Manila (16). About two decades later, there were as many as thirty-nine merchant houses in Filipinas, at least a dozen of them decidedly foreign companies (Benitez 1954, 233; Cushner 1971, 198). By 1846 Manila had forty-six British residents.20 Numerically, the corps of foreign merchants had become a more visible component of colonial society, they who had previously formed the despicable Protestant/Masonic fringe. Their numbers would grow and their activities pervade colonial society even more. But how was the prevailing negative attitude, not least by the native, toward foreigners-qua-Protestants decisively overcome? For an answer, we need to turn to a little-known episode in Philippine history: the marriage of the leading merchant, George Sturgis, of the renowned American commercial house, Russell, Sturgis, and Co., to a Catholic lady in the first Protestant ceremony ever solemnized in Filipinas.

Having been previously associated with the merchants at Canton, Russell and Sturgis began operations in Manila around 1828 and reportedly dominated the sugar trade by the 1830s (Legarda 1972, 30–34; Tarling 1963, 306–310). With Sturgis at the helm, the firm enjoyed the enviable position of representing Baring Brothers, one of the largest and most prestigious English banking houses then active in the Orient. Owing to the superior credit enjoyed by the firm, it essayed what became the customary practice of providing clients a 50 percent advance. To further outflank their competitors, Russell and Sturgis revealed in ostentatious advertising, hosting lavish dinner parties “almost nightly” so that their reputation “spread over the Archipelago” (Regidor and Mason 1925, 27).

Sturgis’ marriage to a Catholic on 22 April 1849 aboard a British warship anchored in Manila Bay heightened the firm’s reputation in a singularly peculiar manner (cf. Santayana 1944, 43). As recounted by a leading Spanish Mason, the event was

at once novel, and yet typical of the repressive influences that had been holding in check, for two centuries, the development of the Philippines. He married at Manila, a young Filipino girl of Spanish descent, Miss Josefina Borras, according to Protestant rites. . . . The [native] Fili-
pinos, taught by the Friars of the awful penalties attached to any connection with Protestantism, expected to see this desecration of their creed meet with some immediate supernatural punishment. In their minds, the event assumed the importance of a trial of strength between the Friars and the firm of Russell, Sturgis, and on the day of the ceremony... they gathered about the landing place, anticipating that the bride would be snatched to the infernal regions. The absence of any unusual episode was attributed to the power and strength of the American firm, and attracted further business from the natives. (Regidor and Mason 1925, 27)  

This wedding ceremony represented a pivotal conjuncture in the capitalistic penetration of the Spanish Philippines, as it ramified in increased native cooperation with the burgeoning export economy. To the segment of indigenous society that then directly dealt with the merchant capitalists, the Chinese mestizos "thro' whose hands pass almost the entire produce of the Country," this episode bestowed upon the firm of Russell and Sturgis what a British merchant was later to allude to as "an attitude of power" that produced "an overwhelming influence" (Tarling 1963, 302). Thus the aura of power and influence sought by foreign merchants was won unwittingly by Sturgis through a historic rite of passage that native observers interpreted as a sign of approval by the entire cosmic polity. In the indigenous worldview, the Protestant/Masonic merchant capitalists had earned spiritual favor through the sheer demonstration of superior strength in their contest with the friars.

The wedding episode served to elucidate "the evil" the foreign merchants represented. Merchants and friars were locked, not in a fight between the two absolutes of good and evil as understood in the Judeo-Christian sense, but rather in the amoral struggle between competing supernatural forces, a struggle decided solely by the superior power of the victor. The capitalist penetration of the colony was thus seen by the natives as a contest between contending cosmic forces, the resolution of which was dictated by sheer might. In many ways, the native's view of a clash of spirits that pitted foreign merchant capitalists with Friar Power was consistent with the political and economic rivalry taking place among Western powers. That the backward colony would resist merchant capitalism with a show of force was also congruent with the Marxist notion of an opposition between capitalist and precapitalist modes of producing and reproducing social life.

Cosmic Struggles, Power Encounters, and Social Stratification

The islanders conquered by Spain in the late sixteenth century saw the physical world as thoroughly suffused by a spiritual dimension. The
people of the islands believed in, feared, and worshipped a host of highly differentiated deities and spirits, preternatural beings the early Spanish accounts referred to as anito among the Tagalog and diwata among the Visayan. These ancestral and environmental spirits were believed to inhabit their representations in wood and stone, explaining the native belief in the potency of icons. Spirits were not always benign, for many were in constant conflict with humans. Reflective of their relative strengths, the islanders’ social world was locally circumscribed while the spirit-world was not.

Unless placated by priestly ritualists, the preconquest shamans, who were usually elderly women known as babaylan in the Visayas and catalona in Tagalog, or effeminate/transvestite men (asog), the unseen beings would cause misfortune to befall such essential human ventures as warfare and the cultivation and harvesting of food crops, especially rice. The late-sixteenth-century Boxer Codex (Anon. 1979, 336) reported, for instance, a certain highly malevolent deity who had to be fearfully implored to spare people from harm as he ambulated about the fields and mountains. The female divinity that reigned on Negros Island’s volcano, variously called Laon or Lalahan, also needed to be invoked during harvests, failing which she would send a horde of locusts to destroy the crops (de Loarca 1903, 135).22

Spirits were also believed to be responsible for causing illness. During the healing ritual, the shaman would offer prayers, food, drinks, and even gold and other valuable gifts to appease the offended unseen beings. She would go into a trance, possessed by spirits with whom she had established friendly relations. If health was not regained, other more powerful spirits were believed to have intervened and overwhelmed the shaman’s spirit-guides (Anon. 1979, 344). As an ultimate symbol of the adversarial relationship between the spirit-world and the human realm, the early Visayans attributed death to the consuming envy of a deity called Macapitan (de Loarca 1903, 133, 135).

The islanders’ mythical understanding of the world portrayed the inherent conflicts that pervaded the cosmos. In the Visayan origin myth, the creation of land was attributed to the strife precipitated by a scheming bird that succeeded in making the sky and the sea engage in battle, the earth being formed when the sky angrily threw islands at the sea (Anon. 1979, 315–316; Colin 1906, 73; de Loarca 1903, 125–127).23 The antagonism later extended to the opposition between land and sea such that “Those who journeyed ashore could not mention anything of the sea; and those who voyaged on the sea could not take any land animal with them, or even name it” (Colin 1906, 78; my italics). In everyday life, the islanders were witnesses to a cosmic struggle in the ceaseless
chase and marital conflict between the female Moon and the male Sun, which erupted when the latter touched and embraced their children, causing them to perish and rousing the Moon's maternal fury. The mythically divine origin of warfare also conferred upon human conflict a natural quality and sense of inevitability (de Loarca 1903, 141).

In the indigenous worldview, reality was also permeated by continual conflict among humans, an interpersonal battle involving what still today is known in Ilonggo and Kinaray-a as one's dungan. Literally meaning "together," the dungan—in Alicia Magos' pioneering exposition of this critical concept—is a life force, an energy, as well as an ethereal entity, a spirit with a will of its own that resides in the human body and provides the essence of life. Apart from denoting an alter ego and soul stuff, the dungan as presently understood refers to such personal attributes as willpower, knowledge, and intelligence, and even the ability to dominate and persuade others (Magos 1992, 47–50).

This multireferential concept is indispensable for our understanding of the primeval Visayan notion of what it meant to be human. Present-day shamans have retained the ancient notion that everyone has a dungan that begins to inhabit the body of its choosing at around the time of a person's birth. The dungan undergoes a process of adaptation and of knowing its world, and must feel comfortably lodged and domesticated in the host person's body; otherwise it could be coaxed by spirits to stray and even be held in captivity, the loss of soul resulting in prolonged illness or death of the host person. When an individual is startled, the dungan jumps out of the body, and the regaining of composure is linked to the dungan's return and the forgetting of its fright. When the person is asleep, the dungan voluntarily leaves the body, allowing one to see one's other self in dreams. While away, the dungan's wanderings must be safe so it can return at the appropriate time, for which reason someone asleep is never rudely awakened.

Differentials in dungan strength—commonly referred to as "height"—signify the latent antagonism in human relationships; this conflict is settled by an act of power on the part of the stronger, metaphorically taller individual. These power encounters start early in life, in the form of the still widely believed phenomenon of usug, which occurs when the weak and unknowing dungan of an infant is frightened at the sight of a stranger, who normally has a more forceful dungan. In its fright, the dungan causes the child to cry, vomit, and experience abdominal pains. To prevent usug—hence to subdue the weak dungan—the adult wets a finger with his or her saliva and applies this to the infant (Tan 1987, 21). A child prone to illness or crying means that its dungan has not fully known and felt confident in its corporeal dwelling, necessitating the per-
formance of a series of rites to familiarize and nurture the dungan in its new habitation. Well-being is therefore synonymous with a dungan that spatially and socially "knows" its place and feels sufficiently domiciled in its new abode, the result of overpowering acts by the adult world.

The dungan is also the traditional idiom for the power encounter and recurrent negotiation over rank among adults of all social strata. An individual with a stronger dungan can overpower and wittingly cause illness in another with a weaker dungan. This can occur through forms of speech ("flattery") or gesture ("a malicious touch") that have the effect of sapping energy and stealing the desired trait of another. The contemporary notion of the dungan (although influenced by what would later be discussed as the gambling mentality and the realities of capitalist accumulation) nonetheless has strong affinity with the idea that the person with unsurpassed dungan exhibits acute intelligence, vast knowledge, indomitable willpower, and self-confidence; generates wealth and an awesome reputation; and exudes capacities to rule, dominate others, and subdue enemies. Feared and respected, individuals of such extraordinary qualities are known in Ilonggo as dunganon, the equivalent of what in Bikol are referred to as "big people" (Lynch 1979). In all, the working out of dungan competition orders personal status, ranks individuals, and stratifies society, with the acceptance or toleration of the outcome easing social conflict and the fluidities of hierarchy.

Based on the contemporary Visayan concept, I surmise that the apogee of dungan strength in the precolonial world was anchored in the person's ability to relate to the spirit-world. Gravitating around such persons would be a set of followers, warriors, and dependants, wanting to participate in the spiritual and material benefits and accomplishments that accrue to persons of strong and tall dungan. The precolonial datu—leader of each of the scattered bands and settlements over which no unifying superordinate political entity existed—most assuredly possessed the ancient vitality and intensity of a forceful dungan, demonstrated in a robust physique, sharp mind, masterful oratorical style, good fortune, bravery, and a loyal, servile, and dependable followership. The datu was a Big Man whose exceptional dungan was indicative of favor from and rapport with the spirit-world, a spiritual relationship that allowed him to fight other datu, attain success, and perform supernatural feats.

Each datu was resolutely independent, especially among the Visayan Pintados, so-called because of the elaborate tattoos that covered the bodies of both men and women (de Loarca 1905, 175). Valorous accomplishments in life conferred upon them in death the self-consciously sought status of an ancestor known as papu. Precolonial datuship as inextricably linked to dungan strength suggests that the islanders shared
with their regional neighbors a cultural theme prevalent throughout early Southeast Asia: the dominance of what Oliver Wolters (1982) has called "men of prowess."

Because not everyone had the same ability to relate to the spirit-world, each band or settlement was stratified according to the distribution of supernatural prowess and the attendant economy of prestige. In an apparent gender division of power, the male datu's elevated status was matched by the highly respected female shamans who were specialists in propitiating the spirits. In rendering their priestly services, the shamans received a gift that signified a preemptive propitiatory act, a form of advanced appeasement to obviate punishment from the spirits who stood with the shaman in providing the service—just in case the recipient turned out to be "unworthy" of the service (Anon. 1979, 335, 343–344; Chirino 1969, 301; Rosell 1906, 217). (Friars would later misinterpret this gift as a form of payment making for a lucrative trade.) As in the datu's headship, wealth obtained through shamanship and displayed in dress and personal adornment articulated the differential status and rank among individuals as ordained by the spirit-world (Chirino 1969, 301; de Loarca 1903, 133).

Social existence in the precolonial world was thus characterized by an endless series of power encounters settled through various acts of potency, victory, and strength. Rooted in origin myths and in explanations of illness, in the antagonism of spirits to humans, in the contests of dungan, in the datu's leadership, and in the babaylan's priestly centrality, the view of reality possessed by the inhabitants of the islands Spain colonized was one pervaded by cosmic struggles. With neither side being inherently good or evil, conflicts were omnipresent in the entire cosmos. The world was experienced and life lived as a material-cum-spiritual arena for the contest of strength and favor, counterstrength and counterfavor.

It was, I believe, from such a cultural window that indios observed and participated in the power encounter between Spanish friars and foreign merchant capitalists. It was from the same vantage point that natives meaningfully interpreted the wedding of George Sturgis as endowing the merchants with mystical prowess capable of challenging Friar Power, the essence of Spanish colonial rule. By virtue of the feat that Protestant/Masonic capital symbolically demonstrated in that wedding, the natives, I surmise, began to ascribe to the merchants a different role in the cosmic order. As mercantile economics was crowned with mythical might, the trading sections of indigenous society found an unequivocal sign that they were transacting with the powerful. No longer were foreigners to be relegated to the social and spatial fringes of colonial society. No longer were they prey to the native's wrath, despite the episodic mor-
tality from cholera epidemics that occurred throughout the nineteenth century. Consistent with the structural changes at the level of empire, the native interpretation of changing colonial realities led to intensified commercial relations and, through networks of intermediaries, encouraged further export-crop production in the countryside. Sturgis’ wedding served as pivot and augury of things to come.

The basic cultural constructs the natives used to interpret the triumph of merchant capitalism were the same ones they relied upon to comprehend the earlier power encounter with Iberian conquerors. Despite phenomenal continuity, however, the islands’ indigenous cultures and societies had already undergone a radical reconfiguration by the time of capitalist incorporation in the nineteenth century. The depth of the colonial transformation of the islands needs to be understood from the moment of conquest, the task set out for the next chapter.
Notes

Introduction

1. Nagano (1982), however, emphasizes the period's push toward "rationalization" centered around improved technology and the wage-labor system.

2. This statement reappears in McCoy 1984, 78. McCoy quotes approvingly the "counterhistory" written by Columban priests, which asserts that "Within thirteen years of his arrival at the Port City of Iloilo on 31 July 1856, Nicholas Loney had killed a city, raped a province, destroyed all local industry and initiative, and had set up an economic system which insured a life of increasing poverty for the vast majority of the people, and super profits for the rich" (75).

3. A more general statement on such duality is found in Iteo 1988.

4. For a fuller discussion of the theoretical concerns of this study, particularly the transcendence of the base-superstructure model, see Aguilar 1994a.

5. A specific instance in Philippine historiography of gross distortions arising from ignoring the structure-agency dynamic is the 1855 opening to world trade of provincial ports. See Aguilar 1994c.

Chapter 1 A Clash of Spirits

1. The captain-general, Mariano Fernandez de Folgueras, reported that 5,000 fell victim to the cholera epidemic. El Capitan General da cuenta de las novedades ocurridos en aquella Ysla con motivo de la Epidemia, coleramorbo, Manila 10 November 1820, AHN Legajo 5152, Expediente No. 3.
The first of a series of global cholera pandemics in the nineteenth century hit Asia from 1817 to 1824. About five months before the outbreak in Manila, an epidemic struck Siam (Thailand) in May 1820, claiming the lives of about 30,000 people (Terwiel 1987). In Java, an estimated 125,000 died during the cholera epidemic of 1821 (Boomgaard 1987). For a discussion of cholera epidemics in the nineteenth-century Philippines, see Huetz de Lemps (1990), Smith (1978), and De Beoise (1995).

2. Cf. El Capitan General da cuenta de las novedades . . . , AHN Legajo 5152, Expediente No. 3. For a fantastic account of the massacre, see de la Gironiere (1962, chap. 1).

3. Along with the letter of Peter Dobell, the Russian consul, the decree of Folgueras is cited at length in B&R, vol. 51 (1907, 43–45).

4. The galleon trade reduced Manila to a mere transshipment point for the exchange of Chinese silk and Mexican silver. It was terminated in 1815.


6. Describing them as "usually from the drags of other nations," a civilian official accused foreigners in the 1820s of having "clandestinely introduced impious, revolutionary, and obscene books printed in the Spanish language, but pirated in France . . . " (Manuel Bernaldez 1907, 207–208). In his secret report of the 1840s, the noted diplomat and "liberal" Sinibaldo de Mas looked unfavorably upon "the introduction of inopportune books," saying that he knew "of one who left in a house in a town in the province the history of the American Revolution." He recommended enforcing "the laws prohibiting foreigners from going to the provinces and not to open wide the doors to their admission to the capital. This policy is suspicious and unenlightened but still useful for preserving the colony" (de Mas 1963, 169; italics in original).

7. El Capitan General da cuenta de las novedades . . . , AHN Legajo 5152, Expediente No. 3.

8. Cf. Dobell (1907, 41); and Medidas para la admission y permanencia de estrangeros, AHN Legajo 2140, Expediente No. 10. See especially the Fiscal's dictamen of 9 November 1826 and the Real Tribunal de Comercio's memorandum dated 15 December 1826.


10. El Capitan General de Filipinas manifiesta ser conveniente la remesa de Religiosos Españoles . . . , AHN Legajo 5153, Expediente No. 57. The letters from two captains-general, dated Manila 12 April 1823 and 26 Janu-

11. AHN Legajo 3150 contains several unnumbered expedientes (files) from 1820 to 1845 dealing with the topic "Misiones de Asia." Cf. especially the exhaustive report dated 19 February 1845.

12. There were limits to this liberal trend. In 1841 an English firm wanted to purchase the Dominican estate of Calamba, which had an annual production of 6,000 cavans of rice, 100 quintals of indigo, and 20,000 pilones of sugar. An indignant Dominican exclaimed: "But put the hacienda in English hands, and who will benefit? Only the foreigner, and the native will receive a daily pittance and he will return it in order to purchase cloths, food and foreign trinkets." Addressing the spectre of Protestantism, he concluded, "And within a few years Calamba would be a colony of pagans." The sale was not consummated (Cushner 1971, 208).

13. Contestaciones á ordenes expedidas por el Ministerio del Fomento, AHN Legajo 5153, Expediente No. 9. See especially the letter from Intendencia General de Exercito, Manila 31 January 1833.


15. To avoid paying an additional 8 percent duty above the 6 percent charged the Spanish ships, merchants devised a system of transshipping imported goods from Europe to Spanish vessels in Hongkong or Singapore, which then brought these goods to Manila. Cf. Jagor 1965, 11; Mallat 1983, 465, 488–506; and William Farren to the earl of Aberdeen, No. 6, Manila 8 February 1845, FO 72/684.

16. In that year, the Real Compañía de Filipinas, organized in 1785 to stimulate agricultural production in the colony and trade with Spain, went bankrupt, thus forfeiting its exclusive trade rights.

17. Farren to the earl of Aberdeen, Manila 7 January 1845, FO 72/684.

18. For a succinct overview of the foreign merchant houses in nineteenth-century Manila from the perspective of the abaca trade, see Owen 1989, chap. 2. Note, however, that Owen tends to underemphasize the role of natives as middlemen in the first half of the century.


20. Farren to the earl of Aberdeen, Manila 19 July 1846, FO 72/708.

21. The philosopher George Santayana, son of Josefina Borras by a second marriage after Sturgis' death, was probably responding to this, then widely known, story by stressing in his autobiography that his mother's marriage to Sturgis was "rationally chosen" (Santayana 1944, 42). His account rectifies the misconception that Borras was a Spanish mestiza as, according
to him, she was born in Glasgow around 1826 of Catalan ancestry. In 1845, she sailed to the Spanish Philippines with her father, who very briefly held a position in one of the provincial governments. Orphaned at twenty and the only Spanish civilian on a remote island, she “adopted the native dress,” (38) which gave her the appearance of a mestiza. After about two years, she went to Manila to live with a creole family. She was about twenty-three when she married the thirty-two-year-old Sturgis. Santayana describes his mother as follows: “if she was not a Protestant, at least she was no bigoted Catholic, but a stern, philosophical, virtuous soul” (42). Santayana’s autobiography was recently republished; see Holzberger and Saatkamp 1986.

22. Two other chroniclers equated Laon, meaning Antiquity, with the Tagalog’s Bathala Meycapal, but did not mention Laon as inhabiting the Negros volcano (Chirino 1969, 279; Colin 1906, 70).

23. Combining themes of life and death, reproduction and destruction, “complementary dualism” is a prevalent feature of thought in island Southeast Asia (Fox 1987, 520–527).

24. Variants of this reputedly Visayan folktale can be found among the Tinguian of northern Luzon and the Mandaya of Mindanao (M. C. Cole 1916, 65, 145, 201).

25. The ng in dungan is pronounced as in English “singer.”

26. This custom was derided by a friar who wrote, “It is laughable to see them waken another who is sleeping like a stone, when they come up without making any noise and touching him very lightly with the point of the finger, will call him for two hours, until the sleeper finishes his sleep and awakens” (de San Agustin 1906, 211). The sleeper referred to could conceivably be a Spaniard, particularly a friar.

27. There is some parallelism between the concept of the dungan and its height among the hierarchical Visayan with the notion of the height of a man’s heart as determined by bəye (knowledge) and liget (anger, passion, energy, force) among the more egalitarian Ilongot. See the fascinating ethnography of Michelle Rosaldo (1980).

28. The ng in dunganon is pronounced as in English “finger.”

29. For an interpretation of the fluid hierarchy of precolonial Tagalog society, see Rafael 1988.

30. Suggestive of the relationship nurtured with the spirit-world, a chief in Bohol “kept many cups and small jars full of charms, together with other instruments for casting lots” and divination (Chirino 1969, 384). The Tagalogs offered sacrifices in “certain private oratories” owned by chiefs (de San Agustin 1906, 334). Until the late nineteenth century, the principal Bukidnon datu were in exclusive possession of a highly respected “idol called Tigo- bas” (Clotet 1906, 295, 304–305).

In seventeenth-century Mindanao, Sultan Kudrat, who practiced “sorcery” according to a Jesuit report, was the exemplar of a datu’s magical
prowess. Among his extraordinary abilities, he could cause “the fish to enter his boat” and could make “a piece of artillery float on . . . water.” He had tools for “good or evil augury.” Because he talked “very familiarly with the devil,” he became “a greater king than any of his forebears; for their fear of him is incredible, as they recognize in him one who has superior power to avenge himself” (Combes 1906, 138).

31. For the sociological connection between chief and shaman, cf., among the early Spanish accounts, Chirino (1969, 302) and More (1906, 204). For parallels in modern-day Bukidnon, see Cullen (1973, 8–9, 27–28).


CHAPTER 2  Cockfights and Enchantos

1. Until 1768, except for parish priests, some soldiers, and a handful of civilian officials, colonial law prohibited Spaniards from living in provinces beyond Manila. The friar was the only permanent colonial fixture in most areas outside the capital (Larkin 1972, 29).

2. Cited in Phelan 1959, 34. The same phrase was used in the conquest of Mexico (cf. Behar 1987, 34).

3. Some terms differ across ethnolinguistic groups, which is indicative of the absence of a national means of communication for most of the Spanish colonial epoch; other terms probably became generalized as a result of modern mass media. Nonetheless, the advent of colonial rule and increased mobility within given regions, I think, allowed for the common usage of these terms beyond the narrow confines of one village, town, or even province.

4. It was noted that the natives’ “horror for Cafres and negros . . . is so great that [they] would sooner suffer themselves to be killed than to receive them” (de San Agustin 1906, 254). Although kaffir is Islamic for “infidel,” which might suggest that the entry to the islands of the word kapre might have predated Spanish colonialism, it is also probable that the dread of the kapre came with the cafres and other black slaves bought by Spaniards from Portuguese traders for use in the Spanish monastic estates in the Tagalog region, a practice that lasted until the 1690s (Cushner 1976, 47–48).

5. This list is certainly not exhaustive. There are also numerous terms to denote rites and implements, such as santiguar, bentusa, etc., which are of Spanish derivation.

6. For similar but less detailed descriptions arising from fieldwork in the Visayas, particularly Negros, see Hart 1966, 67, and Lieban 1962, 307.

7. Chapter 1, note 26 suggests that the natives perceived the Spaniards as possessing dungan.

The Formation of a Landed Hacendero Class in Negros

The Race of Races and the World Market's Allure

At the time of its opening to world trade in 1855, the Iloilo port area was the center of a thriving piece-goods trade controlled by the Chinese mestizos of Molo and Jaro. The native textile industry, which produced finely crafted sinamay and piña fabrics woven from cotton, silk, and pineapple and abaca fibers, had exported its products to other parts of the Spanish Philippines and to overseas markets since the mid-eighteenth century (McCoy 1982a, 301–302). In the 1850s local textiles worth an estimated $400,000 (Mexican) were annually exported by mestizo traders, who embarked “in numbers from 6 to 10, 15 and sometimes twenty in the coasting vessels leaving for the capital.” On their return, European, chiefly British, goods amounting to about $30,000 to $40,000 (Mexican) per month were brought to Iloilo and sold in the larger markets of Jaro, Molo, and other towns whence some goods gradually found their way to the interior.

But the mestizos soon found themselves facing stiff competition from the ethnic Chinese, generally males, most of whom had migrated from the Hokkien language area (Doeppe 1986; Wickberg 1965, 48–61). The readmission of Chinese sojourners and their participation in economic activities outside Manila were made possible by the colonial state’s liberalization of immigration, residential, and travel restrictions commencing in the 1830s. By the 1850s, there were about thirty Chinese in Molo and about two or three in Jaro who had established permanent
shops as agents or partners of Manila Chinese.² In 1861, Nicholas Loney reported that mestizo traders were being squeezed by the Chinese who procured manufactured goods “from first hands in Manila.”³ The Iloilo Chinese were positively advantaged by their participation in the so-called cabecilla system, an ethnically based trading network that appeared in the 1840s and lasted until the 1880s. This network enabled the Chinese to present a united front in bargaining with the European importers whenever a cargo of textiles arrived in Manila, and it assured all Chinese wholesalers, including smaller Manila dealers and those based in provincial capitals like Iloilo and Cebu, a supply of textiles for sale (Wickberg 1965, 74). On their part, foreign commercial houses found the Chinese network advantageous, as the imported goods obtained the broadest possible distribution. The Chinese traders also doubled as a network of purchasing agents that provided the Manila-based foreign merchants a steady supply of exportable produce. Faced with such formidable competition, the Iloilo mestizos could not but lose out to the Chinese.

It must be noted that in spite of the opening of Iloilo to world trade the direct flow of imported goods to the region did not commence immediately, in part because of the unsettled market conditions and the “cotton famine” triggered by the American Civil War in the first half of the 1860s.⁴ Moreover, British shipmasters continued to complain about the unsatisfactory and dangerous state of the Iloilo port’s entrance.⁵ In the early 1870s, the direct import trade between Iloilo and Britain was considered “very limited” and did not exceed £20,000.⁶ The direct importation of cotton goods and textiles from Manchester and Glasgow into Iloilo did not reach significant levels until the 1880s; and only in 1888 did the direct trade in textiles peak, its value exceeding 3.3 million pesos (cf. McCoy 1977, 62–63). The sluggish growth of direct trade notwithstanding, the flow of imported goods via Manila through the Chinese trade network continued, this indirect trade (rather than the opening of the Iloilo port per se) dealing the fatal blow to the trading activities of the Iloilo mestizos. Spaniards with interests in the mestizo-led coasting trade were also badly hit.

The financial decline of the mestizos resulted in racial tension, manifested in “a more or less subdued feeling of hostility towards [the Chinese] and a tendency both among mestizos and Spanish to regard them as interlopers.”⁷ Viewed as naturally vicious, Chinese shopkeepers, as their numbers rose, began to push the mestizos out of retail trade, which the latter increasingly found “much more difficult, precarious and unre- muneratorive.”⁸ Ejected from “a branch of commerce where they had become superfluous,”⁹ the mestizos began to shift their attention to agri-
culture. The displacement of mestizos in Iloilo and in other parts of the colony bred a general resentment against the Chinese, which prompted the mestizos to oppose vehemently the idea of importing Chinese coolie laborers to solve the perceived problem of labor shortage (a position they staunchly clung to even during the American colonial period). However, as far as Loney was concerned, that the mestizos diverted themselves to sugar production suited his schema that an appropriate racial category develop the region’s agricultural potential, race and class being conjoined in his frame of mind (cf. De Rooy 1990). Although the Chinese occupied a somewhat higher position in Loney’s racial hierarchy, he reported that “their numbers in the interior are too few to enable them to cultivate the ground on a large scale, and in small isolated bodies they would not have sufficient security against the ill will of the natives.”¹⁰ Loney’s desire that “more capital and intelligence” be applied to agriculture saw partial fulfillment when the mestizos turned to sugar production, especially on adjacent Negros Island. In setting their sights upon sugar, the mestizos deliberately abandoned the native textile industry to rapid destruction.

By 1861, Loney reported that, along with a few Europeans, a “great number of Iloilo mestizos” who “hitherto [had] been engaged in the piece goods (wholesale and retail) trade in this province” had already “invested in the large tracts of fertile and well-situated land on the coast of Negros.”¹¹ In contrast to the indios, whom Loney depicted insultingly as “a set of deceitful, lazy vagabonds,” the mestizos he regarded as “a remarkable commercial, industrial and speculative race” who were “increasing yearly in social and political importance, and though not so fully possessed as the Chinese of the persevering and commercial qualities necessary for continued success under the pressure of great competition, are not without pre-vision, energy and enterprise.”¹² Sharing the social Darwinism sweeping Europe at that time, Loney applauded the formation of a sugar-planter class extracted from mestizo stock.

Clearly, the advance of capitalist free trade in the Iloilo-Negros area was accompanied by social reorganization and economic sectoral transfers caused by the wedge between mestizo and Chinese. Given impetus by the dynamics of the local cultural milieu, the resulting changes were more attuned, as far as the British vice-consul was concerned, to the requirements of the world market. Capitalist penetration converged structurally with the ethnic tensions peculiar to the plural society of the Spanish Philippines. In other words, despite his racism, the institutional linkages to the world market he sought to build, and the initial capital he lent to interested parties, Loney did not engineer the mestizo-Chinese competition that facilitated the emergence of a sugar-planter class in
Negros. Local actors as human agents in dialectical interaction with changing structures adopted strategies that resulted in the willful neglect of the mestizos’ economic interests in Iloilo in favor of sugar production in Negros.

As early as 1857, the speculative mestizos, according to Loney, were favorably responding to the “very high prices which have been ruling in Europe for sugar for some time past” due to the Crimean War, the prices serving as “a great inducement” for natives to cultivate “any amount of sugar” (Loney 1964, 71). Moreover, the “high prices” of the initially trifling amount of sugar exported to Australia from the Iloilo port in 1859, compared with what planters would obtain from the Manila market, “led planters and others to see how much they benefit by the direct trade.” Along with remunerative prices, the establishment of commercial houses in Iloilo that handled Negros sugar afforded the advantages of a secure market as well as “prompt cash transactions in place of the delay and risk of forwarding consignments to Manila.”

The allure of windfalls, indeed of suwerte, from export agriculture attracted the nascent capitalist mestizos to gamble on cane growing and raw-sugar production. The Iloilo price per picul of sugar was definitely on the rise: from a range of 1.25 to 1.50 pesos in 1854 to 3.25 pesos in 1866, and still further to from 4.75 to 5.00 pesos in 1868 (Jagor 1965, 220). The initial direct shipment in 1859 raised Loney’s expectation that the following year’s crop would be “ten times larger” than that of 1856 (Loney 1964, 97; italics in original). Rising world market prices induced greater sugar production. The Iloilo port saw its direct sugar exports rise sharply from 584 tons in 1859, to 1,555 tons in 1860, to 3,722 tons during the first half of 1861; these figures represented 11 percent, 22 percent, and 95 percent, respectively, of all sugar leaving Iloilo. As direct sugar exports rose, sugar shipments to Manila declined. Notwithstanding erratic prices from 1880 to 1889, the Iloilo port exported sugar at an annual average of 78,345 tons, registering a peak of 165,407 tons in 1892 (Foreman 1899, 295–296).

In the early 1850s there were in Negros only four notable hacienda owners: the creole Spaniards Agustin Montilla in the sitio of Pulupandan in the town of Bago and Eusebio Ruiz de Luzuriaga in Bacolod, the Frenchman Ives Leopold de Germain Gaston in Silay, and someone called Tia Sipa in Minuluang (present-day Talisay). Their combined annual sugar production reportedly totaled 3,000 piculs (Echauz 1894, 22–23). With the opening of the Iloilo port to world trade in 1855, the ranks of Negros hacienda owners—or hacenderos in local parlance—soon expanded to include the mestizos who decided to leave their Iloilo-based trading activities to relocate to Negros. Also moving to Negros were a
number of blancos, with few exceptions peninsular and creole Spaniards, who, as later discussions in this chapter will show, had virtually no capital for investment in sugar production but who nonetheless dreamed of building a fortune by cashing in on the island's economic boom.

The admixture of different racial and ethnic groups was potentially problematic. Europeans of all shades did not look kindly upon the native, and even among Spaniards the peninsular and creole categories formed a major divide. In the 1860s, Jagor made the trenchant observation that, in Manila:

Life in the city proper cannot be very pleasant; pride, envy, place-hunting, and caste hatred are the order of the day; the [peninsulars] consider themselves superior to the creoles, who, in their turn, reproach the former with the taunt that they have only come to the colony to save themselves from starvation. A similar hatred and envy exists between the whites and the mestizos. (Jagor 1965, 16)

The creoles were known to have disdained agriculture and commerce, so they relied primarily on their posts as colonial state employees. Within the bureaucracy, however, they could not aspire to any position of significance because the best sinecures were assigned to Spaniards born in the Peninsula. Despite cultural and physical similarities, the accident of birth outside the metropole and the bureaucratic structure of empire created deep feelings of separateness; indeed, the creoles of Latin America became the pioneers of modern nationalism (Anderson 1991, chap. 4). National differences were articulated at the same time in economic terms, so that cultural and nationalist consciousness blended with class awareness and economic conflict, in the same way that the racial and caste categories of the Inquisition discussed in Chapter 1 had given way to cultural differentiation along class lines within the emerging national societies.

But the animosity between creole and peninsular did not hinder members of both groups from trying their luck in Negros. In 1861 there were a total of thirteen blancos in Negros in various occupations, a number that rose to twenty in 1866; by 1880 the count was placed at sixty. 18 In 1888 as many as 254 blancos, all but five Spanish, reportedly resided on the island, along with 631 Chinese, most of whom were devoted to trade. 19 The magnetic pull of Negros contrasted sharply with Pampanga where, also in 1888, resident Spaniards numbered fifty-eight only, of whom only a small number (twenty-seven) were classified as agriculturists (Larkin 1972, 77). The 1888 data for Negros indicated that the majority of blancos were clustered in eight towns, with the largest concentrations found on the
eastern side of the island. The Recollect historian, Fr. Angel Martinez Cuesta, has observed a spatial distribution among the three ethnic categories of hacenderos (Cuesta 1980, 376). For instance, the peninsulars congregated in the town of La Carlota, the creoles in Jimamaylan. Mestizos, on the other hand, predominated in Minuluan, Silay, and Saravia (present-day E. B. Magalona). Apparently, the location of haciendas followed a pattern of clustering and segregation along the cultural and somatic lines that stratified colonial society.

Nevertheless, social cleavages no longer posed insurmountable barriers. In Bais, creoles and peninsulars were mixed together, while mestizodominated Minuluan had twenty blancos. The Negros export economy helped blur, to a degree, the social divisions that previously were all-important in colonial society. Whether mestizo, creole, or peninsular, everyone had embarked upon the same journey with a common object. On the island of Negros they faced the same vicissitudes and hopes. However, once they had settled and carved their own niches and hacienda enclaves, the journey turned into a social game that simultaneously emphasized as well as deemphasized racial and status differences.

As migrants starting from about the same footing, as no one possessed spectacular capital such as to outshine the rest, the hacenderos were comparatively even, rather equally matched—an essential rule for combatants in the gaming arena of the cockpit. As in any contest, the sugar game produced winners and losers, the differences becoming more apparent after a series of matches. In the race of races, the mestizos were in the lead of sugar production. Excluding Minuluan, seven towns with a sizeable number of blancos in 1888 had an estimated annual sugar production of 187,500 piculs. In contrast, the two overwhelmingly mestizo towns of Saravia and Silay produced 245,000 piculs, which, when combined with the annual output of Minuluan, totaled 405,000 piculs, or 42 percent of Negros's aggregate sugar production (Table 1).

Earlier in 1881, the local elite (principality) composed of officeholders in the different Negros townships assembled to list the residents in their respective towns from whom at least 200 pesos could be collected in property and business taxes. This exercise yielded 1,009 names, a monied group that no longer coincided with the extant political elite of the island. The Negros export economy had produced a new economic elite, one composed primarily of migrant mestizos. The towns with a concentration of at least forty such individuals had no sizeable blanco population, except for Bais and to some extent Minuluan.

Numerically, the mestizos were the most visible beneficiaries of export agriculture.
Table 1.
Principal Agricultural Production per Year, by Town, Negros Island, 1880s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Sugar (Picos)</th>
<th>Rice (Cavans)</th>
<th>Corn (Cavans)</th>
<th>Tobacco (Fardos)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negros Occidental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argüelles</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacolod</td>
<td>19,500</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binalbagan</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabancalan</td>
<td>41,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadiz</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calatrava</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauayan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancalan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escalante</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginigaran</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granada</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guihujigan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilog</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabelia</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isiu</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimamaylan</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Carlota</td>
<td>48,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manapla</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minuluan</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murcia</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.S. de las Victorias</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontevedra</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Enrique</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saravia</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silay</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suay</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumag</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valladolid</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>873,500</td>
<td>303,500</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>3,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Sugar (Piculs)</th>
<th>Rice (Cavans)</th>
<th>Corn (Cavans)</th>
<th>Tobacco (Fardos)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negros Oriental</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amblan</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayuñgon</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayuqutan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon*</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bais</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daun</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumaguete</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guihuhgan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimalalud</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10,450</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuyod</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nueva Valencia*</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siaton</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibulan</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanjay</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tayasan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolong</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamboanguita</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>965,100</td>
<td>315,900</td>
<td>68,250</td>
<td>4,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Datos estadísticos conocidos, Memoria de la Ysla de Negros, 31 May 1888, PNA Memoria de Negros, Oriental y Occidental.

*Bacon and Nueva Valencia also produced 1,000 and 4,000 piculs of abaca, respectively.

Further data disaggregation showed that 187 individuals, or 18.5 percent of the 1,009 listed names, were deemed liable to pay more than 1,000 pesos in taxes.23 Although not an exclusively mestizo group, the wealthiest hacenderos were found in sizeable numbers in predominantly mestizo towns, particularly Ginigaran and Saravia.24 In Bacolod, the mestizo Teodoro Benedicto was the only one who made it to the highest tax category, while the creole Jose Ruiz de Luzuriaga was classified along with six mestizos/natives in the over-500-peso category.25 Evidently, mestizos had surpassed the blancos in the contest of wealth, a fact made even
more salient in elite consciousness by the very exercise of ranking one’s peers for tax purposes.

With profits from sugar making, the mestizos who had mimicked the Spaniards to deal with the cultural ambivalence of their middling position found grounds to feel on a par with, if not superior to, the blancos. The impressive economic showing by individual mestizos, which allowed them to purchase the trappings of a European lifestyle, must have taught them that they could truly aspire to the status of the colonial hombres superiores. The imperial fear that the colonial subjects would imagine themselves equal to the power holders had been realized, but not in the leveling field where indios would toil alongside poor Spanish peasants, as Madrid had earlier imagined. On the contrary, the perception of equality came with the attainment of economic success. Money ignited the mestizo nationalist imagination: henceforth, money and nation would dance around each other. The mestizos began to see themselves as akin to the “Filipinos,” the creole label designating Spaniards born in Filipinas. This same label, which mestizos would later appropriate to designate a newfound sense of national identity, would be used to emblematize the commonality of birthplace and, in due course, to homogenize the mestizo and the indio.

The imaginings of equality notwithstanding, the mestizos’ cultural ambivalence persisted. Unlike their role as liminars in the cockpit, in the broader arena of life the mestizos were marginals who had no assurance of a final resolution to their deep feelings of cultural ambiguity (cf. Turner 1974). The status anxiety was provoked, I believe, by the fact that the mestizos who aspired to “Filipino” status were not unaware of the foreigner’s taunt of the Spanish. In 1850s Iloilo, Loney himself had described Spaniards in the colony as, “from a social point of view, of a third or fourth rate sort, many of them ex-mates of vessels and that sort of thing who have left the sea and taken to small trading operations” (Loney 1964, 60). Such class contempt could only be thinly disguised by the upwardly mobile British, although Loney seemed particularly skillful at dissimulation. Because they also tried to imitate the foreigners, the mestizos immersed themselves in a convoluted mix of ranking systems.

But although interaction with foreign merchant capitalists accented feelings of cultural ambiguity and problems of identity, the mestizos found it necessary to ally with them in order to gain access to the capital that lubricated the sugar economy. Moreover, it was precisely in the reliance upon foreign capital that mestizos were on a level with the similarly capital-starved Spaniards. Regardless of race or ethnicity, hacenderos were ostensibly even in their equal dependence upon the foreign commercial houses at Iloilo for the funds that defrayed hacienda pro-
duction. The social distinctions that energized the sugar contest were simultaneously overshadowed by a sense of uniformity that hacenderos were all players in a game which, despite British and American dominance, could reward astute players with money that somehow knew no race, even as money held different meanings for the various players. A document about the state of Negros Island in the decade ending 1887 provides graphic evidence that sugar capitalism could transcend racial barriers: the signatures of peninsulars like Miguel Perez and Domingo Tejido appeared side by side with those of mestizos like M. Locsin and [uan] A. Araneta.\(^{27}\)

Negros had become like a giant colonial cockpit where social categories were intermingled. As Jean Mallat incisively observed elsewhere in the 1890s, "On holidays, the curious people flock from all sides to these [cock]fights: not only Indios are to be found there but also mestizos, Chinese and even Spaniards; all ranks and status are mingled and confounded; the priests sit beside the military" (Mallat 1983, 301). Like the imaginary egalitarian world of the cockpit, Negros had become an arena for the phenomenological forgetting as well as affirmation of the social classification scheme of colonial society.\(^{28}\) Moreover, like the colonial cockpit where law enforcers mixed with law offenders, the distinction between the legal sphere and the illegal was progressively blurred. Thus pursuing their suwerte—a concept shared by mestizos and Spaniards alike—the hacenderos were all gamblers in the sugar economy where they had been lured by the prices and profits afforded by linkage to the world market.

**Hacendero Gambling in the Negros Sugar Cockpit**

Occupying the time and saturating the thoughts of hacenderos, gambling bloomed into a worldview that served as the operative framework in the farms of Negros. In a way, hacienda production was pitted in a contest with the elements, the unpredictable rains and the periodic infestations of locusts. The risks were heightened by the uncertainty of whether a sufficient number of workers could be found in time to harvest the cane (Echauz 1894, 75–85). The unforeseen and uncontrollable factors surrounding sugar production legitimated a gambling principle encapsulated in the hacenderos' "faith in an unwritten law of crops, which they often quote, i.e., that the good and bad crop years alternate" (Hord 1910, 14), like the flipping of a coin.

In a deeper way, the hacenderos deployed the gambling mentality to make systematically calibrated moves that contravened colonial state regulations concerning labor, as the next chapter will show, and concerning land, as this chapter's discussion suggests. Gambling confounded the ap-
pearance of dualism that seemingly separated the loyal colonial towns from the unsubjugated hinterlands, the religious subjects from the heathen rebels, the orderly and law-abiding insiders from the troublesome outlaws. The putative alliance between sugar hacendados and the colonial state was less straightforward than had previously been portrayed in Philippine historiography (Ileto 1988; McCoy 1982b, 173; McCoy 1992). On the contrary, in pursuit of their sugar interests, hacendados gambled with the state for the chance that they would neither be caught nor prosecuted by a weak colonial state in the process furthering its enfeeblement.

Moreover, as a speculative gamble, the sugar industry required enormous funds to prepare the land; purchase cane points, work animals, and machinery; construct lodgings and warehouses; and build access points. Although on their own they did not have sufficient resources, the hacendados could utilize somebody else’s money—the foreign merchants—as stakes in the game of sugar. The chain of borrowings initially pivoted around Loney who, using funds supplied by Russel and Sturgis, built a warehouse on the Iloilo waterfront and began the practice of lending capital to hacendados at 8 percent annual interest; at the same time, Loney extended credit payable in four to twelve months for the express purpose of acquiring modern machinery. Paying their loans in the form of raw sugar, the hacendados still garnered high net returns because of the rising prices and the technical changes that augmented sugar yields.

Dependence on credit became deeply ingrained in the minds of the sugar players. The system of cash advances practiced by foreign commercial houses as a mechanism to secure access to exportable produce was a business strategy that became the hacendados’ addiction. Instead of channeling their surplus into savings and investments for the next crop year, the hacendados were wont to gamble away a huge chunk of their profits and to spend the rest in conspicuous consumption. As John Foreman observed in the 1890s,

although [the native planter] may owe thousands of dollars, he will spend money in feasts, and undertake fresh obligations of a most worthless nature. He will buy on credit, to be paid for after the next crop, an amount of paltry jewellery from the first hawker who passes his way, or let the cash slip out of his hands at the cock-pit or the gambling table. (Foreman 1899, 307)

Habits forged by earlier generations of natives in the wake of colonial subjugation, particularly gambling and the ostentatious display of prestige goods as unstable status markers, forestalled capital accumulation. Confused over the position they occupied in colonial society, the mestizo planters were further influenced by the reputed flamboyance of the
merchant capitalist lifestyle exemplified by Russel and Sturgis. Amid the ambience of easy money and accessible suwerte came the constant need for capital, thus perpetuating the yearly cycle of cash advances and loans from the commercial houses—a practice that did not differ much from the indebtedness of indio sharecroppers. Eventually, as we shall see in Chapter 7, the annual running-into-debt habit would be institutionalized by the American colonial state. Meanwhile, given the outstanding loans they had incurred, Foreman projected that, if forced to liquidate within twelve months, “certainly 50% of [all the Philippine planters] would have been insolvent” (ibid.).

But the risk of insolvency and failure was just that: a risk among many risks. Cane cultivation and sugar making, after all, constituted a foreign-funded game in its entirety, the production phases being a staggered and protracted liminal period when all forces, from weather to locusts, from spirits to labor, could affect the outcome in unexpected ways. In every agricultural cycle, the mystery deepened after the weeding period, when the growing canes were purposely left unattended, when the fields were said to be “closed” (cerrado), at least to human intervention. Like the last phase of a struggle, the harvesting came, followed immediately by the caking of sugar. Then, as in cockfighting, the sentencia began: the counting of the number of pilones made, the grading of sugars, and, above all, the revelation of prices and the rough estimation of gains. Then Negros was abuzz, as it was about the same time each year, preoccupied with ranking winners and losers according to their greater or lesser suwerte.

Marketing soon became a strategic game in itself, especially after sugar prices became highly erratic in the mid-1880s. One was never sure what the gains would be from one year to the next. But unless the planter was completely bound to a credit source, as the industry’s periodical noted in the 1920s of an old hacendero practice, “it was his habit to gamble with the market or to await an auspicious moment before selling his sugar,” such as the meaningfully impregnated time of Holy Week (Sugar News 1924b). As reported at the turn of the century, the foreign merchant houses at Iloilo indeed saw sugar planters as “gambling in their product,” for instance, by delivering their sugar stocks to the traders without actually selling until a given day when, following a lucky date or a prophetic dream, the price of sugar was expected to rise (Stewart 1908, 200). Thus, the hacenderos dabbled in the market; and not surprisingly, as prices constituted the aspect of the industry best known to most hacenderos who, as a rule, were hardly conversant with the technical or financial intricacies of sugar production. As former textile traders, playing with prices was what they knew.

In the 1850s, Loney observed that “a superior class of sugar” could
not be produced in Negros because of the "very defective nature of the process employed by the native and 'mestizo' planters."  In the late 1880s, Spanish officials in Negros observed that the hacenderos were "absolutely devoid of agricultural instruction" and that 95 percent of them were extraneous to the sugar industry.  The lack of agricultural expertise was similarly observed in Negros as well as in Pampanga during the early American period.  In financial management the hacenderos also had negligible technical knowhow. In the 1920s, it was reported that planters did not keep financial books and had no precise financial picture of the hacienda (Sugar News 1920b). As Carlos Locsin observed of his fellow mestizos, who by then had developed the "Negrense" identity, it was "exceptional to find hacenderos who keep cost account records or even a segregation of accounts in order to determine the actual field expenses as distinguished from other running expenses connected with the management of a sugar cane plantation" (Locsin 1923, 73). In cognizance of this problem, the Philippine Sugar Association (PSA) began to make a concerted effort to disseminate a system of accounting for sugar plantations.

Still, the American-dominated PSA, notwithstanding the by then illegal status of gambling in the United States, relied upon the gambling mentality to prod the sugar planters in the American Philippines. In the early 1920s, at a time of dropping sugar prices, an editorial of the Sugar News (1922i) reaffirmed that "The gambling instinct is strong in most of us. We like to take a chance. Surely the Filipino hacendero, at the moment, has an excellent opportunity to gamble on the future." For the possibility that prices might suddenly rise, the editorial asked, "Isn't it worth the gamble?" Official policy pronouncements to the contrary, elite gambling was exalted.

In the present century, as in the past, regardless of the earnings for the year the hacenderos have been consistent in the avidity they have shown toward the cockpit, card games like monte and panguingui, mahjong, and other forms of gambling—a behavior analogous to that of the slaveholders of 1680s Virginia who sought to underscore their freshly acquired gentility (Breen 1977). By the late nineteenth century, high-stakes gambling had become a desirable outlet for the display of hacendero wealth. For wagers they reportedly risked titles to haciendas and sometimes sugar by the shipload once the wads of cash they had brought along to the gambling dens had been exhausted. A law passed in 1861 limited the amount that could be staked by any person on a cockfight to a maximum of fifty (Mexican) dollars, but the hacenderos could not be bothered by such petty legalism (Artigas 1894, 152; Foreman 1899, 406; Worcester 1898, 286). After all, as Francisco Varona wrote in the 1930s, the specu-
lative spirit was "the first manifestation of opulence and good taste" for the region's "legendary magnates," such as Isidro de la Rama, who philosophically considered the "calculation" involved in gambling as a suitable "sign of intelligence and of mastery over self." In 1939, a Bacolod newspaper editorial admitted that the gambler "is as respectable as a saint or a reformer" (The Commoner 1939b). As a system to stratify the ranks of sugar planters, gambling gave the ancient Visayan notion of interpersonal dungan rivalries a modern expression as hacenderos engaged in their contests of acumen and grit, skill and otherworldly favor, strength and superiority. Gambling was the foundation of the sugar-export economy and society.

Betting on Land, Gambling on Legalism

In the pursuit of suwerte, control of cultivable land, like casino chips, was integral to the broader game of sugar. To acquire more land for sugar-cane cultivation hacenderos adroitly manipulated the legal system to their advantage. In particular, because the Laws of the Indies recognized the right of usufruct, natives could reclaim land by judicial recourse to the court injunction known as the interdicto de despojo. Combined with other means, this legal provision was utilized by Teodoro Benedicto, the mestizo cause célèbre from Jaro, to acquire vast tracts of land in the central interior of west Negros.

Benedicto's alleged machinations were roundly protested by eleven Spaniards from the town of La Carlota in a petition to the governor-general dated 12 August 1876. In clamoring that Benedicto's interdictos be nullified, the petitioners argued that these types of legal document were easily falsifiable: (a) the written testimony of a complainant pretending to have once been the possessor of a piece of land now occupied by certain John Does (Fulano y Mengano); (b) the complicity of three witnesses; and (c) the posting of a bond, all of which were sufficient grounds for a judge to issue an injunction. In turn, with the assistance of local officials, particularly the town magistrate (gobernadorcillo), the document could be used to summarily order legitimate occupants to vacate the land.

Benedicto's detractors vouched that he had seized "perhaps no less than" the equivalent of seven thousand hectares in Negros. "With no law other than his own caprice," Benedicto, according to the Spaniards, had also diverted the river waters of Najalin, in the process depriving haciendas in La Carlota of irrigation. Alleging that Benedicto was not "without imitators," the peninsula's identified the creole Bonifacio Montilla of Bago as having similarly usurped the two barrios of Santa Teresa and Zaragoza and "extended his property toward the slopes of Kanlaon."
Using colonial discourse for their own ends, the Spaniards lamented the injustices inflicted upon displaced indio settlers. Although the complaint about misuse of legal procedures seemed valid, the La Carlota peninsulars' act of publicly denouncing Benedicto was more suggestive of the ethnic conflict that fractionalized Negros' emergent hacendero class than of genuine concern for native welfare.

A few days before the peninsulars wrote their statement, two of the petitioners, Lucas Rubin and Manuel Pacheco of La Carlota, and a third person, Alejandra Bagallon of the town of San Enrique, were implicated on 1 August 1876 by fifty-five residents from the barrio of Borja in Pontevedra. In this earlier instance the Spaniards were accused of appropriating "immense" parcels of land in sitio Panlopgasan, which were converted into exclusive pasture lands where indios were barred from entering even if merely to gather forest products for subsistence.\footnote{A fortnight after the La Carlota petition, another testimony dated 27 August 1876 was executed by ten native principales from Pontevedra with the stamp (Visto Bueno) of the parish priest. In it Lucas Rubin was charged with constructing a canal that "diverted the waters of the river Bujangin from its natural course, depriving everyone of water in the barrio especially in years of scarce rainfall."} A fortnight after the La Carlota petition, another testimony dated 27 August 1876 was executed by ten native principales from Pontevedra with the stamp (Visto Bueno) of the parish priest. In it Lucas Rubin was charged with constructing a canal that "diverted the waters of the river Bujangin from its natural course, depriving everyone of water in the barrio especially in years of scarce rainfall."\footnote{A fortnight after the La Carlota petition, another testimony dated 27 August 1876 was executed by ten native principales from Pontevedra with the stamp (Visto Bueno) of the parish priest. In it Lucas Rubin was charged with constructing a canal that "diverted the waters of the river Bujangin from its natural course, depriving everyone of water in the barrio especially in years of scarce rainfall."} A similar pattern emerged in the case of another piece of property purchased by Benedicto. The vendor, Micaela Herrera, had earlier requested a survey of the land "conceded by the principales of the town" because, "with the passage of time the old boundaries had been confused, although the land appeared to have measured 300 cavans."\footnote{Arguing that after two years one's claim to ownership could be forfeited through noncultivation, which implied "abandonment" (cf. Corcuera and Cruzat 1907, 198), the Pontevedra elite expressed their own view of the matter by calling for "equitable distribution" by restoring the contested property to "the legitimate owners," the settlers who had occupied the land before Espinosa and Herrera entered into transactions to sell those properties.} Meanwhile, in October 1876 the plot thickened when the parish priest sought the Negros governor's assistance on behalf of the residents of La
Carlota’s barrio San Miguel, citing that they had been twice expelled from the land after Benedicto had illicitly extended the boundaries of his Hacienda San Bernardino. Claiming to have bought the farm from the Custodio family in 1871, Benedicto later claimed that the legal papers of that purchase had been destroyed in a fire that gutted his Illoilo residence. For his part, Mauro Custodio, gobernadorcillo of Pontevedra, was identified in a complaint filed in 1872 as having “usurped” thirteen hectares in Binigsian, La Carlota, accomplished in all likelihood with the connivance of Joaquin Custodio, the local juez de sementeras in charge of adjudicating agricultural conflicts.

In evaluating the case against Benedicto, Negros governor Ramon Pastor found that the mestizo had been the recipient of two interdictos, one for 90 hectares in La Carlota and another involving 44 hectares in Isabela. But Benedicto had also used other tactics. Testimonies of thirteen Spaniards and twenty-one displaced migrant indios in the investigation conducted by the Inspección General de Montes in March 1877 revealed that Benedicto had resorted to intimidation. Threatened by armed men, occupants of lots adjoining Hacienda San Bernardino were made to sign documents that relinquished a total of about 272 hectares in exchange for compensation amounting to 1,029 pesos, purportedly for clearing the land of forest growth. By coercing the occupants to sell, Benedicto enlarged his hacienda from about 800 hectares to over 1,100 hectares and could even produce documents supporting his contention of a legal purchase, a tool that assured him of judicial victory.

While providing a glimpse of Benedicto’s nefarious activities, the investigation was also suggestive of a serious conflict between Benedicto and the peninsulars, for the latter evidently had sought to acquire some of the contested land parcels. One of the eleven petitioners, Teodoro Gurrea, for instance, allegedly offered 200 pesos for the 18 hectares tilled by the indio Vicente Agatis, but the latter refused, only to be pressured by Benedicto into accepting 100 pesos for the land. (Incidentally, just a year before the peninsulars filed their protest, Gurrea had borrowed 4,500 pesos from Benedicto, with Gurrea’s 119-hectare hacienda in La Carlota as collateral.) The investigation concluded that Benedicto “and his accomplices” were criminally liable for the methods they had employed, but the legality of the land acquisition itself could not be ascertained. In a decision penned in June 1883, the Real Audiencia de Manila exonerated the local officials involved and endorsed the case back to the Court of First Instance in Negros, deemed by the Audiencia as the only competent body to resolve the issue. The collusion of local functionaries with land grabbers went unpunished.

To the envy of his peninsular opponents and the misery of migrant
*indio* settlers, Benedicto thrived on winnable court suits brought about by the ambiguities of colonial land laws, the anarchic land market in which transactions could be consummated *sin formalidades* (without formal procedures), and the absence of an orderly system of property titling and registration. Benedicto, however, was not the only one who exploited the malleable legal system. As some Spanish officials were prepared to admit, there were “countless” cases resulting “continually” in dispossession because of the misuse of the *interdicto de despojo.*54 In response to complaints about the *interdicto,* officials in Manila reacted by defending the judicial instrument as well “within the existing legal framework.”55 By allowing formal legalism to triumph over sound governance, the colonial bureaucracy perpetuated the twilight zone of the law. All that the governor-general did was issue a banal instruction to parish priests and local officials to inform the people and “make them understand” that legal remedies existed in case they were wrongly subjected to an *interdicto de despojo.*56 In 1880 the *Real Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais* appealed to Madrid to legislate reforms on the *interdicto,* but the request was met with the almost predictable fate of imperial inaction and apathy.57

In the meantime, countless peasants were dispossessed even as the *interdicto* figured in the incessant squabbles among *hacenderos.* For instance, it was central in a case involving Antonio Buenafe, leaseholder since 1879 of Hacienda Daumon in Victorias. Some 50 hectares of the leased property were encroached upon by Manuel Suarez in 1887 and restituted to Buenafe in the same year; but two years later 13 hectares were again usurped by Manuel’s son, Felix Suarez.58 *Interdictos* and counterclaims were also employed in a litigation that lasted a decade involving 25 hectares in Tangcong, Saravia, which Julian Gigiento claimed he had legally purchased in 1873 but which, in 1881, Pedro Montino claimed as his inherited property.59 Paradoxically, despite elite games against the colonial state, the *hacenderos* nonetheless continued to appear before the colonial judiciary to sort out their differences, suggesting differential use of the state apparatus. The settlement of intra-*hacendero* disputes over land seemed to be one of those instances when the parties concerned regarded state intervention as useful. After all, in the cockpit as well as in a court of law, the *sentencia* was passed by an individual appointed by the colonial state (cf. Artigas 1894, 152–153).

In addition to sensational cases of land grabbing (*usurpacion*), the *hacenderos* resorted to various other means of acquiring land. Particularly in the more settled zone along Negros’ western coast (Figure 2), appreciable changes of property ownership entailed the purchase of farm lots already cleared of forest growth—belying the image of planters as pioneers romantically painted by the hagiographer of Negros *hacenderos,*

335
FIGURE 2. Map of Negros Island with its Pueblos c.1890
Formation of a Hacendero Class

Francisco Varona (1965). Because small indio landholders were willing to receive cash for land long made productive, probably thinking there were no serious obstacles to opening up new land for cultivation, they sold off their fields, usually without the legal formalities. This pattern of land acquisition accounted for the large concentration of sugar production by the 1880s in the established coastal towns along the northwestern portion of the island (cf. Table 1).

The farmland transactions notarized in 1861 (the first year for which a fairly complete record is available) revealed that thirty-one of the thirty-six legible cases involved the sale of land that ranged from small plots of about 2 hectares to at most 60 hectares. Nearly three-fifths of the plots sold were located in Bacolod, and slightly over a fifth in Pontevedra. The average land sale involved approximately 16 hectares valued at 246 pesos, or an average of roughly 15.5 pesos per hectare. Close to three-fifths of the land sales involved a Spanish buyer.

By 1875 some 800 hectares changed recorded ownership, the largest parcel measuring 200 hectares. This time the farmlands were acquired mostly by mestizo buyers (Spanish buyers formed only one-fifth) and were somewhat more evenly distributed from Cadiz in the north to Ilog in the southwest. Reflecting the profitability of sugar, the average land sale involved about 35 hectares worth 1,039 pesos, each hectare costing an estimated 30 pesos, or about double the 1861 figure. Of the other forty-five notarized farmland transactions in 1875, most were either requests for the "legitimate title" of land "long held without interruption" or the mortgaging of property. In absolute terms, a greater area was involved in requests for titles, as the average case measured nearly 120 hectares, which the predominantly mestizo petitioners invariably claimed as the aggrupation of small plots bought over the years from several previous owners.

The land market continued to thrive, with an unprecedented 3,117 hectares being sold in thirty-one documented transactions in 1890. Four transactions involved haciendas at least 300 hectares in size, with another five involving 100 hectares or more. In general, the 1890 public notary records reflected an enlargement in the average farm size sold (about 100.5 hectares) and mortgaged (125 hectares), whereas in 1875 the corresponding figures were only 35 hectares and 45.5 hectares, respectively. Three and a half decades after the region's direct incorporation to the world market, the pattern of land distribution had become more skewed: as haciendas expanded in size, more and more land areas were falling under the control of fewer individuals. The increasing concentration of land was suggestive of a trend toward the centralization of wealth in the hands of large (and luckier?) hacenderos.
Despite the sugar crisis that began in 1884, the average sale price per hectare in 1890 was computed at 28.3 pesos, only slightly lower than 1875’s 30 pesos, while the average value per hectare of mortgaged property amounted to 25.5 pesos, nearly the same as 1875’s 26.5 pesos. But the fact that entire haciendas were being sold or leased meant that those more averse to taking risks were seeking to temper the sugar gamble. However, the crisis did not drastically destabilize the sugar industry, and the properties for lease or sale were not without takers, who believed that market woes were amenable to “calculation.” Certainly, land speculation was ripe when uncultivated portions of the public domain were auctioned off in 1890. In seven such auctions, about 874 hectares were sold by the colonial state, averaging 270 hectares at a giveaway price of just over 2 pesos per hectare.64

A land registration scheme introduced in 1889 provided yet another facile means to claim and control land legitimately. Data from 1894 to 1896 indicated a total of 538 land parcels registered for the first time in Negros.65 Land parcels not exceeding 20 hectares comprised over half of the properties registered; in fact, plots 10 hectares in area or even less comprised 37 percent, suggesting that smallholding peasants also took advantage of the chance to formalize their claim to land. But the most cunning players were the bigger hacendados. During this three-year period, they registered 128 land parcels ranging from 21 to 50 hectares; they also registered another 51 parcels that varied from 50 to 100 hectares, and as many as 76 parcels that exceeded 100 hectares.

The resulting pattern of landholding was characterized by a few relatively large haciendas and a preponderance of small and medium-sized farms.66 Through various means, legal and extralegal, an inequitable land distribution pattern became entrenched in Negros. Nevertheless, even the island’s largest nineteenth-century haciendas were comparably small by the standards of Latin America’s latifundios, which ran into several thousands of hectares.67 Probably in recognition that they fell markedly short of the scale and grandeur of Latin America’s landowners, the local sugar planters desisted from calling themselves hacendados, the Spanish word for landowner. Instead, they settled for the humbler term that had long been used in the Spanish Philippines: hacendero. In reports and memoranda about Negros, Spanish officials, especially when addressing Madrid, normally explained hacendero in an aside as the local custom: “como se titulase en la localidad.”

The hacendero tag, however, was strangely inappropriate. As a noun, it originally referred to a daily wage worker in the mines of Almaden. In contrast, the Negros hacenderos saw themselves as belonging, economically and culturally, to a class category far superior to that of a wage
Formation of a Hacendero Class

worker. Indeed, they fancied themselves as constituting an aristocratic class, a new oligarchy pretending to be old, with self-consciously crafted images of gentility supported by a life of leisure and gambling. Their style of life resonated oddly with the adjectival meaning of hacendero, which referred to someone thrifty and industrious, for thrift was furthest from the language of the sugar hacenderos, who approached the growing of cane and the marketing of clayed sugars as one big gamble.

Thus, hacendero was an oddly fashionable term, but every landowner relished being known by such a label, no matter the size of his or her farm. To belong to the elastic construct of the hacendero class permitted the use of the coveted titles of Don and Doña, now accessible even to those who did not come from the old native elite. The owner of 5, 50, or 500 hectares could claim the old honorifics in the new capitalist age of the late nineteenth century. Undeniably, differential adeptness at the sugar game resulted in an evident system of social stratification. Even so, it was reassuring that all were intermingled in the same colonial gambling den where to be hacendero meant to express unbridled individualism as each player asserted the strength of one's dungan in pursuit of suwerte.

The Colonial State and Foreign Capital in Negros

The fact that the gambling den that was Negros was lubricated by foreign capital did not please the colonial state, despite the high revenues generated by the Iloilo port where, as in 1891 and 1892, customs collections surpassed 1.3 million pesos. Spanish functionaries complained that the merchant houses were the real beneficiaries of foreign trade and not the hacenderos, much less the colonial state. Structurally, however, sugar planters had little option but to rely upon the merchant houses.

In the matter of technology, for instance, Loney's tied loans for the purchase of British equipment to upgrade local sugar manufacturing became indispensable, inasmuch as the colonial state was "opposed to the practice of foreign importers of machinery at Manila [selling] on other terms than cash." How, then, were the hacenderos to improve backward techniques of sugar production as they had no wherewithal to acquire machinery? As it happened, technical change began to dawn upon the region only after foreign merchants and local planters decided to bypass the colonial state's obstructionism. By 1861 Iloilo Province had three animal-drawn iron mills (molinos de sangre) and one steam-powered mill; even more noticeable was the change in Negros, where, in 1857, there had been only one iron mill but where, four years later, thirteen were in operation. By the late 1880s, there were 500 iron cattle mills in Negros, supplemented by 200 steam engines and 30 water-powered mills.

Less than a decade after the Iloilo port's opening, the island of Negros

339
was already being referred to as _el emporio de la riqueza_ (the emporium of wealth) of the Visayas. Nevertheless, the dramatic boom of Negros did not coincide with the dreams of patriotic Spaniards who, thinking themselves cheated, began to reactivar the exclusionary term _extranjero_. Among those who emphatically denounced the foreign merchants was Remigio Molto, head of the Provincial Government of the Visayas based in Cebu. In the mid-1860s Molto wrote in a memorandum that the Spaniards who had ventured into Negros were poor retirees who had served either in the military or the civilian bureaucracy and whose meager salaries did not allow them to accumulate the needed capital for sugar production. This “misfortune,” he said, was exploited by foreign merchant capitalists, who were charging exorbitant rates of interest, forcibly making Spaniards buy machinery and other items, and requiring the Spanish debtors, whose loans were tied to the standing crops, to surrender their produce at prices lower than prevailing market prices. The result, according to Molto, was prosperity for the predatory foreign commercial houses but misery for the Spaniards who—like the sugarcane—were “smothered,” unable to extricate themselves from the foreigners’ iron hands, which literally “squeezed” them of cane juice.

Spaniards in Negros were said to be desperately selling their properties, and the specter was raised that eventual foreign ownership of _haciendas_ would make a mockery of Spanish suzerainty: “and Filipinas would become a foreigners’ province with Spanish authorities” as mere figureheads. Molto’s fears, however, were baseless, as foreigners did not dominate landownership in Negros. Specifically mentioned among the Spaniards who were supposed to have sold out were “los señores Coscolluela, Lasuriaga y Macunana.” Only the last name, however, does not figure among the large sugar planters in late-twentieth-century Negros, and its disappearance may have been due to reasons other than those raised by Molto. Moreover, though foreigners did acquire properties in Negros, these were eventually bought by mestizos.

At any event, Molto suggested several measures that would turn the tide in favor of Spaniards, such as exempting their work force from corvee labor and deploying corvee workers to assist Spanish planters in dire need of farmhands for harvesting and other tasks. He also suggested, as many others had done before and have done since, that an agricultural bank be created to lend capital at low interest rates so that Spaniards could cut their dependency ties (_dependencia_) with the foreign merchant houses. But Molto’s suggestions were either politically ill-advised or financially infeasible. The “dependency” connections were not severed, even as interest rates in general soared due to the unabated demand for capital. In the notary records, interest rates jumped from
9 percent in 1861 to from 12 to as much as 36 percent in 1875, declining somewhat to from 6 to 20 percent in 1890. The wealthier sugar planters also began to loan funds to smaller planters at even higher interest rates than those charged by the commercial houses. Despite ostensible problems of capital, labor, and transportation, the Negros hacenderos pushed ahead with their production, and sugar exports continued to rise, even as Spanish officials saw fit to continue to denounce the foreign merchants.

Reporting on conditions in the mid-1880s, Antonio Tovar, the governor of Negros, censured the commercial houses at Iloilo for being “casas acaparadoras” (monopoly houses) that purchased Negros sugar on grossly unfair terms by virtue of the crop loans. Except for Ynchausti y Compañía, a Spanish commercial house based in Manila that loaned to a number of sugar planters in Negros, the sugar export trade in Iloilo in 1886 was dominated by four British commercial houses (Smith-Bell & Co., Ker & Co., W.F. Stevenson & Co., and Macleod & Co.), one American (Peeler-Hubbell & Co.), and one Swiss (F. Luchsinger) (McCoy 1977, 85, 87). Tovar accused these Iloilo exporters of colluding on the prices paid for Negros sugar. Whether or not he was aware of the broader crisis in the global sugar market at this time did not seem to matter, for he called the prices “arbitrary” and pinned the blame on the foreign merchants’ whims. Censuring the latter as “fingidos protectores” (deceitful protectors), the governor listed the merchants’ malpractices as including: (a) the absence of a “legal classification” system to determine the quality and value of sugar; (b) tampering with weighing scales; (c) the practice of tara, by which the buyer made the sugar producer pay for packing the sugar; and (d) manipulations like “humidifying,” which lowered sugar volume, and changing the sacks of the sugar temporarily stored in Iloilo warehouses even when not needed. Even the means of transporting sugar from Negros to Iloilo were also apparently controlled by the merchant houses (Stewart 1908, 180). The disastrous outcome, Tovar averred, was that “bit by bit the monopoly houses at Iloilo appropriate the wealth . . . leaving behind in such a fertile island nothing but the frustrated dreams of the planters.”

The sugar planters were probably cognizant of the delicate balance in their relationship with the foreign traders, which hovered between exploitation and mutual advantage. But the hacendero point of view was certainly different from that espoused by Spanish officials. The planters instead faulted the colonial state for exacerbating their problems. Not only were they deprived of technical and credit assistance and a supportive administrative system, but they were made to bear an additional burden arising from a new tax on urban property and industrial-commercial
income, without the "odious" diezmos prediales (tithes on real estate) being abolished. This imposition prompted sugar planters to devise schemes to reduce or avoid paying the new tax, a strategy at which Philippine elites have been most adept. Although some were caught, they were eventually absolved of any offense, suggesting that taking gambles with the state does pay off. To the planters taxation was a mere irritant and did not constitute an insurmountable problem. What they found most offensive were the contradictory policies at the level of empire, which prompted the hacenderos to enter into a formal alliance with the foreign merchants despite harangues by such Spanish officials as Molto and Tovar.

The crisis of the 1880s starkly demonstrated the chaos and apathy that beset Madrid and their deleterious consequences for the Spanish Philippines. The bounty system, which subsidized beet-sugar producers in Germany and France, occasioned a precipitous decline in world sugar prices, with the year 1884 particularly critical, as it saw total Philippine sugar exports plummet by over 42 percent from that of the previous year. The decline in sugar exports, the scarcity of rice that required huge importations from French Saigon, and the withdrawal of about 4 million pesos from the colony to support Madrid left the colonial treasury with a loss of about 17 million pesos in 1884. Amid this crisis, Madrid made policy decisions detrimental to Philippine sugar. First, on 25 July 1884, Madrid reduced by 5 percent the export duties on Cuban products. Then, a little over two months later, on 5 October, the sugar exports of the Spanish Antilles, Cuba, and Puerto Rico were allowed duty-free admission to the Peninsula.

In objecting to such moves, the colony's most important commercial interests, Spanish and foreign alike, lamented that their needs were heard "so late and sometimes inexact at the bosom of the Mother Country." They beseeched the Ministerio de Ultramar, in December of that crisis-ridden year, to place Philippine sugar on an equal footing with that of Cuba and Puerto Rico to encourage fair competition. In July 1885 Madrid acceded to only one item of their petition, that of allowing Philippine sugar duty-free entry to the, in any case, almost negligible market in the Peninsula. This concession paled in comparison to Spain's other market interventions. Notwithstanding formal representations by Philippine sugar interests in Madrid and the support extended to the December 1884 petition by the highest Spanish officials in Manila, Spain went ahead to conclude negotiations on a treaty that granted Cuban and Puerto Rican sugar duty-free entry to the vast and lucrative United States market. In January 1885 the "businessmen and agriculturists" of Negros and Iloilo reacted in disbelief. They told the Ultramar that they preferred to view the "omission" of Filipinas from the
coverage of that treaty as an "involuntary lapse of memory," which ought to be rectified to forestall the "complete ruination" of sugar production, the principal pillar of the colonial economy.88

The United States had become the major market for the sugar produced by the Spanish Philippines beginning around 1869, and its importance became pronounced in the 1880s (see Table 2). The United States absorbed over half of Philippine sugar exports in 1882 and more than two-thirds of that in 1883. Thus the Negros and Iloilo sugar interests reasoned that the U.S. market was indispensable to the colony's sugar industry, in much the same way that Cuba depended upon the U.S. market for some 80 percent of its sugar exports. Exclusion of the Spanish Philippines from the treaty was catastrophic, especially so for Iloilo's sugar exports: of the 1,518,341 piculs exported in 1883 (which comprised 45 percent of the aggregate volume sold by the colony), as much as 80 percent went to the United States.89 Undoubtedly, the duty-free admission of Cuban sugar gravely disadvantaged local sugar.

### Table 2.

Destination of Philippine Sugar Exports from 1850 to 1919 (Total Exports in Tons of 2,000 Pounds, Muscovado)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>% to U.S.A.</th>
<th>% to China-Japan</th>
<th>% to U.K.</th>
<th>% to Europe/Continent</th>
<th>% to Other Countries</th>
<th>Total Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850-54</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>35,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855-59</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>8,809</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>61,457</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>58,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>89,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>82,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>70,311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>60,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>60,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>71,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>81,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>75,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>86,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>96,412</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>% to U.S.A.</th>
<th>% to China-Japan</th>
<th>% to U.K.*</th>
<th>% to Europe/Continent</th>
<th>% to Other Countries*</th>
<th>Total Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>105,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>98,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>114,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>139,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>143,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>134,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>130,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>148,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>199,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>233,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>166,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>237,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>135,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>234,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>204,792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>197,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>204,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>241,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>162,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>183,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>272,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>288,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>214,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>254,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>254,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>222,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>199,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>94,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>71,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>62,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>108,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>94,035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

344
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>% to U.S.A</th>
<th>% to China-Japan</th>
<th>% to U.K.</th>
<th>% to Europe/Continent</th>
<th>% to Other Countries</th>
<th>Total Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>95,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>19,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>42,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>141,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>159,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>142,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>133,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>250,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>217,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>173,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>260,691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>232,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>372,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>226,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>301,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>149,979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Palmer 1920, I-8, U-6.

*Exports to the United Kingdom and other parts of Europe are lumped together for the years 1850–1859.

*Other countries include Australia, British India, and Canada.

*Includes 70,567 tons of centrifugal sugar; prior to January 1918 all sugar is stated in terms of muscovado.

*Includes 32,914 tons of centrifugal sugar and 30 tons of refined.

In response to the petition of Philippine sugar interests, Madrid reduced sugar export duties by 20 percent, a concession belatedly granted in 1887.50 Also in September 1887, about a year after Spain and the United States entered into a general agreement on the equalization of tonnage dues and imposts, an amendment was forged to include the Philippines in the modus vivendi that originally covered Cuba and Puerto Rico.51 In principle, such policy changes might have served to make sugar produced in Filipinas more competitive in the world market. By the 1890s, however, Western consumer tastes had shifted markedly to refined white sugar. Because of its inferior quality, Philippine
raw muscovado sugar found its market mainly in the low-priced China market, a situation that prevailed until the early 1900s (Table 2). Meanwhile, Spain and the United States continued to sign commercial agreements, such as one issued in early 1895 pertaining to the application of the lowest tariff rates possible for the products and manufactures of Cuba and Puerto Rico, with Filipinas again remaining excluded.  

The disjunctures within the Spanish imperial domain crystallized to local sugar interests the importance of their dependence upon the “deceitful protectors” at Iloilo. Local parties could not have marketed Negros sugar on their own internationally because of the region’s relative isolation from other parts of the world. Prospective local traders did not have the connections the foreign merchants at Iloilo had established with markets worldwide. Global marketing was made doubly difficult by the absence of a direct channel of communication with the centers of sugar trade. Although by 1880 Luzon was already linked internationally by means of telegraphic connections via China, the Visayas had no rapid means of communication even with Manila. Businessmen perceptively argued that telegraph lines to the Visayas would not only improve commerce but would also “establish and strengthen the criterion of unity.” Madrid’s inaction on repeated requests to extend the telegraphic network again compelled the hacenderos of Panay and Negros to band together with the merchants of Iloilo in raising another clamor to the Ultramar in December 1892. This last request was granted, but not until 29 November 1897 did the southward telegraphic network finally become operational. By the time Madrid acted, the telegraph lines merely served to facilitate the relaying of messages as the revolution against Spain struck the islands.

With little support from the colonial power, the sugar economy of the Negros-Iloilo region proceeded under its own momentum. The colonial state’s vision of a lucrative agriculture was finally realized, but in a way that made the state virtually irrelevant as the hacenderos took matters into their own hands, contravening the strictures of the colonial state with impunity. Whether on questions of land or, as discussed in the next chapter, on questions of labor, the Manila government chose to remain unmindful of the exigencies of the emerging regional economy. Ultimately, the colonial state was more concerned with upholding the frequently obsolete legal principles of Spanish imperial administration. Plagued by political and financial disarray, Madrid for its part was suffering from indifference that bred chaotic policies, while rhetorically upholding its beloved self-image as a paternalistic imperial ruler. As in an earlier era, to vituperate the foreign merchant houses as villains was
all that patriotic Spanish officials in Filipinas could do. The foreign merchants, as might be expected, were attentive to the promotion of their own economic interests. In the process, the funds and market outlets they provided were seized upon by the hacenderos to indulge in sugar gambles in a game that intermingled different social categories and a contest where the state was an extraneous, though occasionally useful, umpire. But the mestizos were not the only gamblers; as we shall see in the next chapter, the indios were as well.
1886. Interestingly, there were no signatories from the major exporting districts of Iloilo, Negros, and Cebu.

56. See, for instance, the 1888 case of the deported Cuban Agustin Bao y Rol in AHN Legajo 5257, Expediente No. 43.

57. Yinformes... en el proyecto formado para la inmigracion de colonos españoles y braceros asiaticos, AHN Legajo 476, Expediente No. 29. The *Real Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais* bluntly stated in its letter from Manila, 31 October 1884: “la razon politica se opone á la inmigracion y se añade a modo de corolario que España domina este Archipielago por reconocida superioridad de raza: y que los españoles son respetados y acatados como hombres superiores a los indigenas, pues lo son de hecho, y el dia en que perdieramos ese respeto, ese prestigio que nadie nos disputa, nuestra suerte estaria decidida” (underscoring in original). Another reason adduced by the *Consejo de Administracion de Filipinas* on 8 April 1891, and by the *Real Sociedad Economica* on 7 January 1891, was the fact that the *indio* was cheaper at two *reales* per day for as much as ten hours of work, in contrast to the *jornalero Europeo*, who could work only five hours but demand one peso as daily wage.

58. Loney to Lord Stanley, Manila 31 January 1867, FO 72/1155.

59. Creacion del 3er. tercio de la Guardia Civil, con destino a Visayas, AHN Legajo 5328, Expediente No. 21; Sobre establecimiento de la Guardia civil en algunas provincias del Archipielago, 1867, AHN Legajo 5329, Expediente No. 32; and Filipinas: Guardia Civil, 1855, AHN Legajo 5360 (expediente s/n).

60. Sobre creacion de un Gobierno, una Alcaldia y una Administracion depositaria en la Isla de Negros, 1861–1867, AHN Legajo 2243 (expediente s/n); and Visita girada por el G. G. á la Isla de Negros y disposiciones tomadas por dicha autoridad modificando la division Politico-Militar en dicho territorio, AHN Legajo 5339, Expediente No. 84.


62. On the initial hesitation of foreign capital to move to the Iloilo-Negros area, see Aguilar 1994c, 86–90.

CHAPTER 4 The Formation of a Landed Hacendado Class in Negros

1. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 12 April 1857, FO 72/927.
2. Ibid.
3. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017.
4. Loney to Earl Russell, Iloilo 10 September 1864, FO 72/1087.
5. F. Ricketts to Lord Stanley, Manila 19 September 1868, FO 72/1193.
6. Ricketts to the earl of Granville, London 5 May 1873, FO 72/1355.
7. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 12 April 1857, FO 72/927.
8. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017.
9. Ibid.
10. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 12 April 1857, FO 72/927.
11. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017. McCoy (1977, 67-70) has shown a remarkable connection between Iloilo province’s pre-1855 elite and the emerging sugar-planter class in Negros. Among the “family names” of former Molo gobernadorcillos found in Negros were those of Locsin, de la Rama, Maravilla, Araneta, Yusay, and Tiongco. In the case of former cabezas de barangay in Molo, the naturales or indio list included the “family names” of Villanueva, Arroyo, Maravilla, Hechanova, and Magalon, while the mestizo list included Lacson, Montelibano, Severino Yuson, and Araneta. However, because a mestiza who married an indio fell into the husband’s legal category, it is not certain that the naturales had no mestizo admixtures (cf. Wickberg 1964, 65).
12. Loney 1964, 82; Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017.
13. Ibid., 97; Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017.
15. Ibid.
16. In 1844, Montilla was described as “having in his disposition ninety-five individuals” organized as two cabecerias fitted with a fort and cannons to fend off Moro raids. Rice, corn, mung beans, cotton, abaca, coconut, and other crops were grown in an area that stretched to a total of 500 hectares drawn from lands “abandoned” by former inhabitants. Montilla supplied the peasants with carabaos. Sugar was not mentioned as a crop. Expediente promovido por Don Agustin Montilla solicitando aprobacion de una estancia agricola—Pulupandan, PNA Varias Provincias, Negros.
17. Luzuriaga was a former cobrador de tributos, or tribute collector, against whom a complaint was lodged in 1844 by the cabezas de barangay of Bacolod; the case was later withdrawn. En la Casa Real del Pueblo de Himamaylan, Cavecera de la Provincia de Ysla de Negros ... ante el Alcalde Mayor D. Jose Saenz de Vizmanos, 7 September 1844, PNA Cabezas de Barangay, Negros Occidental.
19. Memoria de la Ysla de Negros, 31 May 1888, PNA Memoria de Negros, Oriental y Occidental. See the “Datos estadisticos conocidos.”
20. The largest concentrations of blancos were found on the east coast of Negros: Bais (58), Dumaguete (31), and Tanjay (43); followed by towns in the western side of the island: Pontevedra (22), La Carlota (20), Minuluan (20), Bacolod (12), and Jimaymaylan (11). Cf. Figure 2.
21. Estado que demuestra el numero de individuos que se considera existen en cada pueblo de este distrito, comprendidos en las categorias que se espresan a continuacion, referentes a la riqueza rustica é industrial pecuaria,
según los comprobantes que se acompañan, Bacolod 28 December 1881, PNA Varías Provincias, Negros.

22. The nine towns with at least 40 big taxpayers were: Ginigaran (193), Minuluan (135), Zamboanga (98), Nueva Valencia (52), Calatrava (48), Bago (47), Bais (43), Cabancalan (43), and Valladolid (41). The seven towns with smaller concentrations of 20 to less than 40 such taxpayers were: Silay (38), Cadiz Nuevo (32), Jimaymaylan (32), La Carlota (32), Cabancalan (29), Pontevedra (28), and Bacolod (22).

23. Some 64.8 percent of the 1,009 names fell in the 200 to 600 pesos tax category, while about 16.6 percent were in the over 600 to 1,000 pesos tax category.

24. The 187 residents assessed to pay over 1,000 pesos in taxes were from Ginigaran (48), Saravia (25), Valladolid (20), Bais (19), La Carlota (10), Minuluan (10), Victorias (9), Cadiz Nuevo (7), Jimaymaylan (6), Silay (6), Bago (4), Nueva Valencia (4), San Enrique (4), Suay (2), and one each from Arguelles, Bacolod, Calatrava, Granada, and Murcia.


26. Loney was keenly aware of the consequences of doing otherwise. In a letter to his father dated 23 October 1865, he noted the problems encountered by a member of the British consulate in Manila: “Though an estimable, gentlemanly person, his dislike of Spaniards is so great that they have discerned and resented it, never calling on him or exchanging the usual social amenities of that kind” (Loney 1964, 113).

27. Cronica semihistoria de Filipinas y en especial de las Ysas Visayas desde 1877 á 1887, folio 1, NL Ayer Collection MS 1390.

28. Mallat (1983, 301) further observed that the mixing of social categories was more prevalent in the opium dens where card games were played: “Monte is a game of chance prohibited by law; but it is played very fast and is easy to conceal...it is played especially in places where opium is smoked, and there all ranks, all sexes are mingled...” In 1893 the three-year franchise of the opium monopoly in Negros was farmed out to Yap-Sangco of Silay for 31,800 pesos, surpassing the bid tendered by Nicasio Veloso Chiong-Tuico of Manila for 62,310 pesos and that by Ong-Songty of Bacolod for 36,700 pesos. Among the comisionados (agents) of Yap-Sangco were Gregorio Echauz Tan-Chipco, Tan Guanco, Yap-Chiengjo, Uy-Suaitco, and Du-Coman. Expediente interior referente al arriendo de los fumadores de anfion de las provincias de Ysla de Negros Oriental y Occidental, 1893, PNA Anfion, Negros Oriental and Occidental.

29. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017; Loney 1964, 66.

30. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 12 April 1857, FO 72/927.

31. The hacendados were described as “carece en absoluto de instruccion agricola, y podemos asegurar el noventa y cinco por ciento de ellos hu-
bieron sido muy útiles para cualquiera empresa, pero son nulidades en esta clase de industrias.” Memoria descriptiva del estado de Agricultura, de la ganadería é industria que de ellas se derivan, en Ysla de Negros con indicación de los medios y procedimientos que pueden emplearse para mejorá-las; escrita para la Exposición general de las Islas Filipinas que ha de tener en Madrid el año de 1887, PNA Memoria de Negros, Oriental y Occidental.

32. Devoting “most of their time to either politics or other business,” Pampanga hacendados “entrust the whole responsibility of field operation to their ‘aparceros’ [share tenants] who know no more than they do” (Ocampo 1923).

33. Carlos Locsin was at the forefront of this effort to systematize cost accounting. See Locsin 1924.

34. The illegalization of gambling in the United States in the 1890s made all other forms of gain appear normal and moral (Fabian 1990).

35. Varona 1965, 28th installment.

36. For a similar gamble with the state through manipulation of land laws in Nueva Ecija during the Spanish and American colonial periods, cf. McLennan 1984, 70–72.

37. Incidente sobre suspension del interdicto de despojo promovido por varios españoles residentes en la Carlota Ysla de Negros, 12 August 1876, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2. The signatories were Miguel Perez, Teodoro Gurrea, Lucas Rubin, Alejandro de la Viña, Domingo Tejido, Manuel Pacheco, Juan Rubin, Jose Maria Guaco, Pedro Camon, Manuel Lansirvia, and Jose Amonategui. Only de la Viña was positively identified as Creole, “un español Filipino.”

38. The petitioners added that if “valiant” indios were on the land, “matters did not terminate so peacefully” because the victims exacted vengeance according to the “natural instincts” of the “primitive race”; otherwise, the displaced indios simply retreated to the mountains (ibid.).

39. Broken down as follows: 300 hectares in La Carlota, 2,600 hectares in Bungayin, Isabela, an undetermined area in Antipolo, Pontevedra, and 1,600 hectares in La Castellana, then part of Isabela (ibid.).

40. Ibid.

41. Ramon Pastor, Gobernador Político-Militar of Negros, to the Governor-General, Bacolod 31 January 1877, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2. See Enclosure No. 2.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid. Cf. Enclosure No. 1, “Copia de escritura de composicion de terrenos,” 3 July 1866; and “Copia de escritura de compra de tierras en el barrio de Borja,” formalized on 7 August 1876.

44. Protocolo de escrituras publicas otorgadas y protocolizadas en este Juzgado de la Ysla de Negros, 1875, PNA Protocolos, Legajo 1744, folio 779ff.

45. Ramon Pastor, Gobernador Político-Militar of Negros, to the Governor-

351
General, Bacolod 31 January 1877, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2. Cf. Enclosure No. 2.


47. Letter of Manuel Tomonong of La Carlota, dated Bacolod 27 October 1872, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2.

48. Ramon Pastor, Gobernador Politico-Militar of Negros, to the Governor-General, Bacolod 31 January 1877, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2.

49. Real Audiencia Territorial de Filipinas, Tribunal Pleno, expediente sobre deslindes de los Montes del Estado confinantes con la hacienda de San Bernardino de Don Teodoro Benedicto en la provincia de Ysla de Negros, 1883, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2. According to the final result of the investigation, the documents of purchase presented by Benedicto covered about 215 hectares only.

50. Ibid. Cf. testimony of Teodoro Benedicto on 14 March 1877.

51. Ibid. Cf. testimony of Vicente Agatis on 8 March 1877.

52. Escritura de reconocimiento de credito con hipoteca otorgada por Don Teodoro Currea á favor de Don Teodoro Benedicto, Bacolod 18 August 1875, PNA Protocolos, Legajo 744, folios 64ff.


54. Instancia elevada á la Dirección General de Hacienda por Don Carlos Gemora, vecino de Ylog, provincia de Ysla de Negros, 1880, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2. Cf. minuta of letter from the Señor Yntendente general de Hacienda, Manila 4 June 1880.

55. Memorandum of Fernandez Cañete, Manila 13 October 1876, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2.

56. Order of the Governor-General to the Gobernador P. M. de Ysla de Negros, Manila 3 January 1877; and Enclosure No. 4, Ramon Pastor to the Governor-General, Bacolod 31 January 1877, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2.

57. Dictamen de la Comisión nombrada por la Real Sociedad . . . pidiendo á S.M. por conducto del Excmo. Gobernador General, se reforme la legislacion vigente en estas Islas sobre interdictos, Manila 1 March 1880, PNA Real Sociedad de Amigos del País, Bundle 2.

58. Complaint by Don Francisco Jiz de Ortega representing Don Antonio Buenafe, to the Señor Juez de primera instancia del distrito de Ysla de Negros, Iloilo 26 February 1889, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 2.

59. Alegato, Al Juzgado de primera instancia por Don Antonio Jayme y Ledesma, Abogado de Don Julian Giguiento, Bacolod 17 August 1891, PNA Terrenos (Negros), Bundle 1.
60. Protocolo de escrituras publicas otorgadas y protocolizadas en este Juzgado de la Ysla de Negros, PNA Protocolos, Legajo 1722 (1860 to 8 November 1861) and Legajo 1723 (26 November 1861 to 1862). Records for most of September, October, and November 1861 have all been virtually erased. The fungus-infested records were formerly kept in Manila's Old Bilibid Prison, which was frequently under water.

61. PNA Protocolos, Legajo 1743 (January to June 1875) and Legajo 1744 (July to December 1875). Spaniards figured in only slightly over one-fifth of twenty-three land sales.

62. Calculable data for nineteen of twenty-one mortgage cases indicated an average transaction involving 45.5 hectares valued at 1,906.5 pesos, or about 26.5 pesos per hectare. The protocolos, however, yielded only a handful of notarized cases of pacto de retroventa: three in 1875 and six in 1890. Cf. Ibid. for 1875 and Legajo 1772 for 1890 data.

63. PNA Protocolos, Legajo 1772 (1890).

64. Ibid. Through this auction, Alejandro Montelibano acquired 507 hectares in Saravia, and the Spaniards Francisco and Lucas Rubin a composite 258 hectares in Cabancalan.


66. A similar pattern was observed in Pampanga, where one data set showed “estates” ranging from 10 to 1,033 hectares, with the average computed at 155 hectares (Larkin 1972, 76).

67. In 1950 about 1.5 percent of the individual farm holdings in Latin America exceeded 15,000 hectares and accounted for about half of all agricultural land (Farley 1972, 176). Another estimate reckoned the average latifundio as measuring about 41,000 hectares (Garcia 1966, 135). In Argentina in 1929, three families each owned more than 200,000 hectares and twelve each owned more than 100,000 hectares in the most fertile portions of Buenos Aires (Coe 1965, 99).

68. Lineas Telegraficas aerias de las Visayas, Panay, Negros y Cebu y cables para unirlas con Luzon, AHN Legajo 607, Expediente No. 259. Cf. “Comercio nacional y extranjero de Iloilo y agricultores de las Yslas de Panay y Negros” to the Ultramar, Iloilo 28 December 1892.

69. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017.

70. Ibid.

71. The steam engines had capacities ranging from 4 to 18 horsepower and the water-powered mills from 4 to at most 12 horsepower. “Memoria descriptiva del estado de Agricultura... en Ysla de Negros... escrita para la Exposicion general... en Madrid el año de 1887,” PNA Memoria de Negros, Oriental y Occidental. See also Echauz 1894, 35, 37.

72. “Sobre los medios de colonizar la Ysla de Negros,” AHN Legajo. 447.
Expediente No. 15. Cf. Remigio Molto to Gobernador Superior Civil, Cebu 13 August 1864 and 17 August 1865.

73. Remigio Molto to Gobernador Superior Civil, Cebu 13 August 1864. Molto referred specifically to Españoles Europeos, or peninsulars, whom he described as "pobres pues que en su mayor parte proceden de licenciados del Ejercito, empleados de corto sueldo &cra."

74. Ibid. Molto also complained that in Iloilo Spaniards had been "relegated" to the coasting trade while, in international shipping, no Spanish vessels were being utilized and benefited by Iloilo's foreign trade.

75. Ibid., 1865 letter.

76. Eugenio Lopez, for instance, acquired 840 hectares in Cadiz Nuevo in a public auction following the bankruptcy of Russell and Sturgis; in 1889, he also bought 80 hectares in Cadiz from John MacNab, a British commercial agent, and in 1891 he acquired a 535-hectare hacienda in Pontevedra from James Fleming Macleod, a British trader (O. Lopez 1982, xlv).  

77. Despite the terrible condition of Negros' roads, the hacendados simply continued to rely upon corvee labor, even though it was already plainly deficient for maintenance of public works. Some found an argument. In 1889 the Spanish hacienda owners of La Carlota, Pontevedra, and San Enrique complained that the "vias publicas" to these interior towns were not properly maintained because the gobernadorcillo of San Enrique, required to serve as corvee supervisor, had paid more attention to "his pernicious habit of smoking opium." But just as the hacendados were gambling, so did the gobernadorcillo enjoy his opium. Tovar to the Governor-General, Bacolod 7 March 1889, PNA Varias Provincias, Negros.

78. PNA Protocolos, Legajo 1722 and 1723 for 1861; Legajo 1743 and 1744 for 1875; and Legajo 1772 for 1890.

79. Memoria descriptiva del estado de Agricultura ... en Ysla de Negros ... escrita para la Esposicion general ... en Madrid el año de 1887, PNA Memoria de Negros, Oriental y Occidental.

80. Ibid.


82. Expediente exterior contra el vecion del pueblo de la Yaabela ... Gavino Gasataya, 1891; Expediente principal referente á la alzada suscrita por D. Baldomero de la Rama impugnando de la providencia de la subalternna en la Ysla de Negros Occidental, 1892; Recurso de alzada interpuesta por D. Ramon Puentevefla del pueblo de Minuluan; all in PNA Varias Provincias, Negros.


84. Ibid. Cf. "los comerciantes y agricultores de Yloilo y Negros en las
Ysas Filipinas y 'El Porvenir de Bisayas'” to the Ministro de Ultramar, Iloilo 20 January 1885.

85. Ibid. Cf. “las casas mas importantes del comercio de esta plaza” to the Ministro de Ultramar, Manila 10 December 1884.

86. Ibid. Cf. Ministro de Ultramar to the Governor-General of Filipinas, Madrid 10 July 1885.

87. Mocion pidiendo franquicias para la produccion azucarera de Filipinas, AHN Legajo 5314, Expediente No. 489 (cf. Ortiga y Rey, Madrid 16 November 1884); Asunto: Azucares de Filipinas, AHN Legajo 1492, Expediente No. 8 (cf. Governor-General to the Ultramar, Manila 29 December 1884 and letter of Intendente General de Hacienda remitted by the Governor-General to the Ultramar, Manila 14 March 1885).


89. Ibid.

90. Ibid. Cf. Ministro de Ultramar to the Governor-General of Filipinas, Madrid 28 March 1887.

91. See communications between U.S. Secretary of State T. F. Bayard and Spanish Envoy E. de Muruaga (United States 1888, 1030-5).

92. See communications between Minister of State Alejandro Groizard and Head of the U.S. Legation Hannis Taylor (United States 1895, 626-635; United States 1896, 1185-1186).


94. Ibid. Cf. Camara de Comercio de Manila to the Ultramar, Manila 6 October 1890.

95. Ibid. Cf. “Comercio nacional y estranier que de Iloilo y agricultores de las Ysas de Panay y Negros” to the Ultramar, Iloilo 28 December 1892.

96. “Expediente para que los telegramas que se expidan á las Ysas Filipinas sean justificadas—igual que los internacionales y abono de $35’55 importe de la media taza de los telegramas expedidos en la Ysla de Negros Occidental, á razon de 25 centimos de franco una,” PNA Administracion Central de Impuestos, Negros Occidental. Cf. Direcion General de Administracion Civil to the Intendente General de Hacienda, Manila 29 November 1897.

CHAPTER 5  “Capitalists Begging for Laborers”

1. Loney to Farren, Iloilo 10 July 1861, FO 72/1017.

2. “Memoria descriptiva del estado de Agricultura ... en Ysla de Negros ... para la Exposicion general ... en Madrid el año de 1887,” PNA Memoria de Negros, Oriental y Occidental.