

Religion, Imperialism, and Resistance in Nineteenth Century's Netherlands Indies and Spanish Philippines¹

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Abstrak

Artikel ini menjelaskan bagaimana agama berfungsi sebagai pembenar imperialisme dan antiimperialisme, dengan mengkaji kekuatan imperialis Belanda di Hindia Belanda dan imperialis Spanyol di Filipina pada abad XIX. Pemerintah Kolonial Belanda tidaklah seberhasil pemerintah kolonial Spanyol dalam menjadikan jajahan mereka menjadi bangsa seperti mereka, meskipun agama digunakan sebagai alat dominasi. Bagi Spanyol, agama Katolik menjadi bagian peradaban mereka, dan menjadi bagian penting proyek kolonialisme mereka, sedangkan bagi pemerintah kolonial Belanda, agama Kristen tidak menjadi bagian penting kolonialisme mereka (kenyataan sejarah yang menolak anggapan umum di Indonesia bahwa kolonialisme Belanda dan kristenisasi sangat berhubungan). Misionaris Spanyol di Filipina menguasai daerah koloni melalui metode-metode keagamaan dan kebudayaan, sedangkan pemerintah kolonial Belanda, dan misionaris dari Belanda, harus berurusan dengan masyarakat yang sudah memeluk Islam di daerah-daerah Indonesia. Pemerintah Belanda mengizinkan kristenisasi dalam beberapa kasus asalkan tidak mengganggu umat Islam dan tidak mengganggu kepentingan ekonomi mereka. Akibatnya, mayoritas Filipina menjadi Katolik, sedangkan mayoritas Hindia Belanda tidak menjadi Protestan. Di sisi lain, agama juga berfungsi sebagai kekuatan antiimperialisme,

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seperti dalam penggunaan *pasyon* bagi sebagian bangsa Filipina yang Katolik, dan *jihad* dan *ratu adil* bagi sebagian masyarakat Hindia Belanda yang muslim. Penafsiran terhadap agama masing-masing dipengaruhi oleh konteks kolonial. Agama mengalami lokalisasi atau pembumian sebelum ia menjadi alat perjuangan anticolonialisme. Agama menjadi sistem budaya simbolik dan praktikal yang mereka butuhkan ketika mereka perlukan. Dalam situasi dibawah imperialisme, agama menjadi alat yang kuat untuk mendukung ketidakpuasan dan harapan.

Kata kunci: agama, imperialisme, antiimperialisme, kolonialisme, Hindia Belanda

Introduction

Empires are created by conquest, and conquerors have always attempted to keep those they have conquered in subservience. This has been achieved by a mixture of simple force and some kind of ideology. It is also assumed that virtually those who live under imperial rule, would stand up against their conquerors (Pagden, 2001. xxi). This paper seeks to demonstrate how religion served to legitimize both imperial control and resistance to empire, by focusing on two imperial cases: the Dutch in the East Indies (today's Indonesia) and the Spanish in the Philippines, during the nineteenth century, a period of both colonialism and resistance.

Colonial effects were not confined to areas of physical conquest alone (Stoler, 2002). Colonialism was more than just an economic and military expansion; it was cultural and religious too. The Dutch East Indies Company (VOC), a company with strong commercial motives, was not able to prevent Protestant missionaries from proselytizing in the colony. Spain, endorsing no separation of church and crown, was preoccupied with the catholicization of the natives, from the very beginning of colonization until the end.

This paper suggests that comparatively speaking, the Dutch colonial in the East Indies were less successful than the Spanish in the Philippines in using religion as an instrument of imperial control because while the former was ambiguous in church-state relationship, the latter prioritized missionary activities over all others since the beginning. Therefore, the Spanish gained a more complete imperial control over the Philippines. This paper also argues that resistance should be understood in the context of colonial transformations resulting from changing colonial policies. The two cases of resistance, the Java War (1825-1830) and the Katipunan Revolution in 1896, represent not only local responses generated by the processes of imperialism but also sustained collective protests involving religious, millenarian leaders. This paper will demonstrate how religion became a crucial instrument of such resistance, although the driving factors were not purely religious.

Colonial Goals: Between Commercial and Religious

It is well-known among Dutch and Indonesian historians that the underlying motive for Dutch imperial expansion was economic in nature. Externally, the rivalry between European empires, notably Portugal, Spain, British, and French during the sixteenth century, forced Dutch capitalists to conquer the home of spices, the East Indies. Sea power, based on superior ship design and the development of artillery in sailing vassals, was the most decisive advantage of the VOC in the early centuries of its involvement in the East Indies (Th Sumartana, 1993, 1-2). As historian Albert Hima pointed out, it was the secular forces that enabled Dutch merchants of the seventeenth century to gain advantage over their competitors in foreign lands. In addition, the development of capitalism in Holland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries contributed to the motive of expansion. During these centuries, for example, Amsterdam, became a center for trade, transportation, and banking (Hima, 1941, 11).

Since the sixteenth century, the VOC had faced conflicts between the secular capitalists and the missionaries. In all the directives issued by the Dutch central government (*Staten Generaal*) and by the provincial governments (e.g. *Staten van Holland*), there was not a single statement on religion. Although there was some tension between religious Orders and the government in the Netherlands, the government had decided not to endorse the union of Church and State (*ibid*, 27). The Federal Government was dominated by the entrepreneurs and capitalists who prioritized economic over religious zeal. Thus, the VOC initiated expansion into Asia, first and foremost represented the economic power of the capitalists, but later began to move toward the acquisition of political power. As the VOC entered the East Indies archipelago and found local and international rivalries, it had to maintain control and domination. It had to prevent the other Europeans from entering the archipelago economically and politically. Since the spice trade did not prove to be such a bonanza, the VOC turned to establishing a plantation colony in Java. After the founding of Batavia in the islands, the VOC continued to maintain control by claiming that it was the vassal of the indigenous Kingdom of Mataram which had previously dominated most areas in the archipelago (Adas, 1979, 4). For the VOC, Java was the most fertile island and over a period of about eighty years, commercial activity was dominated by VOC (Kumar, 1980, 43).

Spain, on the other hand, was a "theocracy" in the sense that Crown and Church supported each other *de jure* and *de facto*. Some historians have contended that Spain's initial goals included establishing an entrepot in the Philippines for Chinese and Japanese trade, converting China and Japan to Christianity as well as the "heathen people" of the archipelago (later called the Philippines) to Christianity. Of the three goals only the last one, missionary ambition, proved realizable because the intervention of the Dutch ultimately

dashed to pieces Spanish interests in the Spice Islands, and the commercial and spiritual conquest of China and Japan was to prove a chimera (Phelan, 1967, 7,13-4). Spain seriously considered withdrawing from her involvement in the islands because the islands were far from Spain and did not yield the riches found in the New World. It was the Roman Catholic Church which insisted on Spain's maintaining this colony in Asia. Although few Spanish settlers went to the Philippines, missionaries of the religious orders entered the islands in significant numbers. These missionaries saw in the islands a real opportunity for establishing a solid base of Catholicism in Asia (Deats, 1967, 14-5).

Although a small merchant oligarchy reaped good profits, the Spanish colonial government produced an annual deficit and the treasure of Mexico had to pay this deficit (Phelan, 13-14). More than any other single factor, a religious commitment kept the Spanish state in the economically profitless colony of the Philippines. Thus, the religious motivation for staying in the Philippines was much more important than the economic one. As Gregorio Zaide has argued, "even though in the pacification of the Philippines, missionaries and conquistadores worked side by side, economic wealth and political grandeur were to Spain secondary colonial aims." (Zaide, 1957, 158-9).

From the very beginning of the conquest, the goals of Spain and of the Roman Church were inseparably linked. Soon after Captain Ferdinand Magellan arrived in Cebu on March 16th, 1521, Cebu's King Humabon was baptized on April 14 and mass baptism followed. Later that same day, "in the presence of Filipinos and Spaniards, Magellan solemnly planted a huge wooden cross on the summit of a hill overlooking the sea, and took the possession of the country in the name of Spain." (Zaide, 115). It was in 1571 that Spain, under King Philip II, succeeded in firmly establishing her sovereignty through the efforts of Miguel Lopez de Legaspi. Legaspi was accompanied by a group of Augustinian missionaries who immediately began intensive missionary labor. Shortly afterward, in 1577, the Franciscans came to the islands. The Jesuits and Dominicans came in 1581, and finally the Recollects arrived in 1606. Through these five religious orders, Catholicism was firmly planted on Filipino soil due to the number of working missionaries and to the number of conversions. Although at first conversion was slow, with only one hundred baptisms during the first five years, by 1622 there had presumably been over half a million baptisms (Deats, 15).

The above motives and goals had a significant impact on how the colonial government designed its colonial bureaucracy and policies. A major impact resulted from the use of religion as an instrument of control. The extent to which religion served to legitimize imperial control also depended on circumstances in the colonies, as shall be demonstrated in the following section.

Colonial Bureaucracy and Missionaries

In his general account of the expansion of the West, Philip D. Curtin argued that it was primarily Europe's administrative technology that enabled the colonial powers to control the colonies. Curtin further argued that imperial control was of little use to the colonial power unless it could administer the conquered territories cheaply and effectively in ways that suited imperial interests (Curtin, 2000, 32-4). But Curtin was only concerned with secular organization and understood imperial control merely in terms of economic cost-benefit calculation. It is true that in the case of the Dutch colonial bureaucracy in the East Indies, the secular (i.e. the commercial) government dominated and when the government eventually approved missionary activities in the colony, it did not regard religion as an indispensable instrument of imperial control. In the case of Spanish bureaucracy, however, secular and religious activities were closely intertwined and Spain didn't pay as much attention to the cost of maintaining her armies as to her support for greater success of conversion.

Unlike the Spanish, the Dutch bureaucracy in the East Indies was formally secular in the sense that there is no union of church and state prevailed. The VOC was a government of merchants acting to promote mercantile interests. Religion was not a VOC priority. Thus, for example, Jan Pieterszoon Coen (1587-1629), the architect and administrator of Dutch power in the East Indies, after his arrival in the region in October 1613, wrote:

Should we try to make Christians of the Ternatanes or take what is ours by right from them even with force, if need be?... Say in reply that in the Moluccas at present religion should by all means be left alone. We must maintain our right to export cloves - by force even - but in respect to other matters we should turn a blind eye to a great deal (H.T. Colenbrander, 1934, 463. in Steenbrink, 1993, 61).

Coen's main argument revolved around the perceived impossibility of any long-term cooperation with the Muslims. Coen did not explicitly support plans to convert the Muslims. The rare cases in which Coen speaks of spreading Christianity concerned mainly non-Islamic villages, the Christianization of which would help in the struggle with Islam. In most cases he prefers discussing the consolidation of Christianity. In 1627 Coen proposed a number of suggestions, "all of them contributing, that is, to the promotion of God's Holy Word and crushing what is left of the infidel religion of the Moors there". However, Coen was not responsible for any large-scale schemes for Christianizing the East Indies and certainly no concrete initiative (ibid).

Later, governor-general Van der Capellen (1816-26) still focused on economic and political controls. He was conservative in the sense that he moved towards complete government control of the economy, rather than

the opening up of Java to Western economic influence. He had planned to suppress the principalities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta and to abolish the post of regency (*bupati*), but he did not succeed. He attempted to maintain the Dutch monopoly of key cash crops, such as coffee and sugar, and forbade Chinese and Europeans to trade freely while also prohibiting the continued lease of land to Europeans in the principalities in May 1823. By introducing these measures, he hoped to pave the way for complete government control of the economy and administration in Java (Knight, 2000; Carey, 1980, 61-3).

It was not until 1855 that the government issued a law to legalize missionary activities in the colony under certain conditions. Moreover, "whenever the permission is found harmful, or its conditions not adhered to, the permission may be revoked by the Governor General" (Vandenbosch, 1944, 46-7). However, despite the fact that the government did not legalize missionary activities in the East Indies until 1855, Christian proselytizing occurred in the seventeenth century. The missionaries believed that they were obliged to spread their religion across regional boundaries. Hugo Grotius published a short summary of the Christian faith which he hoped would be a guide for sailors for their own spiritual salvation and for the dissemination of Christianity. The translation of the Bible into Malay language was actively pursued. The Malay text of the New Testament was first published in 1688, and a translation of the entire Bible was finished in 1734. A seminary was founded in Batavia in 1742 with a goal of educating evangelists for Java and Eastern region (Th. Sumartana, 2). Ministers in the Indies conducted services in Malay, because VOC settlements were polyglot communities in which Portuguese and Malay rather than Dutch were the lingua franca (Kilgour, 1935; Latouratte 1939, in Kipp, 1990, 25-6). A numbers of conversions to Christianity occurred only in isolated cases, including in Batavia, Ambon, Menado, and Timor (*ibid*).

Especially during the nineteenth century, Muslims in the East Indies became more connected to the Middle East and this was seen as a threat to Dutch imperial dominance. The number of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca and that of Arab settlers in Java increased, resulting in a stronger Islamic identity among the Javanese leaders and society. In a Javanese chronicle *Serat Centini*, Islamic orthodoxy became part of the Javanese sense of cultural identity. External wars, such as the Crimean War (1854-56) between the Ottoman Turks and Russians, also caught the imagination of the Javanese. The fortunes of the Turkish armies were eagerly followed and each victory of the Turks was celebrated with prayers and offerings (Carey, 99). It was not until the nineteenth century that the Dutch governors had to deal with the "Islamic question". There were two different positions that the Dutch colonial governors took. Some supported Christianization as a means of containing the development of Islam in the East Indies, whereas others did not see the need to convert the Muslims to Christianity and argued in favor of maintaining the

secular, economic character of the Dutch colonialism.

For the supporters of Christianization, there were many reasons to pursue a mixture of political and religious goals, aimed at securing the region economically and politically, securing the spice monopoly in the peripheries and stopping or containing the spread of Islam (Hendrik E. Niemeijer, in Holtrop & Mcleod, 2000, 32-49). For a number of Christian Dutch scholars, such as van J.V.L. Gericke, N. Adriani, Alb.C.Kruyt, and Hendrik Kraemer, Christianization and colonialism constituted a mutual beneficial (Suminto, 1985,17-8).

In the nineteenth century, many Dutchmen, both at home and in the Indies, had great hopes of eliminating the influence of Islam by the rapid Christianization of the majority of Indonesians. These hopes were partly anchored in the widespread Western belief in the superiority of Christianity to Islam, and partly in the assumption that the syncretic nature of Indonesian Islam at the village level would render conversion to Christianity easier in Indonesia than elsewhere in Muslim lands. While not as closely allied with missionary enterprises as had been the Spanish government, Dutch government at times fell under strong pressure from religious parties in parliament. The Netherlands Constitution eventually allowed Christian missions, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, to operate in Indonesia, and missionary work in the colony was subsidized by public funds. According to historian Harry J. Benda, in spite of such governmental assistance, Christianity was able to spread only very slowly, and only among Indonesians living in areas which had not previously been Islamized (Benda, 1958, 19-20).

The most passionate promoter of Christianization was perhaps A.W.F. Idenburg (1861-1935, ruled 1909-19), influenced by Abraham Kuyper (1839-1920), who promoted Christianization alongside with secular economic projects in the Indies. Idenburg connected the idea of the Netherlands as a Christian Power to its 'moral calling' in Indonesia. But Idenburg was not a missionary in the strict sense; he did not use his office for ecclesiastical activities. In fact, he repeatedly stated that according to him there was a clear distinction between church and missions on the one hand, and the state on the other hand (Pieter N. Holtrop, in Holtrop & Mcleod (eds), 2000, 142-56).

The most influential government adviser was Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), who disagreed with overt Christianization of local Muslims, but recognized the need to deal with the "Islamic question". An expert on Islam and local languages, Snouck founded the Office for Native Affairs. In dealing with Islamic affairs, he appointed religious judges, the leaders and preachers of the main mosques and organized other Islamic matters (Karel Steenbrink, 1993,89). Snouck Hurgronje's recommendations for an "Islamic policy" envisaged a division of Islam into a religious and a political sphere. With regard to the former, Snouck counseled in favor of toleration (spelled out in terms of neutrality *vis-à-vis* religious life), for pacification and for

stability. Suppression was to be stopped and no obstacles were to be placed on the pilgrimage to Mecca. In the political sphere, the Dutch were to distance themselves from religious affairs as long as they did not pose a political threat.

Furthermore, according to Snouck, the application of the twin policies of tolerance and vigilance would go hand in hand with Dutch support for those social elements not under the sway of Islamic fanaticism: the *adat* chiefs and the *priyayi*-elites on Java (Benda, 23-4). Snouck stressed the importance of *adat* (customary law) institutions and the necessity of a close alliance between the colonial government and the *priyayi* elite in Java. At the same time, he recognized the limitations of the *adat* and its inability to withstand the pressures of Islam. He sought instead to facilitate the process of Westernization in Java by freeing the Javanese elite from "the narrow confines of the Islamic system" and by allowing them to participate fully in Dutch culture. This entailed an expansion of Dutch education and the opening of the colonial administration and politics to qualified Indonesians. Snouck thus hoped to steal a march on Islam in terms of modern development and to wean the bulk of religious leaders in Java away from Islamic militancy by governmental noninterference in specifically religious affairs. His hope that the *priyayi* elite could guide the process of Westernization and modernization in Java proved unrealistic. A few regent families did indeed enjoy the benefits of Western education but their links with the vast mass of the Javanese population had already been severed by the impacts of colonialism. Westernization merely heightened their isolation and ineffectiveness (Carey, 103).

Unlike the Dutch government, the Spanish crown, from the early days of conquest, officially supported missionary activities. The missionaries were occupied with secular and religious activities. Moreover, Spanish religious orders did not have to deal directly with the "Islamic question" in the northern Philippines, although they had to face Muslims' resistance in the south.

As the Spanish conquered Cebu, Luzon, and other islands, the Spanish government established colonial bureaucracy, complete with an army, navy, police, ecclesiastical administration, provincial administration, and municipal administration. In terms of ecclesiastical administration, the union of church and state which prevailed in Spain, was also practiced in the Philippines. The church was supported by taxation. The clergy drew their salaries from the state. The Spanish priests enjoyed great political power and prestige. Besides being the guardians of the Christian religion, they were the paladins of Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines.

The head of the religious administration was the Archbishop of Manila, who exercised general supervision and control over all religious affairs of the colony. He was appointed by the Pope upon recommendation of the King of Spain. Under him were the bishops, who were heads of their respective dioceses; and below these bishops were the parish priests, who were in charge

of the parishes. The priests usually had assistants called coadjutors, who were young priests. The Church exercised religious, political, and judicial functions. Its religious functions were the propagation and preservation of Christianity. Its political functions came out of its union with the State. All clergymen enjoyed political power and prestige. The judicial functions of the Church were discharged by the Archbishop's Court and the Holy Inquisition (Zaide, 177-8).

In such system, the real authority in the Philippines towns was the parish priest, "the virtual ruler of the town". The parish priest controlled the local elections, and usually the one elected to the office of *gobernadorcillo* (governor), was his *protégé*, or one who was his personal choice. Furthermore, he was also in charge of education, charities, social welfare, and other activities of the community. He was the inspector of taxation (tribute), the chief examiner of the bright pupils in the public schools, the arbiter of morals, and the censor of books, comedies, and dramas in the language of the country. He certified as to the character and civil status of the *quinto* (every fifth man drawn by lot to serve in the army). Finally, he was also the adviser of the municipal council. His recommendations on all matters affecting the town, were heeded by the provincial and central authorities. (Zaide, 132). "The padre," wrote the traveler Dr. Jagor, "is frequently the only white man in his village, probably the only European for miles around. He becomes the representative not only of religion, but of the government; he is the oracle of the Indians, and his decisions in everything that concerns Europe and civilization are without appeal. His advice is asked in all important emergencies and he has no one whom he in his turn can consult." (Jagor, 119, in Zaide, 132).

The King sent more and more friars of different religious orders to the Philippines at the request of those already residing in the Philippines. To prevent rivalry and conflict between these different orders, these orders were delegated to different towns (Virginia Benitez Licuanan and Jose Llavador Mira (eds), Book 5, 1991, 526). The King ordered the friars to construct the monasteries in various towns at the expense of Spain, but also asked the Filipino natives to contribute their labor for the construction of the buildings (The order of His Majesty, Antonio de Eraso, 13 May 1579, in Licuanan and Mira (eds), book 3, 1991, 317-8).

Since the early centuries of conquest, the Spanish missionaries had been busy converting local people. They were not only evangelizers but also linguists and philologists, masters of the Filipino vernaculars (Zaide, 147). Moreover, the missionaries also served as builders of roads, bridges, forts, irrigation dams, and other public works. For example, Frays Francisco Paula Marquez and Francisco Roxas were Agustinian builders of the road between Dagami and Tanauan. Father Antonio Sedeno, a Jesuit missionary-architect, built the first stone fortifications of Manila. The missionaries also introduced new plants and animals into the Philippines and taught the Filipinos new

industries and crafts. Dr. Laubach said, "Immense was their value to the Islands in the transfer of animals and plants to the Philippine from Spain and Mexico." (Zaide, 191-2).

The missionary orders brought to the Philippines not only the Catholic faith, but also cultural contributions. Missionaries played a crucial role in various fields, including industries, education, printing, libraries and museums, social welfare, literature, music, science, and art. For example, Father Manuel Plaza contributed to Philippine economic progress by promoting the cultivation of bananas in Bohol. The missionaries founded schools and colleges. It is true that the early Spanish missionaries were responsible, to a certain extent, for the destruction of the ancient Filipino writings. But the Spanish education facilitated the Filipino assimilation to the Latin alphabet, the Spanish language and culture, together with the Christian religion. The early missionaries also converted their convents into "schools of art" and taught the Filipinos the rudiments of Western painting and sculpture. (ibid, 192-3). Religion was stressed in all school curricula. Other subjects were Spanish language, Spanish history, music, morality and classical studies. There were no courses in Philippine history and civics, Filipino culture, and national language (ibid, vol.2, 89-90). In short, the missionaries regarded themselves as 'civilizing agents'. Hispanization rose to prominence in almost all aspect of social, political, and cultural life of the Filipino throughout the period from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century.

While the Catholic missionaries gave many contributions toward giving shape and direction to the building of the Philippines, the passing of years unfortunately also saw the church play an increasingly detrimental role in the islands. By the end of the nineteenth century the church, as represented by the religious orders, was seen by the local leaders of the Philippines as one of their enemies, and anticlericalism became one of the dominant factors in the Philippines Revolution. The following section will demonstrate how religion played a crucial role in resistance movements in the East Indies and the Philippines during the nineteenth century.

Religion and Resistance: Java War and Katipunan Revolution

As a result of European colonialism, new groups, ideas, objects, and organizational patterns were introduced into non-Western societies, where they altered and threatened the positions of previously established groups. As Michael Adas has argued, the theory of relative deprivation is well-suited to the comparative study of social protest and rebellion (Adas, 1979, 44). Dispute over land tenure had social, religious, and psychological implications that extended far beyond the obvious factors of production and subsistence (See Scott, 1976). The displacement of elite groups also had multifaceted effects as these groups had previously played economic, social, political and religious roles. Religion was all-pervasive, and in times of stress all men were warriors.

Javanese peasants did not relate to their indigenous rulers in merely political ways; among other things the king functioned as administrator, military commander, custodian of Javanese culture, and mediator between the forces of cosmos and the terrestrial realm (Adas, 45-6).

For three and a half centuries, Dutch colonialism created economic, political, and cultural transformation in different regions of the East Indies in varying degrees. In Java, the central place of Dutch control, such transformations were felt most acutely. The period from 1800 to the Java War (1825-30) was a turning point in the history of Java. Culturally and economically, the period witnessed a remarkable extension of European influence on Javanese society. Before the nineteenth century, contacts between Dutch officials and the local inhabitants had been mainly confined to the administrative elite. By the 1820s, however, the impact of the colonial administration had begun to make itself felt at the village level, and nearly the whole Java had passed under the direct control of the colonial government. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Java was divided between areas administered directly by the Dutch East India Company and the two independent principalities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta in Central Java (Carey, 1980, 45-6).

Historians have proposed a number of reasons for Prince Dipanagara's resistance to the Dutch. The reasons include economic hardship due to the heavy burden of taxes, rent system, forced labor, and land annexation by the Dutch government, political instability due to a threatening Dutch intervention in the Yogyakarta and Surakarta courts, leadership conflicts within the court, and the worsening position of the native elites (Steenbrink, 1984, 17-8). Dutch historian Justus M. van der Kroef and Javanese historian Sagimun, shared the suggestion that the main reasons were political and economic, but they also pointed to religious factors. Prince Dipanagara saw how Islamic and traditional Javanese customs degenerated rapidly due to the Western influences. The declining adherence to Islamic and Javanese traditions and immorality at the court attributable to the influence of the Dutch, forced Dipanagara to the conviction that reform was imperative. The first step toward reform would be to purify Islam and its practices in Java and thus to eliminate the source of the crisis. Under these circumstances, Dipanagara proclaimed himself *panatagama* (religious leader) who combined the secular and the religious elements. The religious element was clearly evident; Islamic-mystical symbols were used before and during the war. Dipanagara prophesized from the Koran (Holy Scriptures) the evil that befalls the Dutch officials (van der Kroef, 1949, 443, 470; Sagimun M.D., 1960).

Prince Dipanagara was an Islamic-syncretic mystic. For his followers, Dipanagara represented an Islamic ascetic piety (Ricklefs, 1998, 341-2). He was educated in Islamic law and Koran exegesis; one of his teachers made the pilgrimage to Mecca and others had lived for some period in the Holy City. At the same time, Dipanagara was encouraged to make pilgrimages to

various shrines and holy places associated with the Mataram Dynasty. Prince Dipanagara grew up in Yogyakarta, but mostly at the village of Tegalrejo where he obtained his Islamic education (Soekanto, 1959,15-6). Although he visited his family at the court, he was most of the time brought up to live apart from the court and established close contacts with the religious communities in the area. He often criticized the court when it fell under the influence of the Dutch, and his connections with important religious figures afforded him widespread local support during the early stages of the Java War (Carey, 63-5). To Dipanagara, the colonial order posed challenges to indigenous ritual and religious order. The Dutch posed a threat to the rule of Muslim princes in Java.

More than anything, religious, moral, and cultural crises eventually prodded Dipanagara and his adherents into open revolt. Western lifestyle, disrespect of Islamic law and tradition, and immorality were perceived as a threat to religious order. Thus, for example, Prince Dipanagara bitterly castigated a resident who merely “enjoyed eating and drinking and followed Dutch ways.” (ibid, 68). The number of local regents who had been Westernized greatly worried Dipanagara. Elements of the Western life-styles such as drinking and dress were strikingly threatening to the traditional and Islamic life-style of the Javanese Muslim community (Steenbrink, 1984, 18). From this can be understood why Dipanagara was later seen to have represented as an Islamic-Javanese-nationalist resistance to Western civilization brought about by the Dutch in the East Indies (van der Kroef, 1949, 424).

The influence of religion played a crucial role in the course of the fighting, because the religious communities had suffered the same economic and social constraints as their contemporaries in the court towns and the countryside. The attitude of Christian Europeans, especially governmental civilian and military personnel, towards Javanese Muslims appeared disdainful and insulting. Government actions against respected religious teachers in Central Java aroused considerable local resentment. Moreover, the legal reforms by governor-generals were viewed by religious communities (*santri*, students and *kiyai*, teacher) and even by the court elite as an unjustifiable infringement on the sovereignty of Javanese-Islamic law. The combination of these factors helped to reinforce a sense of common identity in the face of what the religious communities saw as ‘religious persecution’ on the part of the European government (Carey, 1981, xlv-xlvi). In addition, the Sultan was regarded as the sole link between man and the cosmos, and as such essential for the maintenance of harmony between the heavenly and terrestrial realms. The advance of Dutch power threatened a potential separation of religious and political, sacred and secular authority. These distinctions were seen as alien to the community of believers (*ummat*). Thus, no group in Java resisted Dutch expansion more tenaciously than the Muslim scholars (*ulama*), teachers (*kiyai*), and those who made the pilgrimage to Mecca (*haji*). In Prince Dipanagara

these diverse groups found a patron and defender (Adas, 58).

How did Dipanagara and his followers use religion to legitimize their resistance? They used Islamic symbols such as *kafir* to refer the infidels (i.e. the Dutch official). Of further interest is the fact that the Islam of Dipanagara and his followers was a localized, syncretic Islam. The appeal and ability of Dipanagara to mobilize widespread support were rooted in his personality, revelations and millenarian visions. He proclaimed himself as *Sultan* and *Ratu Paneteg Santagama* (the King who stands as the supreme arbiter of religion). He dressed in the garb (turban) of a Muslim leader engaged in the holy war (*Jihad or perang sabil*). His followers were surrounded by the gilded umbrellas, inscribed banners, and the pomp and ceremony befitting the entourage of a Javanese monarch (Adas, 143).

The factor which enhanced his support immeasurably was the widespread belief that he was the Javanese Messiah, the *Ratu Adil*, who would institute a rule of truth and plenty after a period of decline. This belief, probably derived in Java from a Hindu cycle, was expressed in Javanese literature in the recensions of the prophecies of the legendary King of Kediri, Prabu Jayabaya (Carey, 70). In his proclamations and pleas for support from the nobility and the general populace, Dipanagara emphasized his belief that he was the leader of a holy crusade to drive out the infidel Dutch from Java (Adas, 58-9, 97).

In his chronicle (*babad*), Dipanagara describes the serious visions that was began when he was a young man. On several occasions, he was visited by such revered figures as the Goddess of the Southern Ocean (*Nyai Roro Kidul*) and the Muslim holymen (*walis*) to whom the conversion of Java to Islam was attributed. On these encounters, he learned great sufferings and struggles ahead and was told that he would someday become a King. He also records that he was addressed by many titles, including *Erucakra* ("Just King"), Lord of the Faith, and *Khalif* of the Prophet of God. These claims were widely accepted by both his noble and peasant followers as well as by Muslim religious figures who flocked to his cause. As befits a millenarian figure, Dipanagara's early escapes and recovery from battle wounds convinced his followers that he was invincible and invulnerable (Adas, 99, 128). The Java war ended in 1830 with the capture of Dipanagara in Java. He was exiled to Sulawesi and died there. But his resistance to the Dutch was continued by his followers in Java and other places in the archipelago.

In the Philippines, the story was somewhat different. Filipino revolution was closely tied to a system of belief adopted from Spain. Jose Rizal portrayed in *Noli Me Tangere* (published in Berlin in 1887) how Catholicism had been pervasive and the priests were important in local society. For example, one important character in the novel, named Ibarra, said: "I am Catholic and I keep pure the faith of my fathers." (José Rizal, 1997, 172). But not unlike the Java war, resistance and revolution in the nineteenth century's Philippines was largely religious in nature.

Economic, political, cultural, moral, and religious aspects were mixed. Increasing population, dissemination of the *pasyon*, the discrimination practiced by the Spanish clergy, rising rice prices, an economic recession,

an increasingly unfair tax burden, the Cuban revolution, and the growing incapacity of the Spanish bureaucracy, all helped to trigger resistance (Steinberg, 2000, 64). Yet, the peasant communities expressed their discontent against the Spanish regime through religious idioms. Popular movements were largely framed in religious rather than secular terms. It was not “aberration”, to use Reynaldo Ileto’s phrase, “but occasions in which hidden or unarticulated features of society reveal themselves.” Ileto argues that “the mass experience of Holy Week fundamentally shaped the style of peasant brotherhood and uprising.” In particular, the *pasyon* offered a language and a metaphor for expressing the suffering and hope within peasant society. Christ’s *pasyon* was an intensely personal and understandable experience for the Filipino, and a string of peasant leaders, such as Andres Bonafacio, who founded the Katipunan in 1892 (a Tagalog abbreviation for the Highest and Most Respectable Association of the Sons of the People) and led movements of both political and religious significance. Bonafacio’s retreat to the caves of Mount Tapusi during Holy Week, caves claimed to be those of the Tagalog folk hero Bernardo Carpio, was a symbolic act of vital importance. To the Katipunan, independence (*kalayaan*) and redemption were one (ibid., 58-63).

Internal issues within the religious institutions also triggered hatred against the colonial Spanish. Tensions emerged between the regular clergy and Filipino clergy (Eliodoro G. Robles, 1969, 43-4). A number of political measures adopted by the Spanish clergy, resulted in creating or deepening an antagonism between the Spanish regular clergy and the native secular clergy which rapidly degenerated into a national and racial enmity. Together with the development of a native clergy were the visitation controversy and the secularization controversy (Horacio de la Costa, 1969, 103-4). The Council of Trent in 1564 mentioned that any priest serving a parish should be subject to the authority of the bishop. In addition, bishops and archbishops had the right to supervise parishes within their respective jurisdictions. Despite this ruling, however, the power of the Spanish religious orders was such that there was no way of implementing secularization (the replacing of a regular by a secular priest). The friars became powerful and irreplaceable in the Philippines. These later became crucial background of anticlericalism and nationalism in the Philippines during the nineteenth century. In 1890, Jose Rizal wrote to Ferdinand Blumentritt:

I wanted to hit the friars, but since they used religion not only as a shield but as a weapon, protection, castle, fort, and armor, etc., I was forced to attack their false and superstitious religion to fight the enemy who hid behind it...God should not be utilized as a shield and protector of abuses, and there is less reason for religion to be used for this purpose. If the friars really had more respect for their religion they would not often use its sacred name or expose it to the most dangerous situations. What is

happening in the Philippines is terrible: they abuse the name of religion for a few pesos, preach it to enrich their properties, to seduce an innocent maid, to destroy an enemy, and to disturb the peace of a marriage or family, if not the honor of the wife (Epistolario Rizalino 1938, 528 in Majul, 1969, 159-60).

The major dispute concerned the issue of canonical visitation and it developed into the issue of possession of the parishes. Later in the 19th century, it acquired a racial and political color because the Filipino secular priests were denied the rights and privileges granted to the Spanish friars. The native priests increased in number and quality, in the sense that they are educated and well-trained. In many instances, they showed superiority, intellectually and morally, over the Spanish friars in charge of the parishes. Thus, for example, on June 27, 1864, the young Father Jose Burgos published in Manila a defense of the Filipino clergy entitled *Manifiesto to the Noble Spanish People which the Loyal Filipinos Address in Defense of Their Honor and Loyalty that Have Been Grievously Offended by the Newspaper "La Verdad" of Madrid*. This was one example of how the Filipino clergy suffered injustices and racial discrimination. Out of this conflict, it developed a grievance against Spain, which became one of the causes of the propaganda reform movement (1872-1892) and later of the Philippine Revolution of 1896. (Zaide, vol.2, 40-9). The martyrdom of Father Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora who were accused by the Spanish government to have fomented a revolt at the Cavite Mutiny in 1872, reinforced the growing grievances against Spain among the natives. This contributed to revolution (Steinberg, 83).

How did Catholicism serve to legitimize the Philippine revolution? As it has been shown above, religious conversion was crucial to the consolidation of Spanish power in the Philippines. Catholicism affected in large measure the structuring of the patterns of authority and submission in the history of colonial society. It shaped as it solicited the terms of native surrender, just as in later years. It would lend itself to the formation of idioms of native resistance to colonial rule. For example, one of the Katipunan leaders (*Katipunero*), Genaro de los Reyes wrote the following: "For three generations, the Spaniards have been enslaving the Philippines. Now they are irritable a lot and they kill anyone who comes out in defense of reason. They came as conquerors, and along with the members of the religious orders, they trampled upon our lives and seized our properties. Using religion as a mean of deceiving the people, they appropriated our land and resources..." (in Santiago V. Alvarez, 1992, 160).

Religious language was now widely employed, in a way that the Spanish priests neither welcomed nor expected. Thus, for example, Emilio Jacinto, who was acclaimed by his people as the 'brains of the Katipunan', and the 'Moses of the Filipino people' wrote in his '*Ang Maling Pagsampalataya*' (False

Belief), as follows:

By false belief we wish to say a blind belief in what another say.... And they who do not practice any of its teachings of Christ, call themselves men of Christ?

Christ said: love one another; you are all brothers and equal. And the love of those who call themselves Christians consists in defrauding and robbing their fellowmen, and equality and fraternity they practice by exploiting their similars (sic) and absconding with their wealth....He who wishes to call himself a disciple and man of Christ must imitate him in his humility, kindness, and love for his fellowmen....God is the father of humanity...hence the true respect and obedience to God consists in respect, love, and obedience to the dictates of reason, and to them we must just all our acts, words, and movements, because reason originates with God himself... (Ibid.,42-3; also Agoncillo, 1956, 16).

Thousands were attracted to these teachings of the Katipunan. The harsh methods used by the friars, especially in the execution of Jose Rizal, only brought the people closer together and ensured the advent of a revolution. Religion and revolution were inextricably interwoven in this instance. On the side of Spain, the religious orders were aligned with those forces seeking to stop the revolution and preserve the status quo. On the side of the Philippines, the abuses practiced by the friars topped in the list of grievances that people articulated against the colonial power. Anticlericalism, strong in Latin America and Europe at that time, easily found its way to the Philippines where magnified religious abuses were rampant. While it was not the only rallying cry over the revolution, all other issues – independence, equality, justice, freedom, and land reform – they were related to the question of religion, because of the wide scope of the friars' power and concomitant abuses. The religious orders remained aligned until the end with the forces of reaction that were stifling Philippine nationhood. As Emilio Aguinaldo, who became the first President of the Philippine Republic, said, "it is a widely known and notorious fact, recognized by all the foreigners who have studied Philippine affairs, that the primary causes of the Philippine revolution were the ecclesiastical corporations which, taking advantage of the corrupt Spanish government, have robbed the country, preventing progress and liberty." (Report of the Philippine Commission, 1900, I, 130, in Deats, 1967, 41).

Despite of the fact that the majority of the Filipinos professed loyalty to the Church, the revolution was directed against the friars. Yet, as Richard Deats suggested, this anticlericalism was directed solely toward the foreign priests. The Filipino priests, who had not been in any position of power or prestige within the Church, did not suffer from the people's anticlerical feelings. Three

of their Fathers, Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora, had been the first martyrs of the revolution (executed in 1872) and native priests felt the sting of racial discrimination by the foreigners (*ibid.*, 42). This discrimination against the Filipino clergy was of primary concern, as it was the Filipino clergy that had attained a level of education which ought to have enabled them to take their place alongside their Spanish counterparts (John N. Schumacher, SJ, 1981, 31; John. N. Schumacher, SJ, 1991, 23-30). Moreover, the revolutionaries did not direct their movement against the Roman Catholic Church as such. The Spanish friars tried desperately to convince the people that efforts against the religious orders were actually rebellion against the Church. The revolutionary leaders however held that "they fought the friars and not the Church and that if the Church was endangered, the blame was to be laid on the friars who obstructed the formation of a Filipino clergy whose business was to see to it that the interests of the Church in the Philippines were protected." (Deats, 1967, 42).

Reynaldo Ileto has persuasively demonstrated the persistence of an ideology of resistance based on Spanish-Christian notions of suffering and paradise. Ileto has shown how ideas of revolution and independence of the Katipunan were expressed in the idiom of the *pasyon*. Thus, as Ileto puts it, "the history of the Filipino people was seen in terms of lost Eden, the recovery of which demanded the people's participation in the *pasyon* of Mother Country. Initiation rituals involved transformation of *loób*, a rebirth in the brotherhood, a passage from darkness to light. And paradise became *kalayaan* – not only independence from Spain but enlightenment, prosperity, and true brotherhood." (Ileto, 1998, 254).

Reynaldo Ileto further argued that the Spanish missionaries taught a mystified and 'other worldly' version of Christianity to indoctrinate and subdue the Filipino people for their Spanish overlords. However, Filipinos interpreted Christianity in terms of their own cultural practices and beliefs, rather than adopting the Spanish perspective. Filipinos were able to articulate in the language of Christianity a means for expressing their own values, ideals, and hopes for liberation from their colonial oppressors. As Vicente L. Rafael has argued, language played an important role in shaping the diversity of meanings pertaining to the Spanish friars and to the native Christian converts. Rafael emphasized the differences between Spanish and Tagalog ways of signifying that would problematize the former's claims of power over the latter based on the translation of their language and the "conversion of their bodies and souls". Rafael suggested that the Tagalog reception of colonial rule, as evidenced by their rapid conversion to Christianity, was premised on a sense of what it meant to *submit* to and *negotiate* with authority in ways that were considerably at odds with Spanish expectations (Rafael, 1984).

Although there was a common religious identity among the Spanish friars/priests and the native priests/people, each group had reinterpreted

Christian ideas in its own way (Andaya, 2001, 59). An example of this is Isabelo de los Reyes Florentino's book (1899, Madrid) entitled "The religion of the Katipunan which is the religion of the ancient Filipinos" (Isabelo de Los Reyes Florentino, 1980). In this regard, the conflict between the colonizer and the colonized was powerful and deeply felt.

Thus, Filipinos used Catholicism to formulate resistance to Spanish colonialism. From the Spanish perspective, the *pasyon* was to discourage the natives from enriching and educating themselves to the point that they might constitute a threat to colonial rule. From the Filipino perspective, the *pasyon* was understood in the view of their own world, a world of suffering and hope, independence and redemption.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to demonstrate how religious identifications served to legitimize both imperial control and resistance to empire. This paper has demonstrated that during its colonial rule, especially in the nineteenth century, Dutch failed to make the East-Indies to be Dutch to a similar extent that the Spanish succeeded to make the Philippines Spanish. In both cases of colonialism, religion was a crucial instrument by which to maintain and strengthen domination over a colonized people. For the Spanish, Catholicism was part of their Hispanic civilization and therefore it needed to be part of their colonial projects. To be Hispanic was to be Catholic. By contrast, although Dutch missionaries were able to convert certain sections of the Indonesian population to Christianity, the Dutch government did not conceive proselytization to be a vital part of the colonial enterprise.

Spanish missionaries attempted to control the natives through various religious and cultural means, without any suspicions that the natives would use the religious teachings they acquired to resist colonial authority. *Pasyon* of Christ was the most influential teachings of the missionaries that the natives received and used it for their own purposes. Spanish missionaries managed to convert the majority of the natives they encountered and they maintained their control through ongoing Christianization. The Dutch, on the other hand, struggled to deal with an already Islamized Indonesia. The Spanish believed that Christianization and colonialism were inextricably linked, whereas the Dutch government only allowed missionaries to perform their duties on the condition that they did not threaten economic interests. The Spanish worked among people practicing local religions, while the Dutch missionaries faced an, at the time, antagonistic world religion.

Why was Spain more successful in using religion as an instrument of imperial control? As a theocratic state, the Spanish made Catholic missionary activity its priority, whereas the Dutch had to face internal debate at home over the legality of the Protestant missions abroad and did not surreptitiously support the missions until the late nineteenth century (although some

missionaries had decided to convert the Indies, despite government restrictions).

Moreover, in terms of bureaucracy, Spanish missionaries dealt with both religious and secular affairs, whereas the Dutch separated the two. Consequently, Spanish missionaries interacted directly with local people, while the Dutch largely interacted with the elite (regents and aristocrats). The extent of Christianization was wider and more popular in Spanish case than in that of the Dutch East Indies. Consequently, the Christianity impact on Indonesia was far less severe than was the case in the Philippines, partly because the Christian missions never received a similar level of state support.

Imperialism was accompanied by local resistance and in both cases, the colonized used religion, as they interpreted and localized it, to legitimize resistance to the colonials (See Reynaldo Ileto, 1999, 193-244). They interpreted religious symbols and teachings in their own way and used them as an instrument for their anticolonialism. The Javanese Muslims used Islamic symbols such as *kafir* (to be interpreted as infidel) and *jihad* (to be understood as holy war) as well as local Javanese idioms such as *Panataagama* (religious leadership) and *Ratu adil* (just rule). In a different way, the Filipino revolutionaries used the passion of Christ during the Holy Week and reinterpreted the teachings in the Bible to strengthen their sense of discontent and hope, love and reason, freedom and justice. Thus, religion became localized before it became an instrument of resistance to colonial powers.

Religion had become part of the natives' worldview. They lived as they understood life through interactions with the outside world. Conversion entailed a plethora of adaptations of the new religion; resistance to colonialism was merely a facet. Moreover, religion constituted both abstract and practical cultural system on which man could depend on times of need. In regard of political, economic, and cultural crisis, religion became a powerful mean to legitimize discontent and hope. ●

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