

COMPLETION REPORT

‘Puerto del Japon’: Early Pangasinan in Luzon before and after the coming of the Japanese and the Spaniards

The significance of ‘Puerto del Japon’ in Pangasinan is revealed in this study as it explored the early history of Pangasinan in the context of Southeast Asia and East Asia. No longer as mere footnote or a meager sentence in Philippine history textbooks and all the more absent in the early history of Southeast Asia, the Japanese port in Pangasinan in Northwest Luzon is given the place it deserves in Pangasinan, Philippine and Southeast Asian history. Using a variety sources from Chinese annals and accounts, Portuguese records, Spanish reports, Ryukyuan chronicles and Japanese researches, the early relation between Pangasinan and Japan, between Luzon and Japan is uncovered. To understand the early history of Pangasinan, an original discussion of its ethnogenesis is presented followed by a critical examination on the rise of Lingayen in 1225 as a port in response to the evolving trade relations in Luzon. The evolution of Pangasinan as a multi-ethnic polity is described as it discusses the role of Liyen or Lingayen at the mouth of Agno in the consolidation of polities that will give rise to a polity called San-tao in 1349 in Pangasinan-Ilocos area. It is in the area of San-tao that a community of traders that I suspect to be Sino-Ryukyuan who made possible the trade connection with the Japanese. Pangasinan as Feng-chia-hsi-lan in the *Ming shilu* is assigned the importance it warranted as its connections with Borneo, Melaka, Ryukyu and Siam are examined after analyzing the evolution of Agoo as trade entrepôt about 1450. It is around this time that Sino-Ryukyuan traders were frequenting Luzon to trade for gold and textiles that they bring to Naha, Hakata and Sakai to barter with the Japanese merchants. It was possible that Ryukyuan brought Japanese merchants in their trading expeditions to Southeast Asia including Luzon that preceded the 1513 account of Tome Pirés of Luzon cloths being bought by the Japanese from the Ryukyuan. The probability of Luzon merchants including Pangasinan traders going to Naha and Hakata is considered and it happened about the time Portuguese arrived in Japan, circa 1543, based on Spanish contact period accounts. Agoo as a port would flourish as it became a gold trade center in Northwest Luzon catering to Ryukyuan merchants and later Japanese pirate-traders so that it would earn the sobriquet, ‘puerto del Japon.’ The tribute-trade between Ming China and Ashikaga Japan and its relation to the rise of Sino-Japanese piracy is shown to have affected Luzon through the arrival of Limahong in Pangasinan. At the advent of Spanish colonialism to 1660, Agoo continued as gold trading center witnessing the wholesale transport of deerskins, the coming of Japanese miners in the Spanish expedition to the Igolot mines in the mountains as well as the rebellion of Don Andres Malong, the King of Pangasinan who faced Japanese samurais in a quixotic but radical quest for independence. Cultural traces of Pangasinan-Japanese connections as shown in the conclusion demonstrate the close relations between Pangasinan and Japanese peoples.