

## GUERRILLA MOVEMENT IN THE LENSES OF COMMON FOLKS: SOCIAL HISTORY NARRATIVES OF WORLD WAR II IN THE PACIFIC CIRCA 1942-1945

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### ABSTRACT

We are now almost eighty (80) years in commemoration of the Second World War. In the last war, the Philippines had been on the frontline of the Pacific War. The victory of the war had been contributed by the regular soldiers and the guerrilla movement which resulted in the defeat of the Japanese Imperial Forces. The paper delves into the exploits of the guerrilla movement either recognized or not and the milieu of the era was vividly accounted for in this paper. Their defense of the land including its untold narratives in the towns of Surigao, Tandag, Bacuag, and the village of Claver of the Surigao province which the paper provided a historical construct circa 1942-1945.

**Keywords:** Guerrilla, World War II, Surigao, Tandag, Claver, Social History, Kempeita, Bacuag.

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Second World War was the most horrific war mankind had ever witnessed. In this war, both the victors and the vanquished formulated war strategies just to achieve the wartime objectives including psychological warfare. In Asia and the Pacific, the Philippines had been at the forefront of the war which was fought in the sea, under the sea, in the air, and on the land. Besides the psychological warfare, espionage, and torture it employed on the civilian population whose wounds of the war retold across generations. Thus, making the Philippines one of the most destroyed countries in the Pacific war.

In any war, it entails a financial burden to the players of the war without to mention the wound it inflicted on the survivors. The Psychological trauma it caused was enormous to the survivors then. Their wounds can be held only across the pages of times.

The Second World War united the Filipinos, Americans, tribal groups, and ethnic Chinese communities in Surigao province and Mindanao Island against the common enemy, the Japanese Imperial forces. Memories of the war are slowly diminishing as our veterans both the recognized and unrecognized die due to old age. Moreover, there were only a few educational materials that integrated the lessons of the last war into our history textbooks. Hence, it is the aim of this paper to give homage to the Guerrilla Movement in this part of Mindanao.

The knowledge of the survivors of the war is dwindling due to the advanced age of the guerrillas. Because of this, it is the end view of this paper to have a discourse on the milieu of the province of Surigao during the Second World War. And the significant role of the

recognized guerrillas, the unrecognized, the ethnic Chinese, and the tribal leaders in winning the war. The paper aims to: present the social milieu of the guerilla movement including the significant contribution of women, the mass-based intelligence network, and the unsung contributions of the unrecognized guerrilla.

Heroes' and heroine accounts of the war emerged during and after the war. These narratives are part indeed of Filipino heritage which needs to be recorded for posterity and as a symbol of national pride. The need for values that will serve as the identity of the Filipino nation and serve as part of the national inheritance is illustrated by the values learned from the Great War. Just look at the narratives of the Second World War and the exploits of the common folks just to defend the fatherland is a source of values and national pride. For this reason, should be looked into through the lens of national aspiration. The Surigao province then was a site where significant fighting between the Japanese imperial army and the guerrilla had been documented. It was a site where guerrilla exploits had been narrated or vividly occurred. Several reasons why many guerrilla movements sprouted in the area were as follows: their loyalty to the American colonizers, the ceased operation of the mines which decided the workers of the mines to join the resistance. The support or assistance of the Chinese community for the Guerrilla. And the charismatic leadership of Col. Wendell Fertig led the resistance. The contribution of the guerrilla had been enormous.

For this reason, studying the historical events of the war is vital due to the lessons it offered. In a manner that mankind will never repeat the horror of war. Again, writing about the second war is timely and novel indeed because the Second World War is mankind's inheritance both its baggage and values learn, and to be learned from it.

The paper is relevant as the Filipino nation asserts its boundaries. The lessons in the Second World War serve as lessons that nationalism is a very important virtue for it hones values of love of country and self-sacrifice. And so, the paper is a narrative of the exploits of the Guerrilla Movement in Surigao province circa 1942-1945.

## II. Definition of Terms

**Ayuda.** The assistance is given to the Guerrilla Movement either food such as rice, root crops, indigenous wine from Nipa and coconut, and clothing like from the abaca hemp.

**Bakwetanan.** A place for the evacuees to stay or their dwellings during the Second World War. It comprises caves, mountains, and valleys in the mountains such as Mt. Banahaw in Tandag and Mt. Tomorok in Gigaquet and other areas.

**Bandilyu.** Informing the villagers concerning the presence of the Japanese Imperial Army and giving instructions to evacuate to the mountains or to safe a place.

**Bankero.** The operator of the non-motorized Banka (boat).

**Buluntaryu.** The volunteers of the Guerrilla Movement regardless of gender or sex, age, and religious affiliations.

**Dagmayun.** The fiber is made of Abaca hemp.

**Humay sa Bukid.** Upland rice was cultivated by the volunteers of the Guerrilla Movement.

**Huwes de Kutsilyo.** The system of justice the Japanese Imperial Army employed. Where the alleged members of the Guerrilla Movement were bayoneted or stabbed by a bayonet of the Japanese Imperial military officer and enlisted men.

**Kempeitai/Kenpeitai.** The secret military police of the Japanese Imperial Army.

**Kombento.** The residence of the parish priest.

**Lasang.** The Forested area was used for the evacuation of civilians during the second world war.

**Magjaganay.** The runners which serve as a source of news or news carrier for the Guerrilla for the possible presence of the enemy.

**Manlimasay.** Drying the water in the non-motorized *Bangka* in order for it not to capsize. It also refers to the paddler of the canoe or non-motorized boat.

**Military District of Mindanao.** The 10th Military District of the Guerrilla Movement was headed by Col. Wendell Fertig.

**Radyu de Baktas.** The news is carried out by information runners.

**Resistance Movement.** The Guerrilla Movement was either recognized or not.

**Sityu.** A village part of the "Barangay" or "Barrio."

**Teniente del Baryu.** A village leader.

### III. The Design of the Inquiry

This paper used Historical research as a method of inquiry. On the other hand, qualitative interview was also conducted among the descendants of the members of the Guerrilla Movement either recognized or not. Library research was conducted in different libraries to have a holistic presentation of the narratives.

The following approaches in Historical Research had been employed in this paper:

1. Researching of Primary Data. Primary data such as letters, diaries, and events accounts had been the significant source in this study.
2. Recording Secondary data. Secondary data from the relatives, children of the members of the Guerrilla Movement, and published materials had been utilized.
3. Interviews with the surviving members of the Guerrilla Movement had been undertaken.

### IV. The Setting

*Surigao, Tandag, Bacuag and Claver* during the second world war was part of *Surigao* province. *Surigao* was the capital of *Surigao* province then during the war. *Tandag* was the center of trade in the southern municipalities at that time. *Claver* is a Barangay village of *Gigaquet* which is one of the towns of *Surigao*. And *Bacuag*, a municipality of *Surigao*.

### V. Literature Reviews

Almeda's (1993) book "Surigao Across the years" has a significant chapter discussing of the province of Surigao during the Japanese Imperial Army's occupation of the province. The said book was reviewed by the present researcher. The work is a significant scholarly endeavor concerning the Japanese Imperial Army's occupation of Surigao province.

Trinidad's (2014) book "Tandag Capital of old Caraga" provided also a very significant chapter discussion of the town of Tandag during the Japanese Imperial Army occupation of the town. The book was reviewed by the present researcher and the work is a significant scholarly endeavor concerning the occupation of the Japanese Imperial Army in the town of Tandag.

Pimentel, Floresito Q. Jr.'s work on "Pensong Pensong: A Strange Story of a World War 2 Veteran" in Manuscript form was reviewed by the present researcher. "Pensong Pensong" is a

local hero narrative of a veteran Guerrilla in the person of "Major Florencio S. Pimentel, Sr". A much-celebrated local hero during the Guerrilla resistance in the Surigao-Agusan area.

Holmes, Hansen Virginia "Guerrilla Daughter ". A narrative of a guerrilla Daughter, whose father was assigned as an engineer in the Surigao mining company. And later joined the Guerrilla. The book provided a terrain of the social and family life of the Americans in Surigao island during the said era.

Holmes, Kent's book on "Wendell Fertig and His Guerrilla Forces in the Philippines. Fighting the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945 "of the McFarland and Company was published in 2015. The book provides a vivid discussion of the role of Col. Wendell Fertig in the resistance movement. This book provided significant insights into the milieu of the 10th military District of Mindanao.

## VI. Statement of the Problem/ The Research Question

The paper ventured into the following inquiry:

1. How did the Japanese Imperial Army occupy the said places?
2. How did the residents react to the occupation?
3. What were the economic activities of the residents during the occupation of the Japanese Imperial Army?
4. What was the organizational culture of the Guerrilla Movement?
5. Who were the "Buluntaryus" and their contribution to the Guerrilla Movement?
6. How did the ethnic Chinese and tribal people help the resistance/guerrilla movement members?

## VII. Discussion

### A. The Japanese Imperial Army and Navy presence in Surigao, Tandag, Claver, Bacuag, and the resident's reaction to the occupation ( 1942-1945).

In the whole month of September 1941, the whole of the Siargao Island war was under the surveillance of the Japanese Imperial Air force. Japanese planes known as "Nakajima B5 n "were seen by many residents patrolling the sky of Siargao island including the Surigao mainland. The Mayor Island at that time "Jose Gonzaga Sr." vividly recounted in his memoirs the occurrence of the said planes on the island. On the other hand, the Japanese Imperial Army arrived in Surigao town via Northern Agusan Road. Many of the Japanese forces were from the Butuan Headquarters. The Japanese imperial army in Surigao was headed by Captain Yosee. They have occupied the "Municipal" or municipal tribunal (town hall) as the seat of the military government of the town. Every early in the morning, the Japanese imperial army has their formation in the town plaza ( Almeda , 1993).

When the Japanese Army arrived in Surigao the residents escaped to the mountains. As narrated by an informant from San Juan Surigao City:

*"When the Japanese Army arrived in Surigao we escaped to the mountains. We brought with us our belongings such as rice, corn, dried fish, and clothing. They arrived in armor cars, tanks, and military jeeps. Some of them occupy the beautiful ancestral houses of the town (translation made by the author).*

Another male informant revealed the following data:

*"News that the Japanese had arrived from Butuan reached through "radio de baktas". I and my father together with the whole family evacuated to the farm area of Sison. News of "Huwes de Kutsilyo" or justice by the knife made the whole family frightened of the Japanese presence in the town. The whole town of Surigao appeared to be a ghost town then abandoned by its residents (Translation made by the researcher)".*

Alarmed with the stories of the atrocities of the Japanese Imperial Army in the neighboring town of Butuan. Such as the use of "Bayuneta" (Bayonet) in killing innocent civilians including women and children civilians who refused to bow their heads in the presence of the Japanese soldiers. The Surigaonon escaped to the mountain areas of Sison as narrated by an informant:

*"Together with the whole village headed by the Teniente del Baryu. We proceeded to the mountain areas of Sison to escape the Japanese. The Teniente del Baryu instructed us to bring with us our clothing, and medicines if we have them. Hurriedly the villagers form a band and went to the mountain areas of Sison (Translation made by the researcher).*

Another informant narrated the following:

*"We were instructed by the Teniente del Baryu to escape to the mountainous area of Malimono. Together with well-bodied men, we formed a network of volunteers. During our escape, we simply called ourselves as "Buluntaryus". The volunteer association served as a runner (Manjaganay) to speed up the information network (Radyu de Baktas) against the enemy. In our escape to the mountainous area of Malimono women weaved abaca hemp we called "Dagmayon and "Hinabolhabol "which were supplied during our escape (Translation made by the researcher).*

Another informant revealed the following data:

*"During the Japanese occupation, the Philippine peso runs out of circulation. What was introduced by the Japanese was the "Japanese War Money" but it was not used by the Surigaonon. Instead, it was just scattered in the town plaza (community stage). Together with my whole family, we escaped to Taganaan. In Taganaan, together with the community, we have survived by mountain farming (Translation made by the author).*

In like manner, another male informant revealed the following data:

*"The Japanese arrived with their good military uniform whose weapons have bayonets. Alarmed by the atrocities of the Japanese I escaped and joined the Guerrilla Movement based in Placer with three young men from Sison. We encamped in Mt. Tomorok in Gigaquet(Translation made by the author).*

Another Male informant from Barangay Taft revealed the following data:

*"The Japanese occupation in the town of Surigao brought havoc to the community. Old, young, male, female, and children in panic just to escape the noted Kempatie. My family escaped to Sison and was lucky enough to hide in the mountain areas of Sison where we plated wild yam (gabi, palaw, karlang) and other root crops. Thank god we have survived the entire Japanese occupation(Translation made by the author).*

Another female informant from Mabua, Surigao revealed the following data:

*"When the Japanese arrived in the town with their gallant military uniform the townsfolk was in panic mode. We were in a hurry to escape to the mountain areas due to the reputation of the Japanese in the use of bayonets ("Huwes de Kutsilyu"). My family hurriedly packed our things and escaped with the use of "balsa" (translation made by the author).*

An informant in Barangay San Juan revealed the following narration:

*"I joined the Guerrilla Movement with the high hope of defeating the enemy. I was assigned in the coastal wing which is quite difficult to patrol due to the lack of pump boats (translation made by the author)".*

An informant from Nonoc Island revealed the following data:

*"I and my family escape to the forest area of Sison because of the presence of the Japanese coastal guard in the islet. With the help of our relatives from Sison, we were able to escape. We stayed in Sison until the end of the war (translation made by the researcher). "*

The MSC mission in this part of Mindanao and Agusan continually served the parishioners. The MSC priest and brothers due to their loyal service to their mission served with utmost dedication to the church and the parishioners despite the hardship of this time as Fr. Peter Schreurs, MSC wrote:

*"Many years after the War, Bishop Carlos van den Ouwelant, MSC (from 1942 till 1945), wrote in his informal memories about the personal contacts with the number of American Guerilla soldiers operating in Surigao province. Just like Father Witte, he could not help liking the spirit of most of them, undaunted, at times boyishly adventurous, often courageous, and unwaveringly patriotic. In those same memories, he has also a portion wherein he relates an evening conversation with one of those lonely rangers, named McFaden the man had a voice of real surprise that not a single one of the foreign missionaries, including himself from the wartime miseries accepted by evacuating to Australia in one of the submarines operations. The end of these lines allows me to voice the hope that all Filipino readers will treasure the grateful memories of the good shepherd who stayed with their flock when wolves invaded their abodes. They shared their sufferings because they knew their herd, as much as the latter knew and trusted the shepherds. "*

### **Hichihara treatment of the MSC Missionaries**

Hichihara the Japanese district commander in Surigao was tolerant of the mission work of the MSC missionaries. He allowed the missionaries to preach the gospel even to the "Bakwetanan" (place of the evacuees) in the first two years and a half of the war. As what Charles van den Ouwelant, MSC, DD wrote:

*"We priests and brothers in the Diocese of Surigao were fortunate during the first two years of the war and a half of the war in the Pacific. Of course, there were many sufferings, but we were extremely lucky to have the Japanese district commander - Hichihara - who did not imprison the missionaries. In Surigao, we were free for the first two and a half years of the war -until June 1944 when " orders from the emperor " the bishop and the priest were rounded up and sent to the concentration camp".*

In Surigao, Claver, Tandag, and Bacuag all residents were ordered to bow to the Japanese soldiers and the Japanese flag as the female resident of Bacuag narrated:

*"We were instructed by the Sergeant of the Japanese Imperial Army that we are going to bow to the Japanese soldiers and the Japanese flag. Failure to do so will be slapped. Afraid that we will be bayoneted so, we escaped in the Bakwetanan. We had planted bananas in the Bakwetanan and had made Nipa wine for our merry-making".*

In Bacuag the whole "Poblacion" (township) was deserted due to the Japanese bombardment of the coastal areas of Claver. The residents fled to their "Bakwetanan" to escape the fury of the Japanese. This time the member guerrilla movement was actively recruited in the "Bakwetanan" and were able to have significant recruits. The coastal areas of the village of Claver were bombed by the Japanese as the memoirs of Charles van den Ouwelant, MSC, DD wrote:

*"On November 30 November 1943, a Japanese ship bombarded the town of Claver. This could be the beginning of the bombardment of all the coastal settlements, including Bacuag where I was. I felt the time had come to leave the empty town and evacuate, like my parishioners, to the hills".*

Peter Schreurs, MSC wrote regarding the situation in Bacuag:

*"The following day a Japanese warship came steaming to Bacuag and submitted the place to angry bombardment. It was the first to be administered a punishment that would deal with nearly all the coastal villages later in the war. In several places, the missionaries would eventually be the only inhabitants to remain behind in their parishes".*

## **B. The so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere**

The Japanese Empire devised a political program which was a form of propaganda that Asia can be best governed if the nations in the region/continent will have a close association. And collaboration for its economic development if they shared resources, idealism, and shared governance called the so-called greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere headed by Japan. But in reality, is a form of Japanization and conquest timeline of the Japanese imperial ambition in Asia. The battle cry that Asia for Asians was not supported by the countries in Asia due to Japanese atrocities committed in the war and the imposition of Japanese rule in the occupied territories using intimidation. Japan was seen by its neighbors as a new colonizer in the camouflaged Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The dummy /puppet governments in the occupied countries and territories were made to believe that the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere is a step for liberation from western colonizers like the Americans, British, the Netherlands, and France but in reality, it mark the brutal Japanese occupation in South East Asia.

## **C. The Economic Activities during the Japanese occupation in Surigao, Tandag, and the Village of Claver**

Surviving the war entails not only psychological strength but also looking for resources to provide the evacuee's basic needs most especially food and water. The residents of Tandag, Surigao, and Claver were very self-reliant in looking for food just to survive in their escape from the lowlands/plains to the forest area. The data below provided the construct of the

economic activities of the war as experienced by the residents as occupied by the Japanese Imperial Army.

The following economic activities the evacuees indulged in: were mat weaving, wild boar hunting, subsistence agriculture, freshwater fishing, making sugar from Nipa palm, and harvesting flour from Edyok palm.

The residents survived in the mountain areas by planting root crops, upland rice, and harvesting freshwater fish. They had also done a barter system among themselves for the goods which they are in need of. For the supply of detergent, they employed a simple manner of making it from coconut oil and a mixture of ashes of wood. For sugar needs, they have also used Nipa sugar from Nipa palm and coconut sugar as well.

The Japanese Imperial Army introduced the Japanese war currency but with no success since the townsfolk did not use it. Due to the fact it has no monetary value at all. Thus, the Japanese-introduced currency was worthless. It was just "paper toy money". The Japanese toy money was just scattered in the town plaza worthless and unappreciated. As narrated by one informant:

*"The Japanese introduced the currency just scattered in the Plaza (community staged). For it has no value even though the Philippine peso has gone out of circulation. The war "bakwet" (evacuees) in the mountainous "sityus"(villages) used the "barter" system. Because of this , the Japanese introduced currency has no value and is worthless (Translation made by the researcher)".*

In the mode of exchange as a unit of measurement/scaling ("*timbangan*") the "*ganta*" was used as a unit of measurement. Though, the resistance movement introduces quasi-village taxation. Each "*sityus*"(villages) then situated in the upland has a quota of upland rice for the resistance movement and a piece of Abaca cloth "*Dagmayon*" heavily used as "*habol*" (blanket) by the Guerrilla movement members.

The introduced currency of Col. Wendell Fertig in the Misamis area did not gain a foothold in Surigao for "Barter Trading" was practiced by the locals. Freshwater fishes from lake Mainit supplied by the Mamanwas via "Barter Trading" were the major source of protein for the locals. Lake Mainit fishes then served as the major source of protein for the "Bakwet" (**evacuees**) who evacuated in the mountain areas of Sison and Malimono.

The "*Edyok*" palm tree served as an alternative source of carbohydrates. Its starch was processed as flour by the locals/evacuees. Different wild edible yams such: *palaw*, *karlang*, *bagong* add the sources of root crops which serve as alternatives to upland rice. They have also planted corn to supplement their carbohydrate needs. "Edyok" palm tree also produces good wine, which is one of the favorite beverages of the resistance movement during their merry-making.

Fish harvested from lake Mainit was dried as dried fish such: *haw-an*, *gurame*, *pantat*, Moreover, "*Pejanga*" was widely harvested in the lake with the assistance of the Mamanwas. It then supplements the protein needs of the evacuees or locals.

Other protein source includes python (*sawa*), iguanas (*bibang*), wild boar, *kabug* (Philippine naked-backed fruit bat), which served also as an alternative protein source for the



evacuees/locals. Herbal medicines were heavily used by them due to the absence of community health centers during the war.

The traditional "*mananabang*" (traditional midwife) served the needs of pregnant women including in infant delivery. Cases of infant mortality during the delivery had been observed during their evacuation, including maternal death during the delivery.

Coastal and deep-sea fishing ceased due to the heavy presence of the Japanese Imperial navy patrolling the Surigao, Leyte, and Samar seas. In the village of Claver where the Japanese Imperial Navy was vividly seen patrolling the coast, including the Carrascal and Cantilan, Socorro waters. The locals of Claver evacuated in "*Sityu*" *Sapa, Toyatoya, Kalanggaman, Baoy, Daging, and Manganlo* with the help of the Mamanwa tribe due to the heavy presence of the Japanese Imperial Navy and Army. There were other fishermen who continued in coastal fishing since these were members of the "*Buluntaryus*" or the volunteers or inductee Guerrilla commissioned to spy on the Japanese Imperial Navy presence. Moreover, they shared their fish harvest with the locals as a form of food "*Bayanihan*".

The residents of Claver have continued planting cassava, bananas, upland palay, and Abaca. Copra has no value at that time for the trading of copra ceased during the entire duration of the Japanese occupation. In Claver also, the "*Barter*" of the locals was a significant medium of exchange or trading of goods. Bartered goods include Mat (Baliw), Abaca for clothing, rice cakes (*Bibingka*), reef fishes, the meat of wild boar, honey, upland rice, and *Edyok* and cassava flour.

In order to provide the supply of salt. Salt making was installed by the "*Buluntaryus*" (volunteers) on the island *sityu* of Lapinigan (Poyu). Salt making in Lapinigan island supplied the residents and Guerrillas needs for salt. Barter of salt with other goods was also undertaken. To supply alcoholic beverages saps from Nipa, coconut, edyok were fermented into alcoholic beverages. They supplied the economic activity by planting cassava, pineapple, bananas, camote, ube. Wild edible root crops supplied their carbohydrate needs such: *palaw, carlang, bagong*.

Surviving in the mountain areas of Toya-Toya, Manganlo, Baoy, Daging needs food "*Bayanihan*" (communal system of food distribution). The communal system of food distribution was undertaken and supervised by the "*Teniente del Baryu*".

Tandag, the southern part of Surigao province which a big town occupied by the Japanese Imperial Army. The economic activities of the town during the war included "*barter*", upland agriculture, and freshwater fishing. The Japanese-introduced currency has no value at all. The Guerrilla Movement introduced currency headed by Col. Wendell Fertig (also known as Col. Fertig currency) was not used due to its limited circulation during the entire Japanese occupation in Tandag. In Tandag also the Philippine peso has run out of circulation and was not used in the period (circa 1942-45).

Col. Wendell Fertig's currency was also called Misamis currency. Again, due to its limited circulation, the Tandaganon did not use it. Instead, the economy of the town during the Japanese occupation relied on the Barter system, upland agriculture, and freshwater fishing. All commercial activities or enterprises in the town of Tandag had ceased such as the most important copra and palay (rice) buying.

The Chinese traders in Claver and Surigao also ceased their business operations during the period. Moreover, the Chinese communities of the said sites had supported materially in form of supply of food and Chinese medicine to the guerilla movement members. The resistance movement against the Japanese occupiers. Copra buying in the said sites has also stopped or ceased its operation.

So, the Guerrilla Movement has some sort of quasi-taxation (*Kabahinan /ayuda*) from the residents to support the resistance movement, which they called "Ayuda" (Aid). There was an efficient collection of the quasi taxation collected by the "Manjaganay" (runners) or collectors usually the fastest runner of the Guerrilla Movement.

All the merchandise of Tandag stopped due to the heavy presence of the Japanese Army and Navy. The presence of the Imperial Navy Frigate on the coast of Mabua made the Tandaganon scared of the presence of the occupiers. Hence, they have evacuated to "*Sityus*" *Matikdum, Kag-inid, and Maitum* some in the mountain areas of *Kapatagan* in "*Sityu*" *Sotel*. Others escape in *Mahawan, Poog, Palo Otso*. All the Tandaganon evacuees relied on the Barter system in the exchange of goods. The evacuees just cross the mountain ranges of *Kapatagan* and *Bantayakan* for hunting and collecting edible wild vegetables and animals.

The women who had encamped or settled in the said sites continuously weaved "*Dagmayon*" and "*Panhabolay*" from the Abaca hemp and bartered with the co-evacuees. Others Abaca blanket they had given to the "*Manjaganay*" or collector of quasi tax of the Guerrilla Movement as their assistance.

Other economic activities included freshwater fishing in the Tandag river. Which also includes "*Pamalisaha*", *Patuway* (*freshwater shell collection*). Freshwater fishes from the Tandag river, eels, and hunting wild boar, *sawa* (python) provides their protein source during the Japanese occupation of the town of Tandag.

Making flour from sweet potato, *edyuk* palm, and cassava was also employed by the Tandaganon during their escape from the Japanese Imperial Army. Again, the barter system was heavily employed. *Edyok* palm provided also large-scale indigenous flour including vinegar. Their sugar needs were from the Nipa palm which also supplied the needs of the Guerrilla Movement collected by the "*magjaganay*" or the quasi-tax collector. For grinding the corn and rice flour the stone grinder was utilized. This allows the evacuees to store corn, cassava, and rice flour in large quantities.

In the barter trade, the Manobo community of *Mahawan* has also helped them in the exchange of their goods. The economic "bayanihan" was effectively instituted by the locals, the tribal community, and the Guerrilla Movement just to survive during the sad days/era of Japanese occupation in Tandag during the Second World War.

#### **D. The organizational culture of the Guerrilla Movement**

May 7, 1941, was a significant date of World War II in the Pacific. On the said date Bataan surrendered to the Japanese occupiers. Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright surrendered to the Japanese then others follow. Subsequently, death March follows, and Gen. William F. Sharp also surrendered. The three months long Death March was made up of 61,000 Filipinos and 15,100 Americans who were prisoners of conflict or war. Moreover, many had escaped the

Bataan Death March. Those who had escaped from the death March organized the resistance movement.

The Guerrilla Movement increased in number when the deserters of death March arrived. One of which was Wendell Fertig a US army reservist. A charismatic deserter of the death March formed the resistance movement on Mindanao island. He was an American Engineer and a commissioned reserve officer in the US Army. Fertig combined his engineering skills in leading the resistance. He introduced innovations in how to use an improvised radio just to contact Gen. MacArthur based in Australia, in which he succeeded. After which follows the material and ammunition support via submarine from Australia.

But Fertig was convinced by several Guerrilla wings to stand as its leader. Fertig gladly accepted it. For there was infighting among the Guerrilla and his acceptance reduced the infighting. Having an American as their commander solved the infighting of the different wings of the Guerrilla. Col. Wendell Fertig reorganized the resistance into an actual fighting force. His leadership made it easier for the American troops in liberating Mindanao Island and paved the way for Gen. McArthur's successful return to Leyte.

The success of the Guerrilla movement was due to the following:

1. The assistance from the Chinese migrant community provided them with food, clothing, and medicines.
2. The assistance of the tribal community.
3. The strong village-based intelligence network.
4. The committed volunteers in the Guerrilla movement.
5. Col. Wendell Fertig's military leadership contributed to the success of the Guerrilla movement.
6. The committed Guerrilla though less armed but master of the terrain of the area. And contributed much to the defeat of the enemy.
7. Strong community support for the guerrilla movement. Providing Guerrilla foods, clothing; farm harvest, contributed to the Guerrilla movement's success. Thus, defeating the Japanese.

### **Guerrilla Movement amulets and sacred prayer ("oraciones")**

Philippine Guerrilla Movement is a unique social and wartime movement for it includes a form of amulets (*anting-anting, agimat*) and sacred prayers called "oraciones". "Oraciones" or sacred prayers were from the "Tambalon" or diviner who provided the members of the Guerrilla movement with sacred prayers to protect them from the enemies including the use of amulets. The members of the Guerrilla movement cherished this form of mysticism as a form of surviving the war. It was believed that these amulets can make them invisible to the enemy. The members of the Guerrilla movement have piously memorized these sacred prayers which were usually in Latin.

#### **D.1. The Narratives of "Huwes de Kutsilyo" (Justice by Bayonet or knife) and Kenpeitai.**

Justice by the Bayonet or "Huwes de Kutsilyo". A systematic way of dispensing justice by the Japanese occupiers. The *Tandaganon, Surigaonon, and Clavernon* have a collective phobia of this system of swift justice. They will have to bow to the Japanese soldiers passing by.

And bow to the Japanese flag. And stop when there is an approaching Japanese patrol car. Failure to do so will be backstroked by a bayonet. Others have died from the Bayonet. One of the victims of Justice by Bayonet was Lt. Francisco Canuto from Mainit, a member of the Philippine Constabulary who died in the said justice system. As Almeda (1993) writes:

*"Canuto was arrested on July 22, 1942. Forty-Two Japanese soldiers went to his hideout, where they saw Canuto riding on a white horse. The Japanese commander told Canuto, through an interpreter, that he was the only Filipino officer who have not surrendered and ordered him to salute. Canuto refused by saying, " Why should I salute?"He was dragged down from his mount and together with his followers "Herded inside a chapel "where he was tortured (Almeda, 1993)".*

Trinidad (2014) narrated the abuses of the Japanese as he writes:

*"Vicente P. Ajos, an active guerilla asset recounted his gruesome experience when he was caught by the Japanese soldiers. "I was alone and soundly asleep one day in our makeshift evacuation dwelling in the Barangay Rosario, a few kilometers from Tandag Poblacion when I was awakened by shouts. Four Japanese soldiers broke into my hut and one of them bayoneted my buri mat blanket and tossed it into the air. I was terribly scared that I violently trembled and later become totally unconscious. When I regained consciousness, I saw my hands already tightly bound and fell in some parts of my body. I was then savagely mauled(Trinidad, 2014)".*

The Kempataie atrocities had been vividly recalled by the " key informants". Their presence sometimes wore civilian uniforms to disguise and joined the civilian population. As one of the female informants revealed:

*"The Kempataie , easily blended with the civilian population . In this, the Kempataie can easily report to their superiors regarding the guerilla sympathizers (Translation made by the researcher)".*

The Kempataie has a reputation for torture and harsh interrogation of their prisoners. Alarmed with this news the Surigaonon evacuated hurriedly due to their presence as narrated by female informants:

*"News that the Kenpeitai had been in the town we hurriedly escape to Malimono. It has a reputation for adopting torture and bayoneting even children. We have survived in the forest area of Malimono during the entire Japanese occupation of Surigao. Thank God I was not sick at that time (Translation made by the researcher).*

### **Lt. Col. Wendell Fertig Charismatic Leadership and the Guerilla Movement in Mindanao.**

The most charismatic of all the guerilla leaders in the person of Col. Wendell Fertig. His leadership resulted in the success of the resistance movement against the Japanese on Mindanao Island. He paved the way for ending the competition of the various groups of the resistance movement. And provided vital leadership recognized by all supporters of the resistance movement such as the tribal people, ethnic Chinese, Americans, and the masses.

With the leadership of Lt. Col. Wendell Fertig's contact with the American mining barons were instituted to organize the *Surigao-Agusan* wing of the guerilla movement. Fertig, a very charismatic leader, is a metallurgical engineer in the US Army Engineering Reserve Force/Brigade when the war started. Fertig did not give or entertain the idea of surrendering to the enemy as called by Gen. Sharp. Hence, a guerilla movement in Mindanao was established. The members of the guerilla movement need a charismatic leader in order to sustain the work. Thus Wendell Fertig being an American, highly educated and an Army reservist provided the necessary leadership. Several local leaders of the Guerilla movements were mobilized due to Col. Fertig leadership and robust efforts.

On the other hand, Lt. Col. Fertig personally supervised the management of the 10<sup>th</sup> Military District in Mindanao through its Agusan headquarters. Aided or with the assistance of the tribal communities which supplied fresh provisions of food to the guerillas.

Fertig was also instrumental in the formation of the emergence of *Surigaonon* commanders of the movement. And motivated them to work for the movement, worked for the defense of the archipelago. This includes CIPHERING Garcia (major in rank), former PC Provincial Commander of Surigao, while Mr. Sammy Goode was in charge of the Tandag wing of the guerilla, Oligario Ambray and Semeon Somera in charge in the Cantilan wing while Jose Castillo, the Bislig wing.

In order for the guerilla movement to survive quasi collection of taxes was instituted in form of goods such as rice, and another farm harvest (also called *ayuda* or *kabahinan*). The guerilla money was not in full circulation. Plus, the Japanese introduced currency was not fully supported by the community. The community had gladly accepted the quasi-form taxation of the movement in order for its sustenance for the Philippine peso was not operational during the Second World War. Moreover, there were reports of abuses committed by the guerillas and rivalry between the different Filipino-led movements. With the dynamic and charismatic leadership of Lt. Col. Wendell Fertig, he was able to pacify the rivalry between the different guerilla movements. Another charismatic American guerilla was Major Robert B. Spielman who commanded the special force which destroyed the Japanese radar system that resulted in the heavy defeat of the enemy. Later after the war, Spielman wrote his memoirs which vividly describe the war movement. He died on March 18, 2008. After retiring from the US Army, he worked as a public school teacher in Texas. He was one of the valiant leaders of the guerilla movement in the Philippines and was a co-partner of Fertig in the defense of the island.

Another local guerrilla leader known for gallantry in the battles of Tandag and Tago areas was Major Florencio S. Pimentel Sr., A charismatic leader known as a war veteran having participated in the Davao Guerilla movement. In the war effort, he was assisted by Tomas Medrano and Leopoldo Pagaran from Tago poblacion (township).

The occupation of the Japanese in Tandag terrified the *Tandaganon* of the torture and death of civilians suspected as supporters of the guerilla movement. The town was deserted and in order to win back the loyalty of the Tandaganon Julian Dayupat, the Municipal Secretary was installed as Municipal Mayor by the Japanese but he was assassinated by the resistance movement. After his assassination, Vice Mayor Sergio Gujilde was installed as mayor because Mayor Jaime Serra (also known as Don Jaime Serra, son of the last Spanish Judge of Tandag) went underground as a guerilla himself.

The "*Huwes de Kutsilyo*" (Justice by a bayonet) judgment was rendered by the Japanese to the alleged "guerilla" and their sympathizers. Killings in this judgment were rampant, especially in the remote "Sityus" of Tago and Tandag. Terrified of this manner of judgment the Tandaganon and Tagon-on fled to the mountains to escape the Japanese. In the mountains of Mabuhay and Kayali they have established communities that were self-sustaining in order to help themselves. They have planted upland rice, root crops, and bananas. In order to provide their clothing, they cultivated "*Abaca*" the hemp they used in weaving their clothing; in vernacular, they called "*Dagmayun*".

Kayali and Mabuhay were very far "*sityus*" and would be difficult for the Japanese to penetrate. For this reason, during that time, it has rugged terrain and was very mountainous. The communities in their wartime settlement raised also chickens, carabaos, and freshwater fishing from the Tago River in order to survive. They also engaged in vegetable farming in order to survive the difficult condition of the war. For exchanges of goods "barter" system was used among the residents of the two communities.

The "*buluntaryus*" was established in said communities which increased in number as influenced by the Guerilla movement. The latter (the "*buluntaryus*") was instrumental in supplying food to the guerilla. Among the hardship encountered by the villagers includes frequent malaria, lack of medicines for simple illnesses like cough, and fever, and not being accustomed to the mountain life, maternal death during the delivery was frequent during their escape.

#### **E. The "*Buluntaryus*" and their contribution to the Guerrilla Movement.**

Jose Delos Reyes Dedumo, Martin Sulapaz Dedumo, and the likes were fishers and volunteered ("*buluntaryu*") to the guerilla movements in Claver. Martin Dedumo together with five (5) able men were tasked to guard *Lapinigan* islet from the Japanese patrol and the observations were relayed to the guerrilla camp in *Tumorok* mountains. Local *Teniente del Baryu* Verano Samontina assisted the guerilla movement in their intelligence network. Maria Sulapaz together with three (3) women also assisted in providing food for the guerilla volunteers. The Members of the Mamanwa tribe from *Toya Toya*, *Daging*, and *Manganlo* had also helped in providing food supplies to the guerrilla camps such as wild deer, boar, wild vegetables, taro/*gabi*, corn, upland palay, and other forest vegetables.

The Dedumo's, in particular, was one of the examples of unrecognized guerillas. Together with the Dedumo's were Verano Samontina and his wife Matea Gereda Samontina and many more unrecognized volunteers in the guerilla movement who were unsung but contributed greatly to the resistance against the Japanese. And had helped the guerilla movement as watchmen, or security spies on *Lapinigan* Island. And reported to the resistance or guerrilla movement the Japanese patrol in Claver coastal areas and relayed in Camp Mt. *Tumorok* the headquarters of the guerrilla movement of Claver for the presence of the Japanese navy in the Claver and Carascal, Socorro waters. Before Martin Dedumoc died, I had the opportunity to interview him regarding the unrecognized guerrilla movement on Lapinigan Island. The following was the text of the interview:

*"I was 15 years old at that time when a friend of my father invited me to join the guerilla movement. Because, my father was a fisherman and had a coconut farm at Lapinigan island, and considering that we owned 4 Banka's (non-motorized boats). I was specifically tasked to have a day and night patrol and disguise as bankero (boat operator). When the Japanese*

*patrol the coastal area of Claver. I and my co-fishermen reported the Japanese presence to my superiors. This informed the Tumorok personnel employing the community-based intelligence system the presence of the enemy. I remember my patrol route was from Lapinigan Island, the islet of Bag-ong Banwa, and Kaglayag (Note: translated by the researcher).*

Maria Sulapaz vividly narrates in her memoirs:

*"In the early 3:00 AM, my husband and I were awakened by a visitor in the house. That early in the morning. The visitors were from the Guerrilla movement with specific instructions to allow us to serve as a member of the intelligence system of the island of Lapinigan as volunteers. The visitors bring orders from the Guerilla's superior. I was also instructed to provide a supply of fish to the guerilla movement to be collected by the guerilla collector".*

An interview with Matea Gereda Samontina revealed the following data:

*"I was asked by my husband a guerrilla volunteer to weave Abaca cloth for the guerrillas' which I gladly did. Good that our family has a farm in Kalamngaman. My husband and I planted Abaca hemp which I weaved for the guerilla movement during the entire duration of the Japanese occupation in Claver (Note: Translated by the researcher)."*

An interview with the descendants of Verino Samontina revealed the following data:

*"My grandfather was a Teniente del Baryu during the second world war. He assisted the guerrilla in looking for food in the forest of Kalamngaman. He served as some sort of member of the quasi-intelligence network against the enemy (translated by the researcher).*

Early Chinese migrants from Placer, Gigaquet, and Claver had assisted the guerrilla movement by providing palay, corn, medicine, and firewood. Most of the Chinese male migrants had intermarried with the local women. They have served also as a volunteer in the quasi-intelligence network against the enemy.

### **The Contribution of Don Jaime Serra to the guerrilla or Resistance**

Don Jaime Serra, encouraged/ instituted the formation of the "arm wing" of the "*buluntaryus*". With his charisma and leadership, the infighting of the guerilla in Tandag and Tago ended. The leaders of the "*buluntaryus*" considered also him a prominent leader of the resistance (Guerrilla Movement). In order to provide a protein source for the evacuees, Don Jaime Serra encouraged the residents to have a backyard fishpond of freshwater fish. The contribution of Don Jaime Serra to the resistance movement against the Japanese was enormous. Due to his charisma and leadership, the "*buluntaryus*" movement, acting as a line of defense against the invading Japanese was successfully repulsed. As pre-war Mayor of Tandag Don Jaime Serra was recognized by the Tandaganon as a patriot and dynamic leader.

### **The unrecognized Guerrilla "Buluntaryus"**

The recognized Guerrilla "*buluntaryus*", had greatly contributed to the success of the guerrilla movement. Their task varied from serving as a nursing attendant, gathering firewood and water, spying, guards, and food provider, and participating in actual combat. Yet, despite

their contributions, they had been called "*buluntaryus*", or volunteers. Due to the lack of enlistment papers until today they are unrecognized as Guerrilla.

### **The ethnic Chinese and tribal people contributed to the resistance/guerrilla movement**

The ethnic Chinese community had been very active in supporting the guerrilla movement as Almeda (1993) writes:

*"The first guerilla outfit was known as Pilipino-American-Chinese Guerilla Association (PACGA) and its base of operation was in Masgad, a barrio on the west coast near Malimono. As more men joined the resistance movement, PACGA swelled into a regiment with contacts all over the province. It had elements in the town of Cantilan, Lanuza, Bacuag, Mainit, Carrascal, Placer, Dapa, Numancia, General Luna, and Surigao (Almeda, 1993).*

The Chinese community generously shared their time, ammunition, food, and medicines with the guerrilla movement. This contributed greatly to providing supplies to the guerrilla movement. Another significant contribution of the Chinese community was many of them served as spies in order to closely monitor the movement of the Japanese Army. The Chinese community gladly reported it to the guerrilla movement.

The tribal community's contribution was enormous and contributed to the defeat of the Japanese. The Mamanwas of *Baoy, Kalamgaman, Manganlo* assisted the *Clavernon* in their escape from the Barrio proper to the said places. Besides the Mamanwas greatly helped the guerrilla in teaching the latter survival skills in the jungle such as hunting wild boar, collecting wild yams (*gabi, palaw, carlang, bagong*), and herbal medicines. The Mamanwas volunteered in the intelligence network or village intelligence network against the Japanese.

#### **F. 1 The Atrocities of the *Kempetai*.**

The *Kempetai* or the secret military police of the Japanese Imperial Army contributed havoc. They had burned *nipa* houses, maltreated the elderly, and maltreated the women. The *Kempetai* were notorious. They killed and detained, innocent civilians during the Japanese occupation.

#### **F. 2 Major Florencio S. Pimentel, Sr.: Tandaganon Local Hero.**

Major Florencio S. Pimentel, Sr., a USAFFE soldier. Famous for his guerrilla work/involvement in Davao, Cotabato. A very charismatic guerrilla leader. He was also known for his bravery and gallantry in war. One of the local heroes of the second world war whose exploits were vividly recalled by his relatives in Tandag and Tago.

#### **F.3 Women's contribution to the guerrilla movement**

The women's sector greatly contributed to the guerrilla movement. They have served nurses, food gatherers, or members of the intelligence network. In providing clothing they have provided the "*Hinabol*" or "*dagmayun*" out from the Abaca hemp which supplied the needs of the guerrilla in the form of a blanket. The likes of Mattea Gerida Samontina and Maria Sulapaz who supplied the blankets for the resistance movement from the Abaca hemp were noteworthy indeed.



## VIII. CONCLUSION

The guerilla either recognized or not had greatly contributed to the success of the movement. Their contribution deserves pages in local history. The *Tandaganon*, *Clavernon*, *Surigaonon*, and *Tagon-on* supported the guerilla movement for their patriotic duty to defend the nation. On the other hand, the policy of the Japanese of community attraction did not work for it applied harsh measures such as torture, beheading, detention, and burning houses.

The recognized Filipino guerilla leaders were highly respected members of the community for their heroism and gallantry. The charisma and military genius of Fertig and Speilman had made the guerrilla movement one of the most successful underground movements which contributed to the enemy's defeat. The guerilla movement was mass-based and the women, tribal, ethnic Chinese, members of the rich or well-to-do families, farmers, and fisher folks were actively involved in the movement. And more should be written about them.

## IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is highly recommended to include the lessons of the war and its values in history textbooks for posterity and as part of Filipino heritage.
2. Historical markers be installed in the places of Historical importance during the Pacific or World War in the cities of Surigao and Tandag. The towns of Claver, Bacuag includes places of "*Bakwetan*", places of guerrilla encounters to commemorate the guerrilla movement's heroism.
3. More Historical research concerning the guerrilla movement heroism be conducted in the whole of the Caraga Region.

## X. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following authorities of local history in Surigao, Tandag, and Cantilan respectively:

1. Fernando A. Almeda, Jr., Author of the book: "The story of the Province of Surigao Across the Years". Foremost authority of the history of Surigao for the valuable information his book offered concerning the History of Surigao during the Second World War.
2. Lucilo P. Trinidad author of the book "Tandag Capital of Old Caraga". This book provided significant information concerning the History of Tandag during the Second World War.
3. The late Eulogio V. Eleazar, author of the book "Cantilan, History of the Philippine Town in Surigao del Sur, the Philippines encourage me to write the History of Tandag during the Second World War.
4. Associate Professor Maria Theresa Q. Yusico for her assistance in gathering data for the contribution of Major Florencio S. Pimentel, Sr in the Tandag Guerrilla Movement.
5. To the relatives, descendants, and living Guerrillas of Surigao, Tandag, and Claver for the time granted during the interview.
6. To the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHI) for encouraging me to finish this work which was presented during the 75th commemoration of the Second World War in the Pacific.

**XI. End Notes**

1. This research was conducted in response to the National Historical Commission of the Philippines' encouragement to conduct research concerning the Second World War.
2. The author presented this paper during the 75 years commemoration of the Second World War at the Holy Angel University, Angeles City Philippines last August 17- 19, 2017 sponsored by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines and the Holy Angel University, Angeles City as co-convener.

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