



THE 1762 BRITISH INVASION OF SPANISH- RULED PHILIPPINES: BEYOND IMPERIAL AND NATIONAL IMAGINARIES

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COVER IMAGE
Alegoría de la defensa de Filipinas por el alavés
Don Simón de Anda y Salazar. 1762-1763.
Inventory No. 0050, in the Museo de Bellas Artes de Álava.
Oil on Canvas. 236 x 335 cm.
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Vitoria-Gasteiz

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Scorched Earth: War and Loss in Manila and Luzon, 1762-1764

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Abstract

THE BRITISH invasion of Manila in late 1762 sparked an intense and devastating war in Luzon. By the beginning of 1763, massive popular anti-colonial rebellions erupted in Ilocos and Pangasinan in response to Spain's temporary loss of control of the capital of its Asian empire. Spanish colonial officials partnered with Catholic priests and the loyal principalia to raise a large, multiethnic loyalist army that met the foreign invaders and local insurgents in battles. The rival armed forces that converged and clashed in the Philippines embraced scorched earth strategies, ensuring maximum damage to homes and sacred buildings. This chapter considers this complex, multifront war's destructive impact on human life and material culture in the Philippines, illuminating its enduring impact on cultural heritage and historical knowledge.

KEYWORDS: Cultural heritage, Archives, War, Violence, Rebellion

WHEN A JOINT British Royal Navy and East India Company force attacked Manila in late September of 1762, it set in motion a long and devastating war. The British capture of Intramuros—the walled city of Manila—inspired tens of thousands of Indigenous peoples across Luzon to revolt against Spanish colonial rule. Spanish government officials, militant missionaries, and the Indigenous principalia worked together to organize diverse local communities into a loyalist army to fight a multi-front war to defend Spain's Asian empire against foreign invaders and battalions of homegrown revolutionary fighters. In this complex war, the boundaries dividing soldiers and civilians blurred as people from different regions and social backgrounds were recruited into armed bands. The conflict pitted rivals against each other in major battles and smaller skirmishes and often swept up non-combatants into the path of violent conflict.

The Spaniards and their Filipino allies were ultimately victorious. They corralled the British forces into Intramuros until the British withdrew from the Philippines in early 1764. They also defeated the great Indigenous revolt, executing the movement's leaders and reestablishing the colonial social order. Yet the price of victory was immense. This chapter examines the war's enduring impact on the cultural heritage of the Philippines occasioned by the wartime looting and destruction of libraries, archives, and material culture. It also considers the armed conflict's impact on the people who lived through it. Zeroing in on blood, ashes, exhaustion, and viciousness, it recovers the human experiences of war that have been overlooked in previous studies.¹

1 Previous studies of the British invasion of Manila have focused on the leaders of the Spanish and British governments and military forces in the Philippines. See for example Shirley Fish, *When Britain Ruled the Philippines* (Bloomington: First Books, 2003); Vila Miranda, Carlos. "Toma de Manila por los Ingleses en 1762." *Anuario de Estudios Atlánticos* 53 (2007): 167-219. Moreover, the Philippines have long been marginalized in studies of the global Seven Years' War. See Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000); P. J. Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America, C.1750-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War, 1754-1763* (Great Britain: Pearson, 2011);

A City Ruined: The British Invasion and Urban Destruction and Displacement

The British fleet that attacked Manila was mobilized from Madras. It landed approximately 3000 men in Manila, many of whom were South Asian sepoy soldiers.² With the assistance of heavy artillery, this army captured Intramuros on the 6th of October after a three-week siege. This first short and shocking phase of the war caused extensive damage to Manila's built environment. The invaders set fire to the Ermita church, the church of San Juan in Bagumbayan, and another dedicated to Santiago, in addition to countless homes Extramuros—the neighborhoods outside of the walled city—reducing them to piles of smoldering wood and rubble. This destruction was strategic. Fire eliminated structures that Hispano-Filipino forces could use to attack the invaders, clearing ground in front of the city walls to facilitate their bombardment until a section collapsed. Manila's Archbishop Rojo, who was also the interim governor of the Spanish colony, agreed to surrender to the British when the invading army began to pour through a breach in the city walls. Rojo accepted the terms of the British capitulation agreement, which included a promise that the Spanish Crown would pay a four million dollar ransom to have Manila returned to the monarchy intact.³

What happened next, according to various Spanish and British eyewitness accounts, was that Manila was turned over to the victors to be pillaged for a period of up to forty hours. For two days and two nights, the Royal Navy and East India Company's sailors and soldiers searched and sacked the city's richly adorned churches, stealing their precious and sacred silver and gold, including chalices used in Catholic mass, and any other objects of value they laid their hands on. Troops were seen running about in the clergy's ceremonial vestments.⁴ They damaged statues of saints that locals venerated. The wood and ivory statue of Nuestra Señora del Rosario, a revered image

2 Megan C. Thomas, "Securing Trade: The Military Labor of the British Occupation of Manila, 1762–1764," *International Review of Social History*, Vol.64, N.27 (2019): 133–34.

3 For the siege, see Francisco Leandro de Viana, "Diario del sitio de la plaza de Manila por los ingleses," in *Documentos Indispensables Para La Verdadera Historia de Filipinas*, ed. P. Eduardo Navarro (Madrid: Imprenta del Asilo de Huérfanos, 1908), 339–385; "Diary and Consultations of Deputy-Governor Dawsonne Drake and Council of Manila," in *IOR* (BL, 1762), 58–66.

4 East India Company, *Manilha Consultations*, (Madras: Superintendent of Government Press, 1940–1946), 6: 7–8, 15; 5:3; AGI Estado 44, N.6.

known as ‘La Naval’ whose sanctuary was in the Dominican church and convent in Intramuros, had her jeweled crown stolen by the invaders. They also decapitated the image and tore the limbs off the Christ child that she held in her arms.⁵ In addition to churches, the invaders looted private homes and shops. Josepha Agustiana de Larraguiver, a wealthy widow, testified that enemy soldiers broke into her house and took eight thousand pesos, trunks of clothing and jewels, and objects of Catholic devotion.⁶ The sacking of Señora Larraguiver’s home was repeated in hundreds of households, rich and poor alike. Countless objects of great personal and cultural value were destroyed or transferred from Manileños to the British forces in this violent opening act of the short-lived British government of Manila.

The British invasion and destruction of Manila followed an established script. No visual images of the sacking of Manila survive, however, eyewitness accounts evoke engravings from George Anson’s bestselling book *A Voyage Round the World* that documented the British admiral Anson and his crew’s attacks on Latin American port cities and his capture of a Manila Galleon in the 1740s. One illustration (Image 1) depicts Anson’s men running amok in the coastal Peruvian city of Paita while dressed in the stolen clothes of the city’s residents. The picture of sailors donning women’s gowns is intended to humor British readers, yet the scene could also hint at the violence that led to dresses being removed from women’s bodies and onto the invaders’ backs. Another contemporaneous illustration (Image 2) of the British attack on Paita shows British ships anchored alongside sunken Spanish vessels as thick black smoke rises in the sky above the burning city in the background.

5 See Regalado Trota Jose, “Imaging Our Lady in Sixteenth-Century Manila: Nuestra Señora Del Rosario de La Naval” (2008), p.9. Diego Zurita, Tomás Adriano, and Pedro de Ire. *Oracion panegyrico moral* (Colegio y Universidad de Santo Thomas, por Thomas Adriano Tipo de Documento, 1764); Nicholas P Cushner, *Documents Illustrating the British Conquest of Manila, 1762-1763* (London: Royal Historical Society, University college, 1971), 125-128; Christina H. Lee, *Saints of Resistance. Devotions in the Philippines under Early Spanish Rule* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 73.

6 Cushner, *Documents*, 125; Documents Pertaining to Simón de Anda y Salazar, Newberry Library, Ayer MS 1921, Folder 5.



IMAGE 1. “Admiral Anson’s Men in the Dress of the Inhabitants of Payta.” (1770)⁷

7 Edward Cavendish Drake, *A New Universal Collection of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages and Travels, from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* (London: Printed for J. Cooke, at Shakespear’s Head, 1770), 136. Digitized image from the John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images. <https://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/JCB~1~1~3830~6000004:Admiral-Anson-s-men-in-the-dress-of>



IMAGE 2. “The burning of the Town of Payta on the Coast of Santa Fee in the South Sea” (1748)⁸

People as well as property were the targets of soldiers’ greed and aggression in Manila. César Falliet, a Swiss merchant and mercenary who lived in the city, was shocked that invading troops raped young local women.⁹ Many Manileños were killed by enemy soldiers when they tried to protect their churches, homes, and families from harm. The Spanish reported that an estimated 300 civilians, in addition to fifty soldiers, thirty militiamen, and several military officials “were killed on our side, and many were wounded” during the crazed sacking of Manila.¹⁰ Numerous others fled the violence.

⁸ George Anson, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV* (London: Printed for the author; by John and Paul Knapton, 1748), 200. Digitized image from the John Carter Brown Archive of Early American Images, <https://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/detail/JCB~1~1~501041~115901300:The-burning-of-the-Town-of-Payta-on>.

⁹ Company, *Manilha Consultations*, 6:153.

¹⁰ In Emma Helen Blair and James Alexander Robertson (eds), *The Philippine Islands* (Cleveland: A. H. Clark Company, 1903-1909), 49:127-128.

The Dominican friar Pablo Ngien estimated that he saw ten thousand people, ranging from babies to the elderly, escape Manila after the enemy broke through the city walls.¹¹ War emptied a large, cosmopolitan city, creating a refugee crisis.

Multiple factors contributed to looting on the scale witnessed in the Philippine capital. Pillaging vanquished populations was standard in eighteenth-century warfare. As the wartime British Governor of the Philippines Dawsonne Drake reasoned, “it is a known and universal rule of war amongst the most civilized nations, that places taken by storm... are subject to all the miseries that the conquerors may chose to inflict.”¹² Men who went to war, from the lowest-ranked soldiers to the most powerful military officials, regarded loot as fair remuneration of military labor. They sought out valuable objects that they could easily sell to supplement their pay. Drake shipped numerous ill-gotten goods on his return voyage to India in 1764, including a beautiful embroidered altar cloth bearing the coat of arms of an earlier Philippines Governor Fernando Valdés Tamón, “a gold cross” and “seven Manila religious pictures.”¹³ These trophy items were displayed in Drapers’ house, celebrating his military prowess and lending prestige.¹⁴ Scholars have identified many objects stolen from Manila during the British invasion in modern British collections, but the majority remain lost.

Looting was also an established strategy for knowledge accumulation among European powers in this era.¹⁵ Highly-ranked British officials in Manila sought out spoils of war with strategic value. They raided libraries and archives for rare books and vellum-bound manuscripts that contained useful geographical and political information about the Philippine islands and the wider Pacific world could advance Britain’s imperial ambitions in this

11 AGI Estado 44, N6; AFIO, 21/26.

12 Company, *Manilha Consultations*, 6:16.

13 J.M. Mancini, *Art and War in the Pacific World: Making, Breaking, and Taking from Anson’s Voyage to the Philippine-American War* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018), 29-39; “A True an Perfect Inventory of... the Goods Chattels and Effects of Dawsonne Drake, Late of Fort St George,” in *Pocock Papers* (The Huntington Library, 1787).

14 On British trophy-taking in Asian wars, see Maya Jasanoff, “Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning,” *Past & Present* 184 (2004): 109-135.

15 Emma Hagström Molin, “Spoils of Knowledge: Looted Books in Uppsala University Library During the Seventeenth Century,” in *Rethinking Europe: War and Peace in the Early Modern German Lands*, (Brill, 2019), 252-257.

world region. The nuns of Manila's Santa Clara convent fled the city during the war. When they returned at the end of the conflict, they found their convent building and its contents "quite destroyed."¹⁶ A library and archives were surely among the nuns' stolen and destroyed possessions. The library in the Augustinian convent of San Pablo is one of the most well-known prizes that the British seized in Manila.¹⁷ The collections of this library and others in Manila, which included maps and charts that revealed the locations of forts, dangerous reefs, and safe places to weigh anchor in and around the Philippines, were extremely valuable to an empire that was bent on establishing colonies in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Many of these stolen papers wound up in the Royal Navy hydrographer Alexander Dalrymple's possession. Dalrymple edited and published these documents in the decades after the war, facilitating future British voyages discovery and conquest.¹⁸

Destruction was also a consequence of the scorched earth strategies that the invading British army and Spanish military forces alike adopted in and around Manila. Simón de Anda y Salazar, a high-ranking Spanish colonial official in Manila, became the Governor of the Philippines during the British occupation and led the military campaign against the invading army. Anda relied heavily on the clergy and Indigenous elites to recruit men to fight. Anda's side weaponized the destructive power of fire. In November of 1762, for example, the loyalist Hispano-Filipino battalion led by "a mestizo called Coronél with 150 *indios* under his command" torched the town of Navotas, including its church, to thwart British efforts to occupy it.¹⁹ A Pampangan regiment set fire to rows of houses in Tondo to hurt the invaders in early January.²⁰ Fires were a

16 Sarah E. Owens, *Nuns Navigating the Spanish Empire* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017), 137-138.

17 For the British acquisition of this library, see Company, *Manilha Consultations* 6: 229-236; The 1762 Archive Project that aims to digitally reconstruct and repatriate this stolen library's collections signifies its high value. <https://1762archive.org/disc/>.

18 For example, Dalrymple cited and reproduced charts and maps created by the Manila pilot Thomé Gaspar de León in the 1770s. For example, his notes on the route "from Tanjong Baram to Borneo-proper... is from a Chart of Thomé Gaspar de León, who commanded a Ship from Manila to Borneo in 1752." Alexander Dalrymple, *Memoir of a Chart of the China Sea* (London: George Bigg, 1786), 4; J.M. Mancini, "Disrupting the Transpacific: Objects, Architecture, War, Panic," *Colonial Latin American Review* 25, no. 1 (2016): 41, 77-79.

19 Viana, "Diario del sitio," 428.

20 *Ibid.*, 457-459.

core component of Anda's strategy was to isolate the British in Intramuros and starve them of essential supplies. There were acute food shortages in Manila by December of 1762, when a Spanish priest observed that there was "no beef in the butcher shop, not even for the English governor."²¹ British patrols routinely burned urban and rural towns and farms to the ground to eliminate places where enemy combatants could hide or congregate.²²

The global historian Emmanuel Kreike characterized this kind of devastation as *environcide*. It occurred when combatants deliberately or inadvertently damaged, destroyed, or rendered "inaccessible environmental infrastructure through violence."²³ Krieke's expansive definition of environmental infrastructure encompasses "homes and stables, fields, fences, soils, crops and weeds, granaries and food stores, animals, orchards, wells... is a coproduction of human ingenuity and labor on the one hand and nonhuman actors (animals, insects, microbes, and plants) and forces (physical, chemical) on the other;" that is, the resources necessary to support human life. The multiethnic armies that converged in the Philippines aimed to making life impossible for their rivals. The pursuit of this goal resulted in extreme human suffering and an unfathomable loss of cultural heritage. The outbreak of anti-colonial rebellions in the provinces beyond the capital ensured that *environcide* spread deep into Luzon.

The Great Insurgency: War and Devastation Beyond Manila

Communities across Luzon began to protest against Spanish colonial rule in the final months of 1762 as news spread that the British had taken control of Manila. Many people saw the Spaniards' temporary loss of their colonial capital as an opportunity to transform the way that empire operated in the Philippines. A rambunctious crowd of three thousand people gathered on the third of November outside of the *casa municipal* building in Binalatongan, the largest town in Pangasinan. The town's *gobernadorcillo*, José Magalong, presented a list of demands to Padre Melendez, the head of the Dominican order in the Province and one of the most powerful Spaniards in the region. The protestors' primary demand was a pause on tribute, the

21 *Ibid.*, 456.

22 Company, *Manilha Consultations* 5:162-63.

23 Emmanuel Kreike, *Scorched Earth: Environmental Warfare as a Crime against Humanity and Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 2-3.

annual tax that Indigenous adult men aged between 18 and 60 years of age were obliged to pay to the king of Spain. They also requested that several unpopular colonial officials be replaced, from Pangasinan's *alcalde mayor*, to the local schoolmaster.²⁴ Spanish authorities managed to arrest Juan de la Cruz Palaris, the man who they identified as a ringleader, but the crowd roared until Palaris was freed. Melendez refused to negotiate a moratorium on tribute, and the rebellion grew.²⁵

In the final weeks of 1762, towns across Pangasinan joined the uprising. It spread into the neighboring Ilocos province when its *alcalde* attempted to begin the annual tribute collection. This triggered a major protest in Vigan, the provincial capital. An estimated two thousand armed people gathered at the *alcalde mayor*'s Vigan residence in the middle of December. They called for the immediate suspension of the tribute and the tributary labor system that was known as the *polo*, which required *pueblos* to provide teams of men to undertake work for the Spanish colonial government for set periods of time each year.²⁶ The Vigan-born Diego Baltasar Silang y Andaya emerged as the leader of the growing insurgency in Ilocos. Silang had been raised in the house of a Spanish priest, which afforded him access to a Spanish education and opportunities to build relationships with powerful Spaniards. He was known to be an *apoderadillo*, one of many Indigenous 'little lawyers' who advocated for Filipinos of low social status in disputes against the *principalia* and Spanish elites, often using intimidation and violence to force parties to negotiate mutually agreeable solutions to problems.²⁷ Silang was capable of operating within and across Spanish and Indigenous spaces. He was literate, multilingual, and possessed a rich knowledge of the geography and politics of

24 Binalatongan was also known as San Carlos. AGI Filipinas 609, N.34; Domingo Collantes, *Historia de la provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas, China, y Tinquin* (Manila: en la Imprenta de la Universidad del Santo Tomás por Iuan Franc. de los Santos, 1782), pp.637-642; Juan Ferrando, *Historia de los pp. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas*, (Madrid: Imprenta y Estereotipia de M. Rivadeneyra, 1871), 4:658-659; Rosario Mendoza Cortes, *Pangasinan, 1572-1800* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1974), 172-178.

25 Pedro del Vivar, "Relación de los alzamientos," in *Biblioteca Histórica Filipina* (Manila: Chofré y Comp, 1893); *Documentos indispensables para la verdadera historia de Filipinas*, (Madrid: Imp. del Alislo de Huérfanos, 1908), 1:82-87; Fernando Palanco and José S Arcilla, "Diego Silang's Revolt: A New Approach," *Philippine Studies* 50, no. 4 (2002): 112-137.

26 Vivar, "Relación de los alzamientos." *Documentos indispensables para la verdadera historia de Filipinas*, 1: 82-87; Palanco and Arcilla, "Diego Silang's Revolt," 112-137.

27 AGI Filipinas 605, N.3 (1763) f.21r-22r.

central Luzon, making him well-placed to lead a revolt. During the first few months of 1763, Diego Silang put these transcultural skills to use. He wrote to Simón de Anda—the leader of the loyalist Spanish forces in Luzon—and to Dawsonne Drake, the leader of the British forces in the Philippines. Silang attempted to negotiate with both parties, taking advantage of their rivalry. The British agreed. Drake sent a contingent of British and sepoy soldiers to aid Silang's armed rebellion, however, few could be spared.²⁸

Historians have previously characterized the rebellions in Pangasinan and Ilocos as two separate social movements, but the archive suggests they were interconnected.²⁹ The Catholic clergy claimed that rebels in Binalatongan and Vigan were allies. Melendez observed that the people of Pangasinan were “united with those of Ilocos,” and they were “imitating” each other.³⁰ Chinese migrants also rebelled against the Spanish. Several hundred Chinese men battled against Hispano-Filipino forces at Guagua in Pampanga. In 1763 the revolt spread into the Cagayan valley in northeastern Luzon and the upland Sierra Madre range.³¹

The insurgency's politics became more radical as time passed and it spread further across Luzon. Initial cries for a temporary moratorium on tribute evolved into demands for tribute abolition. Diego Silang's surviving letters and friars' recollections of his speeches show that he underscored how the tribute impoverished Filipinos. The Spaniards, proclaimed Silang, “will let you wear nothing but a loincloth, leaving you only your Christianity.”³² Yet the financial burden of tribute was not the only thing that people hated about it. Tribute was crucial to the creation of what historians have called ‘colonial

28 Company, *Manilha Consultations* 5: 102; Kristie Patricia Flannery, “Battlefield Diplomacy and Empire-Building in the Indo-Pacific World During the Seven Years' War.” *Itinerario* 40, no. 3 (2016): 467-488.

29 Megan C. Thomas, “Proclaiming Sovereignty: Reflections from the Eighteenth-Century Philippines,” in *Comparative Political Theory in Time and Place*, ed. Daniel J. Kapust and Helen M. Kinsella (New York: Palgrave, 2017), pp.79-104; José S Arcilla, “The Pangasinan Uprising, 1762–1765,” *Philippine Historical Review* 4 (1971): pp.35-52; David Routledge, *Diego Silang and the Origins of Philippine Nationalism* (Diliman, Quezon City: Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, University of the Philippines System, 1979).

30 AGI Filipinas 609, N.34, f.217r.

31 On the Chinese at Guagua, see “Documentos para la historia de la invasión,” Newberry Library, Ayer MS 1292; On Cagayan, see Juan Ferrando and Joaquin Fonseca, *Historia de los PP. Dominicos* vol. v (Madrid: M. Rivadeneyra, 1871), 685.

32 Vivar, “Relación de los alzamientos,” 351.

difference'. As a head tax on the Crown's non-Spanish subjects, including Indigenous peoples, tribute signified and reinforced the unequal status of *indios* and *españoles* in the Spanish empire.³³ Spaniards in the Philippines were unwilling to pause or abandon tribute because they saw it as an important symbolic gesture of loyalty and submission to the Crown, comparable to a loyalty oath. Spanish friars were convinced that the rebels' ultimate goal was to destroy the empire in the Philippines, especially after Diego Silang was murdered in mid-1763. The people of San Vicente said that they wanted the Spanish go back to Spain and the English to do the same.³⁴

What began as an anti-colonial rebellion in Pangasinan quickly transformed into a violent civil war. As soon as the revolt broke out, Anda prioritized raising and arming "a Catholic army of Spaniards and Natives that will devastate, destroy, and annihilate" the insurgents.³⁵ The loyalist forces' membership and support base were volatile and shifted as communities assessed and reassessed their decisions to back the Spanish colonial government and their allies, or the rebels, or attempted to avoid the conflict entirely which often proved impossible. At one point, the loyalist "Army of Amainan," as the northern Ilocos region was called, included "the *timaoeria* (commoners) of Laoag, a battalion from Bacarra with Juan Bisocol who also brought some Black archers, and the group from Bangui with their captain D. Luis Beltran."³⁶ Like the fighting men embroiled in war in Manila and its hinterland, the loyalists and the rebels who were embroiled in fighting across the region embraced scorched earth strategies to cause maximum harm to their enemies.

Insurgents left a trail of destruction as they moved from town to town. In Laoag, rebels broke into the parish church and shredded the registry of tribute payments.³⁷ This was not just a symbolic act of defiance; ruining tribute records would have made it very difficult for agents of the Spanish empire to collect the head tax. Such focused acts of sabotage took place in the context of wonton destruction and death. Rebel militias routinely pillaged

33 AGI Filipinas 609, N.34; On tribute and the construction of *calidad*, see Norah H. Gharala, *Taxing Blackness: Free Afromexican Tribute in Bourbon New Spain* (University of Alabama Press, 2019), pp.2-8, 24-40.

34 Vivar, "Relación de los alzamientos," p.404.

35 *Ibid.*, 344.

36 *Ibid.*, 433.

37 *Ibid.*, 322.

the enemy pueblos they entered. When insurgents arrived at the town of San Nicolás, for example, they “tore down the houses of the principales and stole all that they could steal” before sacking the church and convent. The victors then had a drunken party to celebrate their victory, eating and drinking whatever food and booze they could find until there was not a crumb left in the pueblo. “They stole in such a manner that they took even the cats, old pots, and whatever trinkets the people had in their homes.”³⁸ Vigan’s Bishop Ustaríz recalled that when rebel forces attacked Calasiao they “committed the worst atrocities and abuses, leaving not one house, place, or person exempt or free from their fury.”³⁹ Non-combatants died in these attacks. Priests reported that several of their “*criados* and *indios*” (Indigenous servants and staff) were killed as they tried to escape the carnage at Calasiao. Churches and convents across Pangasinan were reduced to ashes in the war, including, in addition to Calasiao, at Santa Barbara, San Carlos, Malasiqui, Asingan, Pandoyocan, Paniqui, Telban, san Isidro de Tubuan. Fire destroyed silver and wooden altars and *santo* statues in addition to parish records that included registers of births, marriages, deaths and libraries.

Loyalist forces also pillaged and torched enemy towns. Following the loyalist army’s victory at a major battle in Vigan, they sacked and burned multiple pueblos on their retreat. The Augustinian missionary Agustín de la Encarnación condemned the victorious loyalists’ excessive violence in the town of Bantay. He estimated that they killed 1000 people. They showed no mercy on the innocent people who took shelter in the church. They raped women “without fear of God,” and executed all the men they found on the patio outside of church, even though they were unarmed, “slaughtering them as though they were animals.” The victors stole all of the livestock, and “not even the plow that are the *indios*’ hands and feet did the soldiers leave them.”⁴⁰ It is not surprising that this mode of warfare resulted in a famine that emptied towns of people across Luzon as residents fled to the mountains to find food, “searching for something to nourish human misery.”⁴¹ Binalatongan, the birthplace of the armed revolt, was one of the last places where it was extinguished by force. Reinforced by fighting men from Cagayan, the loyalist forces clashed with rebels who had dug trenches in

38 *Ibid.*, 371-72.

39 ASPR, *Pangasinan*, Tomo 2 (1760-1782), Doc. 3.

40 AGI Filipinas 605, N.3

41 *Ibid.*, f.62v.

Binalatongan in preparation for the assault. The entire town was destroyed in the battle. Loyalists lit a fire that ravaged the city, leaving only the shells of the burned-out church, convent, and schoolhouse. Notably, to erase the memory of the revolt from popular consciousness, the Spanish colonial government chose not to rebuild Binalatongan. Instead, they constructed a new town named San Carlos several kilometers from its smoldering ashes.⁴² The revolt ended as the loyalists captured and executed rebel leaders. In September 1763, loyalists killed Gabriella Silang, Diego Silang's widow who had taken his place as a key leader of the rebellion in Ilocos following her husband's death. Loyalists finally captured and hanged the Pangasinan revolutionary Palaris in mid 1765.⁴³

Conclusion

The war that began in Manila in late 1762 was a complex conflict that involved the agents of rival European imperial powers and their multiethnic allies, and anti-colonial insurgents who sought to remake or overthrow the colonial systems that oppressed them in the Philippines. These competing armed groups had very different goals, yet they shared a commitment to looting their enemies and using scorched earth strategies against them. The armies and militias that converged and clashed in the islands all embraced fire as a weapon with devastating effects. The British invasion of Manila, the Indigenous revolt against Spain, and the Spanish campaigns to defeat the British and the homegrown insurgency resulted in a massive transfer and loss of cultural heritage and human life. Tribute records show that Pangasinan's population plummeted in the war, falling by more than 25,000 in only a couple of years. This sharp decline reflects a combination of families fleeing war in the province, but also the deaths of so many men of fighting age and non-combatants who became victims of war.⁴⁴ Filipinos' horrific experiences of this mid-eighteenth-century war may have had the effect of extinguishing uprisings against Spanish colonial rule for several generations.

42 Ferrando, *Historia de Los PP. Dominicos en Las Islas Filipinas*, IV, 721, 33-34; Mendoza Cortes, *Pangasinan, 1572-1800*, 209-10. Arcilla, "The Pangasinan Uprising, 1762-1765," 39-44.

43 Agustín María Castro y Amuedo, "Relación sucinta, clara y verídica de la toma de Manila por la escuadra Inglesa. Año de 1770," in *Documentos indispensables para la verdadera historia de Filipinas*, ed. Navarro (1908), 86-87; Ferrando, *Historia de los PP. Dominicos*, IV, 721, 16, 37-38.

44 *Ibid*, p.739; Mendoza Cortes, *Pangasinan, 1572-1800*, 212-13.

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