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Deportation and the Prison Colony of San Ramon, 1870-1898

GREG BANKOFF

The politicization of the judiciary in the Philippines in the late nineteenth century remained a marked feature of the colonial state despite the reforms of the late nineteenth century. The phenomenal expansion of its policing capabilities and the increasing sophistication of its legal and procedural practices changed, but did not alter the fundamentally political nature of the state's judicial process. The law functioned as an instrument of social control through a system that accorded privileges and obligations based on racial origin. Thus both criminal and civil law, judicial procedures, punishment, personal obligations to the state, and taxation, differed according to whether a person was categorized as an *indio*, Chinese, Chinese *mestizo*, Spanish or Spanish *mestizo*. A parallel system of special courts, whose jurisdiction was based on the privileges enjoyed by certain occupational and racial groups, ensured that legal theory became colonial practice. Particular avenues of judicial redress were available only to members of important occupational groups such as the Church, the army, the navy and merchants, whose support was regarded as crucial to the maintenance of Spanish suzerainty over the islands. The state also expanded its control over the lives of ordinary citizens through the creation of special agencies with quasi-police powers, which operated directly as instrumentalities of colonial policy in the sphere of customs, revenue collection, forestry, public health and safety, and even social relations such as employment of servants.¹ Finally, the state was able to pursue the aims of territorial expansion among the Muslim and tribal populations in the south through a policy of enforced migration under the guise of penal deportation.

1. Greg Bankoff, "Crime, Society and the State in the Nineteenth Century Philippines," (Ph.D dissertation, Murdoch University, 1990).

Christian Filipinos regarded as socially undesirable for reasons of political persuasion, criminal intention, or moral laxity were summarily detained and dispatched to the coastal sectors of Mindanao and Palawan.

PENAL DEPORTATION

Deportation to or within the Indies was a penal expedient dating back to the earliest days of the Spanish empire. Various laws in the *Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias*, the major colonial legal compilation first published in 1681, cited deportation as an option for dealing with a variety of antisocial behavioral patterns such as immorality, vagrancy or lack of gainful employment.² In New Spain, mass deportation was practised among the Apache and other tribes on the northern frontier of the viceroyalty during the late eighteenth century. Cuba, in particular, became the destination for all manner of social misfits and outcasts: Indian tribesmen, gamblers, army deserters and vagrants.³ Criminals and political prisoners were shipped further afield—to Manila among other colonial centers. In fact, the Philippines was especially mentioned as one such destination as early as 1595.⁴ In its first year of operation in 1722, the tribunal de la acordada reportedly sentenced criminals in New Spain to imprisonment in the Philippines.⁵ Political prisoners continued to be exiled to the Philippines during the course of the nineteenth century de-

2. See especially, law 1, title 4, book 7 (dated 1568 and 1628); law 2, title 4, book 7 (dated 1595 and 1689) and law 21, title 1, book 6 (dated 1552 and reconfirmed by royal order of 26 February 1768).

3. Deportations ceased during the Napoleonic Wars and the subsequent revolts of Hidalgo and Morelos but were recommenced by the republican government of Mexico among the Maya and Yaqui Indians in the South. Christon I. Archer, "The Deportation of Barbarian Indians from the Internal Provinces of New Spain, 1789-1810," *The Americas*, 29 January 1973 pp. 376-85.

4. *Recopilacion de las Leyes de Indias*, law 2, title 4, book 7. Chile is the other colony specifically mentioned.

5. Colin M. MacLachlan, *Criminal Justice In Eighteenth Century Mexico. A Study of the Tribunal of the Acordada*, p. 90. The tribunal de la acordada was both a judicial body and a paramilitary force established in the early eighteenth century with the express purpose of controlling banditry in New Spain. Its forces were led by a succession of officer-magistrates who enjoyed the unusual distinction of being totally independent of all other judicial bodies, being directly responsible only to the viceroy. Some 62,900 prisoners were processed during the tribunal's existence between 1703 and 1809, of whom 888 were executed and 19,410 served prison sentences. Colin MacLachlan, *ibid.*, pp. 26-27 and 34-35.

spite legislation that abolished deportation to and from the colonies in 1842.⁶

Deportation within the jurisdiction of the captaincy-general of the Philippines was mainly to the southern islands of Mindanao, Palawan and Balabac or to the Pacific dependencies, especially Guam in the Marianas Islands. White observed that many convicts were banished to Mindanao during his visit to the Philippines in 1819 and compared the island to the British penal colony at Botany Bay in Australia.⁷ The reverse flow was also true. Spanish authorities systematically deported whole Samal populations from the south to the Cagayan Valley in the interior of Northern Luzon following the destruction of Balangingi as a slaving base in 1848 and again in 1858.⁸ A two-way pattern of enforced migration can be discerned during the course of the nineteenth century: southern Muslim populations were settled in the nominally Christian far north of the archipelago, while northern and central Christian populations were settled in the largely Muslim south of the country.

What began as a judicial expedient for removing undesirable or hostile elements among the indigenous population, gradually gave way to a more deliberate policy of using deportation as an instrument of colonial governance in the Philippines. Convicts might prove a useful labor pool for public works or even as contractual laborers for private enterprise. But deportation was not only similarly beneficial to society, it also furthered colonial aims. Spain's desire to in-

6. Judicial sentences of deportation were forbidden under the legislation of 1842 but colonial governors retained their authority to expel persons considered prejudicial to the state. Government attention had been drawn to the matter by the plight of men such as Margarito Blanco, a colored soldier implicated in sedition, who had been sentenced to perpetual banishment in Spain. In his intercession to the Régent for permission to return to Cuba, he argued that individuals in his condition, especially colored persons, had little alternative to sustain themselves but to turn to a life of crime. In another case, five persons expelled from Cuba in 1836 petitioned the authorities in Coruña to be readmitted to prison as they were unable to support themselves. "Circular de 18 de Abril; sobre que se procure escusar las sentencias de confinamiento de reos de la Peninsula a Ultramar, y Ultramar a la Peninsula," PNA, *Spanish Manila*, Reel 4, 1842. However, there is evidence to show that a number of liberal and republican activists associated with the various coups in Spain prior to the revolution of 1868 continued to be deported to provincial locations in the Philippines. John Schumacher, *The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895 (The Creators of a Filipino Consciousness, the Makers of the Revolution)* (Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House, 1973), p. 4, footnote 1.

7. John White, "Manila in 1819," *Historical Bulletin* 6 (1962): 95.

8. James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone 1768-1898. The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery, and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1985), pp. 192-94.

corporate the southern portions of the archipelago within its political sphere was partially realized through a process involving the enforced colonization and Christianization of the coastal sectors of Mindanao and Palawan.

Both external and internal factors supported such a policy during the second half of the nineteenth century. Military victories over the Muslim sultanates in the south required political consolidation to become permanent. An administration that primarily depended on military occupation would remain a constant drain on the exchequer. On the other hand, the establishment of Christian settlements in Mindanao would create communities whose prosperity depended on continuing Spanish control over the area, and whose coastal locations denied naval access to seafaring marauders. Similarly, an upsurge in rural lawlessness in Luzon and in the Visayas during the latter half of the century provided the manpower needed to colonize these southern settlements. The bandits, vagrants, arsonists and runaways among the Christian population became the unwilling migrants of state policy.

The systematic enforced migration of thousands of individuals required a more detailed blueprint than that provided for under the laws of the Indies. Colonial authorities attempted to regularize the process of deportation in a series of official measures passed during the 1870s and 1880s. The *gobernadorcillo*, the town's *principalia*, the parish priest and the *guardia civil* were all required to furnish reports on an individual's conduct, which were forwarded to the governor-general together with the personal testimony of the person concerned, copies of judicial sentences and prison records before a final decision to deport a person was reached.⁹ Authorities in Madrid were concerned that deportation should not be solely an executive action but should involve the due process of the law. "The punishment of banishment and deportation," the preamble to a government circular stated, "is too serious (a sentence) to be imposed without a recognized necessity or a justifiable motive."¹⁰ Despite the sentiment, however, regular procedures were often disregarded and the regulations needed to be reiterated on 4 December 1875, again on 30 May 1877, and on at least one other subsequent occasion. Even the governor-general's secretariat expressed the opinion in October 1888 that

9. "Circular of 26 January 1870," *Deportaciones y deportados*, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, Rizal Library MSS. Many of these documents are also held in the Philippine National Archives (PNA). "Varias Circulares sobre vagos y deportados" 1870-1885, PNA, *Spanish Manila*, Reel 14.

10. "Circular of 17 October 1883," *Deportaciones y deportados*, Rizal Library MSS.

deportation should not be a gubernatorial power at all, but should always be the sentence of a competent court. "It does not work out this way in reality," the document admitted, "because many of the deportation orders are made without being justified by necessity."¹¹ In political or other "special" cases, the governor-general retained the right to deport individuals solely on his own authority.¹² The same circular concluded that the existing legislation on banishment and deportation had been applied: "with greater or lesser severity, according to the needs of the moment and the circumstances of each locality."¹³

While these measures established a procedural framework for deportation on a large scale, much of their import was clearly something other than penal. Provisions were made for the deportees to receive land, farm tools and even animals to work the fields. Wives and children were urged to accompany their husbands, so that such families might serve as the nucleus for new settlements and towns.¹⁴ After a period under strict supervision, deportees were to be offered land at a minimal rate of interest and encouraged to settle in the region.¹⁵ Even a measure of self-government was accorded to settlements of over fifty persons, who were permitted to elect an *alguacil* or village constable responsible for keeping the peace and settling boundary disputes.¹⁶

The people deported to the south fell into two broad categories: those convicted of criminal offenses and those simply deemed socially undesirable.¹⁷ The criminal element comprised individuals convicted of banditry, other serious felonies or recidivism. A government circular of 1870 noted "the ineffectualness of the many different methods so far employed to deal with the bandits who infest the provinces, to the great lowering of the law's prestige and serious damage to persons, agriculture and commerce."¹⁸ Those not convicted of any specific offense included vagrants, tax evaders and people of moral laxity or known bad character. Bandits, it was thought, "received protection in the towns from among people with-

11. Secretariat of the Governor-general of the Philippines to the Governor of the Visayas, Manila, 9 October 1888, *Deportaciones y deportados*, Rizal Library MSS.

12. Such powers are specifically mentioned in: "Circular of 4 December 1875" and "Circular of 17 October 1883," *Deportaciones y deportados*, *ibid.*

13. "Circular of 17 October 1883," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

14. "Circular of 26 January 1870," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

15. "Circular of 27 June 1872," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

16. "Circular of 26 January 1870," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

17. "Circular of 6 August 1883," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

18. "Circular of 26 January 1870," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

out any means of subsistence, occupation, or any known resource who live in the most suspicious leisure."¹⁹ Often these people were deported simply on the strength of an unfavorable report from the *gobnadorcillo* or the parish priest. The young, especially those under twenty-five, were thought to profit most from deportation to a penal colony as agricultural work was seen as a means of developing their physical and moral character.²⁰

Provincial governors began to compile indexes of the names of people with suspect life-styles in each municipality, whose conduct made them suitable "for deportation to the provinces of the South." Extracts of the town by town index compiled for Cavite province in 1870 have survived, giving details on the type of person affected by the new policy and some idea of the scale of this deportation over the subsequent twenty-five years.

Table 1. Selected Demographic Details On Suspect Characters in Cavite Province By Town, 1870.²¹

Towns	Numbers (Men)	Civil Status			Prison Record
		Single	Married	Widower	
Naic	6	3	2	1	2
San Roque	8	4	4	-	4
Cavite El Viejo	7	3	3	1	-
San Francisco	20	8	1	1	5
Bacoor	4	1	2	1	2
Indan	6	5	-	1	2
Alfonzo	2	1	-	-	1
Imus	12	5	4	-	-
Silan	1	-	1	-	-
Santa Cruz	3	2	-	1	-
Totals	69	32	17	6	16

19. *Ibid.*

20. "Colonias Penitenciarias," *El Porvenir De Bisayas*, 22 April 1895.

21. Sources: Catalino Rociante to Governor of Cavite, Naic, 19 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; Gregorio Jose to Governor of Cavite, San Roque, 16 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; Mariano Riponga to Governor of Cavite, Cavite El Viejo, 21 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; Julian Lionga to Governor of Cavite, San Francisco de Malabon, 21 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; Victor

THE SAN ROQUE DEPORTEES

The information provided by the gobernadorcillo on the eight entries under the municipality of San Roque is worth reviewing at some length both for its marvelous evocation of these characters, and as an example of the power of gossip and rumor in establishing public reputations during this period. There was Emitterio Sanchez, locally regarded as a petty thief and known to wander about the province begging for alms, pretending that his entire family had died when they were all serving sentences in the provincial jail for swindling. The unmarried Julio Lugay, also regarded as a petty thief, who "can always be seen creeping furtively about the town." The gambler, Vicente Dionicio, imprisoned for forging a judge's signature and helping two prisoners to escape. Lucino Concepcion who had been a prisoner on more than one occasion. The layabout, Mariano Buenaventura, who lived off the earnings of his two prostitute daughters. Valentin Ordoñez who was currently in the municipal jail on a charge of vagrancy. Saturnino de los Reyes who was surprised by the night patrol trying to swindle a widow, and Victor de Ocampo who was "famed as a petty thief."²²

The information that these reports contain is sufficient to indicate certain common characteristics about the type of person deported to the south. In the first place, all those suspected of bad character were men. Despite the fact that Buenaventura's two daughters were clearly identified as prostitutes by the gobernadorcillo of San Roque, their names were not included in his report. Possibly prostitutes in rural areas were less vulnerable to official harassment than their peers in Manila, who could more easily find themselves enforced migrants to an agricultural settlement in the south.²³ In the second place, most of the men were single; nearly 60 percent of those listed in the province of Cavite were unmarried. While there is no specific mention of ages, the civil status of these men suggests that they were probably

Mionay to Governor of Cavite, Bacoor, 1 March 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; Catalino San Jose to Governor of Cavite, Indan, 22 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; Gobernadorcillo of Alfonso to Governor of Cavite, Alfonso, 20 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced; "Relacion nominal de los individuos que se hallan—en la Carcel pública de esta plaza por mala conducta, según informe de los principales y Cura Parroco de sus respectivos pueblos" Cavite, 15 March 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced.

22. Gregorio Jose to Governor of Cavite, San Roque, 16 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, unreferenced.

23. Prostitutes were mainly deported to Nueva Quipuzcoa (Davao) and the Isla de Balabac. Maria Luisa Camagay, "Prostitution in Nineteenth Century Manila," *Philippine Studies* 36 (1988): 243.

in their twenties and thirties. Finally, it is especially interesting to note that 23 percent of these men were known to have served various periods of imprisonment. Once convicted, a person in such a small social environment was branded for life. Concepcion was still included among the list of suspicious characters in San Roque despite the gobernadorcillo's admission that he had been "devoting himself to agriculture" since his last release from prison.²⁴

Table 2. Principal Accusations Leveled At Suspect Characters in Cavite Province, 1870.²⁵

Accusations	Numbers
No Known Occupation	30
Rustling	27
Bandit Association	16
Swindling & Theft	10
Illegal Hunting	5
Gambling	5
Immoral Behavior	4
Begging	1
Disease	1

Simply having no known occupation was sufficient to engender the suspicion of the authorities, though this accusation was frequently leveled in conjunction with a definite offense such as rustling, swindling or theft. Known associates of questionable character was another principal cause for suspicion, especially if those associates were thought to be bandits. Illegal hunting, gambling, immoral behavior (mainly concubinage) and begging were considered other manifestations of bad character. In one case, a certain Jose Francisco of Bacoor had his name placed on the list mainly on the strength of a complaint made by his neighbor about his leprosy.²⁶ Nine of the sixty-nine individuals named had been specifically included at the instigation of a priest or friar, testifying to the authority of the Church in some rural municipalities. Six of the seven men listed in Cavite El Viejo had been named by one or more of the Reforming Fathers.²⁷

24. Gregorio Jose to Governor of Cavite, San Roque, 16 February 1870.

25. Sources are the same as in Table 1.

26. Victor Mionay to Governor of Cavite, Bacoor, 1 March 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, un-referenced.

27. Mariano Riponga to Governor of Cavite, Cavite El Viejo, 21 February 1870, PNA, *Cavite*, un-referenced.

People on the Cavite index and others like them from all over Luzon and the Visayas were sent as unwilling migrants to the south. Specific sites were carefully chosen so as to deter escape and promote agricultural enterprise.²⁸ Sites considered suitable as agricultural penal colonies included: San Ramon in Zamboanga, Cotabato, Davao, and Basilan in Mindanao; the island of Balabac; and Paragua in Palawan. Municipal officials in these localities were supposed to help deportees clear the land and erect shelters. Political prisoners were mainly sent to a penal institution at Agana, capital of the Marianas Islands. Many of those found guilty of complicity in the Cavite Mutiny of 1872 passed several years of exile there. Less important political prisoners were sent to Zamboanga, Cotabato, Davao or the island of Jolo in the Sulu archipelago.²⁹ More than one thousand political detainees were sent to Spanish penal settlements on the Marianas, Palawan, Jolo, Mindanao or Fernando Po in 1896 alone.³⁰

THE SAN RAMON PENAL COLONY

One of the most important of these penal colonies was San Ramon in Mindanao, situated some twenty-five kilometers northwest of the island's principal Spanish settlement at Zamboanga. The settlement was established in 1870 as a penal colony for hardened criminals, the majority of whom had been sentenced to life imprisonment.

28. According to the circular of 26 January 1870, site selection was to be made on the basis that: communications with other parts of the archipelago were severely restricted, the location be able to support additional population, a Spanish military base be situated in the vicinity, and the hostility of the surrounding Muslim population be such as to discourage escape attempts while obliging colonists to supply their daily needs through their own labor. "Circular of 26 January 1870," *Deportaciones y deportados*.

29. *Census of the Philippine Islands Taken Under the Direction of the Philippine Commission in the Year 1903* (Washington: The United States Bureau of the Census, 1905, volume 4), p. 423. Much information concerning the fate of those accused of sedition during the Cavite Mutiny can be found in the record series entitled 'Cavite: Insurgent Records 1872-1876' held in the Philippine National Archives. The isolation of these islands is captured in an extract from one of these cases: "... to the remote beaches of the Marianas islands, where there is only two packet boats a year, where the only other vessel to make port is a whaler and whose approach is so difficult and dangerous that the outcome is frequently suicidal considering the poor condition of the craft used to making the crossing in those hazardous latitudes." "Petición de los abogados Dn. Rafael M. de Sabra y Dn. Manuel Regidor de indulto de D. Antonio Regidor, D. Jose M. Basa, D. Maximo Paterno, D. Aguilar Mendoza, y D. Joaquin Pardo de Tavera, y que hayan de sufrir sea el menor posible," Madrid, 30 July 1873, PNA, *Cavite*, Insurgent Records 1872-76.

30. Gregorio Zaide, *Manila During the Revolutionary Period* (Manila: National Historical Commission, 1973), p. 55.

Foreman described the colonists at San Ramon as among "the most desperate class—assassins, thieves, conspirators."³¹ The colony occupied a rectangular block, five kilometers in length and three in width, stretching from the seashore to the foothills of Balimbing Mountain, and drained by the Saz river in the north and the Talisayan river in the south. The land was fertile with abundant stands of tropical timber, gravel deposits and clay reserves. The soil was rich and suitable for cultivation, extending to a depth of some three meters inland. The climate was benign with little seasonal variation and outside the cyclone path.³² However, despite a natural environment favorable to agricultural endeavor, prisoners in the colony were subject to high incidences of sickness and mortality. An examination of the number of penal colonists available for agricultural work between March 1876 and August 1882 suggests at least two major epidemics during that period: between August and December 1877 when the workforce declined by 18 percent, and between September and October 1879 when the workforce declined by 16 percent.³³ Lack of protective wet weather ware was still blamed for illness among the colonists as late as 1886.³⁴

San Ramon was never an economic success. A severe infestation of an insect known locally as *tinguias* decimated the rice crop in the colony's first year of operation. "The ravages it causes," reported the senior agricultural foreman in 1871, "can be worse than locusts."³⁵ The harvest seems to have failed completely in 1873 and to have been

31. John Foreman, *The Philippine Islands* (Mandaluyong: Cacho Hermanos Inc., 1985 [originally published 1899]), p. 238.

32. The colony's soil were mainly clay (argillaceous silicum) but contained a large proportion of humus caused by the organic decomposition of the timber cover that included abundant tropical stands of: mangachapuy, narra, malatagua, malaming, yacal, bancal, malatumbaga and bananang. The prevalent winds were of little intensity and blow from the southeast and south between March-December and from the west and northwest for the remainder of the year. "Ynforme de este Gobno. a la Direccion Gral. de Admin. Civil, sobre el estado actual de la Colonia agricola de San Ramon," Zamboanga, 8 April 1884, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon, 1870-99* & "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon, 1870-99*.

33. It is unlikely that the decline in the number of colonists available for agricultural labor was the result of prisoners being released as most men were serving life sentences. Escape, on the other hand, could be a small contributing factor.

34. "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

35. Comandante del Presidio de Zamboanga to Politico-Military Governor of Mindanao, Zamboanga, 22 August 1871, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon, 1870-1899*. The colony had no other recourse available to control the insects than to adopt local methods of smoking the crops.

especially poor in 1875 and 1880. (See Table 4) Apart from *palay*, the colony grew maize, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, bananas, guavas, mangoes, coffee and cacao for its consumption, and sugar and abaca in commercial quantities. Over 6,000 coconut trees were also planted. Livestock—carabaos, cattle and pigs—were mainly grazed on the western portions of the settlement, and pisciculture was practised in a specially constructed corral *de pesca*. Despite the generally rising value of agricultural and pastoral produce, the colony remained indebted for each year for which figures are available. Indeed, the year in which the value of produce was highest, 1879, was also the year of the highest total expenditure and the greatest deficit.

Table 3. Number of Prisoners Available for Agricultural Work at San Ramon, March 1876—August 1882.³⁶

Month	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882
January	—	45	123	96	64	82	76
February	—	74	121	97	64	80	75
March	53	72	117	97	63	82	75
April	53	70	117	101	84	82	75
May	51	70	115	98	85	81	74
June	51	69	114	89	83	80	75
July	49	72	114	91	83	80	73
August	49	150	113	91	82	80	73
September	48	150	113	81	82	79	—
October	48	149	108	68	82	79	—
November	48	130	93	68	82	78	—
December	45	124	93	67	82	76	—

Mismanagement was another factor in the colony's poor economic record. The directors of the colony between 1870–82 mainly conceived of their role in administrative and disciplinary terms. Agricultural production was left to the offices of a foreman, the *capataz agricola*, who usually held the position for no other reason than that he had been a sergeant in the army. Only with the appointment as director of Captain Felipe Dujols in 1882 did the colony experience a measure of economic prosperity. However, heavy investment in new machinery including a sugar refiner and saw mill only plunged the

36. Source: "Expediente por D. Nicanor Fernandez Alas, capataz de la Colonia Agricola de San Ramon en queja contra el Director de la misma," San Ramon, 22 May 1884, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon*, 1870–1899.

colony further into debt. The penal colony's deficit exceeded ₱60,000 in 1886.³⁷ There was evidence, too, of large-scale fraud and corruption in later years. An investigation of the colony's accounts in 1891 showed gross irregularities between the books and the amount of produce held in the warehouses. Quantities of sugar, maize, cotton, coffee and cacao had mysteriously disappeared. Over half the previous year's coconut harvest could not be accounted for and there were shortfalls in the store of abaca.³⁸

Table 4. Total Expenditure Compared To Value Of Production In Pesos, San Ramon, 1870-1883.³⁹

Year	Running Costs	Wages	Total Costs	Value of Produce	Deficit
1870	71	254	325	-	325
1871	115	866	981	-	981
1872	680	1,449	2,129	1,168	961
1873	799	2,402	3,201	15	3,186
1874	812	2,714	3,526	1,075	2,451
1875	604	2,221	2,825	591	2,234
1876	644	1,389	2,033	771	1,262
1877	2,688	-	2,688	1,280	1,408
1878	1,305	2,303	3,608	1,774	1,834
1879	4,445	3,091	7,536	2,922	4,614
1880	1,117	3,545	4,662	390	4,272
1881	576	3,009	3,585	1,160	2,425
1882	715	2,610	3,325	1,463	1,826
1883	389	1,149	1,538	3	1,535
Total	14,960	27,002	41,962	12,612	29,350

37. "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*. John Foreman met Felipe Dujols on his twelve-day visit to the colony in either 1884 or 1885.

38. D. Francisco Olive y Garcia to Inspector-General of Prisons, Manila, 2 January 1891, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon*, unreferenced.

39. Sources: "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*. The figures for 1883 are unreliable. On another occasion, the value of the produce in 1883 is given as ₱6,936 and the colony is said to have made a profit of ₱3,233. See: "Ynforme de este Gobno. a la Direccion Gral. de Admin. Civil, sobre el estado actual de la Colonia agricola de San Ramon," Zamboanga, 8 April 1884, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*. The figures for 1876-82, on the other hand, are roughly substantiated in another document. See: "Expediente por D. Nicanor Fernandez Alas, capataz de la Colonia Agricola de San Ramon en queja contra el Director de la misma," San Ramon, 22 May 1884, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

San Ramon, however, was far more effective as a prison than as an economic venture. There were guards to maintain order but no walls or gates to prevent prisoners leaving the settlement. Instead, isolation and a hostile environment meant that prisoners had nowhere to escape to and nowhere to hide. The towns nearest to the colony were: Ayala, a settlement of some 2,000 recently converted tribesmen four kilometers away to the southeast: the barrio of Busugan to the northwest with a population of 120 Yakan people; and the newly created municipality of Reus consisting of 500 Subanons at a distance of ten kilometers.⁴⁰ Communications with these settlements were mainly by sea or by trails that ran parallel to the beach. An escaping prisoner could expect no succor from these communities. In fact, the reverse was often true and prison authorities could call upon local *datu* living under nominal Spanish suzerainty to hunt down the escapees like wild pigs. Muslim warriors frequently executed escaping prisoners who offered the slightest resistance. Thus three runaways from San Ramon were traced to the island of Basilan and run to ground by the headman of the village of Semut in June 1888. Two were easily secured as they were foraging for fruit in the woods, but the third, some distance away, vigorously resisted capture, even knocking a spear from the hands of one of the headman's followers. He was promptly decapitated and his head sent down to the coast along with the two recaptured prisoners.⁴¹

Discipline was difficult to maintain in such an isolated community: even the colony's director was assaulted in full view of the prisoners. On the afternoon of 31 March 1887, Felipe Dujols was pulled from his horse and beaten by the agricultural foreman after rebuking the man for his lack of zeal while inspecting some earthworks.⁴² Other such incidents took place and the lack of tact shown

40. "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

41. "Diligencias instruidas sobre la aprehension y muerte de tres Confinados desertores de la Colonia de Sn. Ramon," Isabela de Basilan, 1888, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon*, Personal 1890. An exceptional case was that of Pedro Cuevas, who began his career as a highwayman in Cavite province but was captured and deported to San Ramon. He became involved in a murderous attack on three Europeans before making his escape to the island of Basilan, where he managed to make himself chief of a large population of Yacan Moros. He subsequently saved the Spanish during a Moro attack on Zamboanga and Isabela de Basilan in return for a full pardon. He remained a loyal Spanish ally thereafter, extending his dominion and was even eventually accorded the title of *datu* by *Datu Aliudi*, the claimant to the Sulu Sultanate. He died in 1904 at the age of fifty-nine. John Foreman, *The Philippine Islands*, pp. 238 and 582-83.

42. "Expediente sobre haber sido herido al Capitan Director, Felipe Dujols, por el capitaz agricola, Andres Rodriguez," PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon*, Personal 1890.

by subsequent directors was held responsible for fostering discord among subordinate officials. Of course, such matters did not unduly concern the colonists. To them, isolated in a hostile environment, survival and the threat of violence were much more immediate anxieties. Living conditions for prisoners were poor: the colony's buildings were in "a ruinous condition." The barracks that housed both prisoners and guards were described as being in a state of collapse in 1883.⁴³ Conditions had not improved by 1884 or even by 1886.⁴⁴ The work day was long and hard but some jobs were particularly onerous. The new sugar press introduced by Dujols needed vast quantities of water that had to be provided by a hand-operated pump requiring the labor of six men. "The work on the pump is very laborious," the annual report for 1886 admitted, "causing those who work it to contract serious illnesses."⁴⁵ Prisoners were also maltreated. The evidence of two runaways, Bruno de los Santos and Claro Rabago, cited physical abuse as the principle reason for their escape from the colony in March 1888.⁴⁶ Fear of the officials who effectively held the power of life and death over the prisoners often lent credence to rumor. A mass break out of sixty-two prisoners on the night of 29 December 1898 was prompted by the mistaken belief that the men were about to be embarked on a boat and tossed overboard with their hands tied while out at sea.⁴⁷

Agricultural colonies like San Ramon served two purposes: one penal and one political. Working on the land was held to be a cleansing process whereby the itinerant and criminal element among the population was transformed into useful members of society. "Work is a powerful force of morality," explained a newspaper article in 1895, "and agricultural labor is the most moral of all work because it is generally performed alone and seems to place man in more direct

43. "Expediente incoado por el Gobierno General para informarse estensamente por este de la Ysla, sobre el estado actual de dicha colonia," Zamboanga, 5 September 1883, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon*, 1870-83.

44. "Ynforme de este Gobno. a la Direccion Gral. de Admin. Civil, sobre el estado actual de la Colonia agricola de San Ramon," Zamboanga, 8 April 1884, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*, and "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

45. "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, *ibid.*

46. "Diligencias instruidas sobre la aprehension y muerte de tres Confinados desertores de la Colonia de Sn. Ramon," Isabela de Basilan, 1888, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

47. Jesus Cabañas to Politico-Military Governor, San Ramon, 3 January 1899, PNA, *Colonia De San Ramon*, 1870-99.

contact with God and with nature."⁴⁸ Men who had served their sentences in penal settlements were encouraged to become colonists and settle in the area. Many former prisoners did just that and in doing so furthered the political aims of Spanish colonialism.⁴⁹ Posing the question as to whether "the State should sustain agricultural development when it is generally held by all that the State ought not to undertake ventures that are the exclusive competence of private initiative," Felipe Dujols responded that without such support the project would be abandoned as too costly and too difficult to be sustained.⁵⁰ Elsewhere the governor of Zamboanga was more explicit: the colony was founded to: "mightily contribute . . . to the great principle of Colonization in which our country has placed its designs."⁵¹ Leroy, commenting on the modified form of Visayan dialect spoken in the coastal towns of Mindanao at the turn of the twentieth century, noted how such settlements had: "sprang from Spanish efforts to hem in the Moros, partly by securing voluntary settlers and partly by establishing penal colonies of deportees, some for political offenses, but the majority for ordinary crimes."⁵² While the colonial government's policy of deportation to the south never became a successful economic venture, it did advance the process of Christian settlement on southern Mindanao and Palawan, and furthered Spanish political aims to bring the entire archipelago under its own jurisdiction. As such, penal deportation was an important factor in Spanish colonial expansion in the Philippines during the late nineteenth century.

48. "Colonias Penitenciarias," *El Porvenir De Bisayas*, 22 April 1895.

49. "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

50. "Expediente sobre recepcion de la maquinaria y memoria, relativa al estado actual de la Colonia," Manila, 10 August 1886, *ibid*.

51. "Ynforme de este Gobno. a la Direccion Gral. de Admin. Civil, sobre el estado actual de la Colonia agricola de San Ramon," Zamboanga, 8 April 1884, PNA, *Colonia de San Ramon*.

52. James Leroy, *The Philippine Islands Circa 1900* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, 1968) (originally published as *Philippine Life in Town and Country* in 1905), p. 141.