

Reanalysis of the Historical Existence of the Remontado Dumagats in Sierra Madre

Edmund Acquioben, Jesse Songcayawon, Jeruel Ibanez, Joseph Ledesma
Adventist University of the Philippines

Abstract

One of the least studied and documented ethnolinguistic groups in the Philippines is the Remontado Dumagat group inhabiting the Sierra Madre Mountains in Rizal and Quezon. This tribal group is considered by writers and researchers who mostly worked on linguistics as a branch of the woolly haired and dark skinned Pygmy aborigines of the Philippines whom the Spaniards called Negritos. Other sources claim that the Remontado Dumagats are but mestizos, offsprings of intermarriages between a branch of the Malays (the dominant race among Austronesians) and the Negritos. But getting in close contact with the Remontado Dumagats, physically most of them are noticeably no different from those of the brown skinned and straight haired Malay Filipinos like the Ilocanos, Tagalogs, Cebuanos, Bicolanos, Ilonggos, Karay-a Waray, etc. except that many of them resemble the physical features of the people of South Asia (the Indians, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis). They are not short and small like the Negritos; instead, some of them are even bigger and taller than the average Malay Filipinos. This paper dealt with the reanalysis of the historical existence of the Remontado Dumagats as a group. It investigated who this group of people are and where they came from based on the different explanations why they are called Remontado Dumagats; the dispersal of their population; their cultural distinctions and similarities with other indigenous people of the Philippines; a discussion of their social and political organization; and, the cultural transformation brought about by industrialization.

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