



Ilocano Cultural Orientation

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Chapter 1: Profile



Terraces in the Cordillera Mountains
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Introduction

The Ilocos Region of the Philippines, known as Administrative Region 1, occupies about 12,840 sq km (4,958 sq mi) on the northwestern coast of Luzon Island.^{1,2} The region is bounded by the Cordillera Mountains to the east, Central Luzon to the south, and the South China Sea to the west.^{3,4} The Ilocos is composed of four provinces: Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan. Pangasinan Province, added to the region in 1972, was not part of the original homeland of the Ilocano. Pangasinan is the historical homeland of the Pangasinense.⁵ Ilocanos, relative newcomers to the province, began migrating to it in the 19th century.⁶

About 4% of the entire national population lives in the Ilocos.⁷ In 2010, approximately 4.75 million people lived in the region.^{8,9} They live throughout Northern Luzon, but are concentrated in the northwestern coastal regions.^{10,11} The most populated province is Pangasinan with about 60% of the population of the region.^{12,13} More than half of Pangasinan's population are Pangasinenses.¹⁴

Geography and Topography

Much of the Ilocos Region is hilly and mountainous with an average elevation of about 1,800 m (5,905 ft).¹⁵ A narrow stretch of coastal lowlands extends from southern La Union Province through the northern part of Ilocos Norte.¹⁶ Among the highest peaks in the north are Mount Sicapoo (2,361 m/7,746 ft), Mount Burnay (2,048 m/6,719 ft), Mount Agnamala (1,786 m/5,860 ft), and Mount Kilung (1,515 m/4,970 ft).^{17, 18, 19, 20, 21}

Progressing southward toward Ilocos Sur, the topography becomes less hilly as it merges into rolling hills near the central plains of Luzon, which occupy a major portion of the province of Pangasinan.^{22,23} Here the average elevation drops to 10–1,700 m (33–5,577 ft).²⁴

Climate

The regional climate is tropical with two distinct seasons. The dry season runs from November to April. During this period, rainfall averages less than 5 cm (2 in) per month.²⁵ During the wet season (May through October), rainfall can average 201–399 cm (79–157 in).²⁶ In Ilocos Sur, average monthly rainfall is about 21.6 cm (8.5 in). The wettest month in the province is August, when an average of 71.1 cm (28 in) of precipitation falls.²⁷ In La Union, average rainfall is slightly less and averages around 15 cm (6 in).²⁸ The warmest months are April and May, with average temperatures hovering around 28°C (82°F). The coldest month, January, is slightly cooler, averaging around 25°C (77°F).²⁹

The northeastern portion of Ilocos Norte has a slightly different climate, characterized by a shorter dry season lasting 1–3 months (usually December to February or March to May).³⁰ Temperatures in Ilocos Norte average about 27°C (81°F), rising slightly during May, the warmest month. The coolest month is December.³¹

The typhoon season runs from April to December.³² In a normal year, several typhoons

may hit the provinces. For example, in 2011 Ilocos Norte suffered significant damage from Typhoon Mina, and in 2013 the province was hit by Typhoon Odette.^{33,34} Typhoons generally move in a westerly or northwesterly direction.³⁵ All receive female names based on the Filipino alphabet.³⁶



Flooding

© European Commission DG ECHO



Pinacanauan River
© Victor Villanueva

Bodies of Water

The Ilocos Region has 29 river systems in addition to numerous small mountain streams that can swell considerably during the rainy season.³⁷ Five major rivers flow through the area. The 200-km (124-mi) Agno River drains into the Lingayen Gulf, with its delta forming part of the Pangasinan Plain. The Amburayan river basin covers parts of Ilocos Sur and La Union provinces. It serves as part of the border between the two provinces. The Laoag (or Padsan) River flows through Ilocos Norte.^{38, 39, 40} The Abra River flows through Ilocos Sur.⁴¹

Over the years, heavy mining of gold, silver, and copper has resulted in significant pollution along the Abra's upper tributaries.⁴² The pollution is so bad that the water is no longer suitable for human use, including recreational use.^{43, 44} The other two major rivers, the Bued and Agno, are located in Pangasinan Province.⁴⁵ Each of these rivers is prone to flooding and erosion, particularly during the heavy rains of the wet season. Dredging projects are underway to attempt to minimize the flooding risk.⁴⁶

Major Cities

The Ilocos Region is predominantly rural and has only nine cities.^{47, 48} Pangasinan Province is the most highly urbanized of the four provinces and contains five of the cities. Slightly more than half of the residents of Pangasinan live in urban areas.^{49, 50}

Laoag City

Laoag City, founded in 1586, is located on the banks of the river of the same name and is the only city in Ilocos Norte.^{51, 52, 53} Its name is derived from the Ilocano term *lawag*, meaning "light" or "brightness."⁵⁴ Lying virtually at sea level, the city is vulnerable to flooding during the rainy season.⁵⁵ Laoag City is 2 hours or less by air from Manila, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, and Japan.⁵⁶



Street in Laoag City
© Shubert Ciencia

The progressive metropolis is the provincial capital and the largest commercial city in Northern Luzon.⁵⁷ It is a major center of politics, education, and religion and is home to the region's only commercial airport.^{58, 59} Although the city's residents are largely Ilocanos, the Catholic Church is not a dominant institution in the city. Protestant churches, including the Aglipayan Church, have a strong foothold.^{60, 61}



Street in Vigan
© Jonathan S. Igharas

Vigan

The historic city of Vigan is the capital of the province of Ilocos Sur.⁶² Located in the Abra River delta on the northern tip of Luzon, it is the finest surviving example of a Spanish colonial town in Asia.⁶³ In 1999, the city was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site.⁶⁴

Even before the arrival of the Spanish in the mid-16th century, the city had been settled and was a major trading center on the Silk Road. The Spanish took control of the outpost in 1572. The city became a major religious center when the seat of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia was transferred to it in 1758.^{65, 66} Today, it remains a major commercial center for Ilocos Sur.⁶⁷

Vigan has at times become a center of unrest because of its location and 300-year history as an important religious, economic, and commercial center.⁶⁸ In 1762, Diego Silang led a revolt against the Spanish in an attempt to create an Ilocano nation. Working with the British, Silang succeeded in overthrowing the Spanish in the same year as the revolt, and the city was named the capital of Free Ilocos.^{69, 70} As the city continued to expand, it was renamed Villa Fernandina in 1778 and later Ciudad Fernandina de Vigan.^{71, 72} Another popular uprising that originated in the city was the Basi revolt of 1817, in which people protested the government's attempts to prohibit the making of sugarcane wine.⁷³

Visitors to the city will quickly notice that most residents have surnames beginning with *A* or *F*.⁷⁴ In 1890, the Spanish governor-general required all Vigans to take a surname to aid in the collection of taxes. All native Vigans were required to choose a last name beginning with the letter *A*, and all mestizos had to choose names beginning with *F*.⁷⁵

San Fernando City

San Fernando City is in the province of La Union. Originally known as Pindangan, the coastal city was often attacked by Japanese, Moro, and Chinese pirates during its early years.⁷⁶ The city changed its name to San Fernando City in 1850.⁷⁷ Strategically located, it has the only national port of entry, Poro, in Northern Luzon.^{78, 79} San Fernando City is a center of trade, commerce, and education for the region. As the Ilocos regional capital,

it is home to national government agencies for Region 1.^{80,81} The city's economy rests on agriculture and fishing.⁸² Its main tourist attractions are its expanses of sandy beaches.⁸³



Bangus at the market
© *thearcheoanthropologist / flickr.com*

Dagupan City

Dagupan City is the largest city in Pangasinan Province.⁸⁴ Established in 1583, the city was originally known as Bacnotan. In 1660, locals led a successful revolt against the Spanish and renamed the town Nandaragupan. In 1780 the name was simplified to Dagupan.⁸⁵ In 1990, Dagupan City was devastated by a 7.7-magnitude earthquake. In the days following the tragedy, experts advised residents to move out of the city permanently, asserting that it was no longer livable and incapable of being rebuilt.⁸⁶ But people stayed, and today Dagupan is the major commercial center of the province. The city is well known for its seafood and salted fish industry. One specialty is milkfish (*bangus*). Every April, the city hosts a Bangus Festival, which includes grilling the famous fish on one of the world's longest outdoor grills.^{87,88}

History of the Ilocos Region

Early History

The first migrants to what is now the Ilocos Region of the Philippines were dark-skinned people of small stature from Asia. Later called Negritos by the Spanish, they call themselves Aeta, Agta, or Atta.⁸⁹ Their origins are still debated in the scientific community, but it is estimated that they arrived on the archipelago between 30,000 and 50,000 years ago. They mixed with waves of Malay immigrants, producing the ancestors of the present-day Ilocanos.^{90,91}

Long before the arrival of the Spaniards in 1572, the region was renowned for its gold mines.⁹² Merchants from China, Japan, and Southeast Asia traded beads, ceramics, and silk for gold with Filipino merchants.⁹³ The inhabitants of the region called their homeland *samttoy*, from *sao mi toy*, which literally means “our language.”⁹⁴ The area from modern-day Ilocos Norte to La Union became known as Ylokos, or “inhabitants of the lowlands.”⁹⁵



Statue of Diego Silang
© Ramon F Velasquez

Spanish Rule

In 1572, Spanish explorer Juan de Salcedo arrived in present-day Vigan in Ilocos Sur and proceeded northward. The Spanish named the region Ylocos or Ilocos and its people Ilocanos.⁹⁶ Shortly thereafter, the Spanish began the colonization of the region. Under colonial rule, the Church gave the Spanish responsibility for promoting, defending, and maintaining the Catholic religion.⁹⁷

Despite Spain's efforts, the Ilocos region was never fully colonized. Abusive practices by the Spanish, including clergy members, led to resistance and revolt among the Ilocanos. In the Dingras uprising in 1589, residents of the town killed six tax collectors from Vigan.^{98, 99} In 1762, local hero Diego Silang led a revolution aimed at freeing the Ilocano people and the establishing an Ilocano state. After his assassination in 1763, his wife, Gabriela, continued his efforts until she was captured and hung later that year.^{100, 101, 102}

The oppression of the Spanish colonial government continued to prompt dissatisfaction among the Ilocos people.¹⁰³ In response to this situation as well as to population growth, the

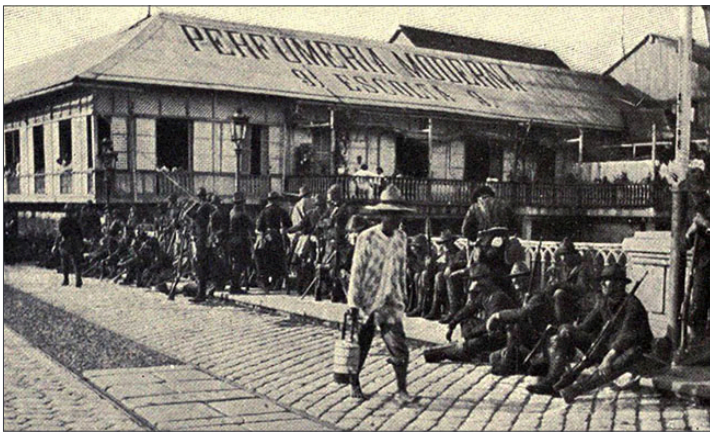
governor recommended the establishment of a separate province in the north. Ilocos Norte was created by Spanish Royal Decree on February 2, 1818. In 1846, Ilocos Sur lost much of its inland territory to the newly created province of Abra. In 1854, several towns were taken from Ilocos Sur to create the province of La Union.^{104, 105}

The Filipino quest for independence started in 1896.^{106, 107} Residents of both Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte actively participated in the effort to establish an independent government.^{108, 109} Aided by the United States, the Filipino revolutionaries overthrew the Spanish and established a short-lived provincial government in 1898.¹¹⁰

U.S. Involvement

The 1898 Treaty of Paris officially ended the Spanish-American War and gave control of the Philippines to the United States.^{111, 112} Having just thrown off the yoke of Spanish colonialism, the Filipinos were not happy with being under foreign governance once again. In 1899, a new revolutionary offensive was launched against the United States. The Philippine-American War, as the conflict was known, lasted until 1902 and cost the lives of tens of thousands of Filipinos and 4,500 Americans.^{113, 114} Although the war ended in 1902 and a civil government was established, sporadic outbreaks of violence continued until 1913.¹¹⁵

President Woodrow Wilson initiated a major change in official U.S. policy toward the Philippines in 1913 and began the process that would lead to Philippine independence. U.S. governance of the Philippines was declared to be temporary and aimed at developing institutions that would permit and encourage the eventual establishment



American troops on bridge over Pasig River
© Courtesy of Wikipedia

of a free and democratic government. American officials concentrated on practical supports for democratic governance, such as public education and an independent judiciary.^{116, 117}

The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1935 made the Philippines a self-governing commonwealth. Under the terms of the act, the United States would retain control over foreign affairs and defense until 1945, although the Filipinos would be responsible for all issues related to domestic affairs.^{118, 119}

Japanese troops invaded the Philippines 3 days after the start of World War II. When Japanese forces invaded Laoag City, the local governments of Ilocos Norte and Laoag City, unlike the national government, never surrendered to the Japanese and continued to fight.^{120, 121} Ilocano guerrilla forces, in cooperation with U.S. troops and national Philippine troops, battled the Japanese until 1945.¹²² In June 1945, Filipino and U.S. troops won a decisive victory over Japanese forces at the Battle of Bessang Pass.¹²³ During World War II, approximately 200,000 Filipinos, more than half of whom died, fought in defense of the United States against the Japanese in the Pacific Theater.¹²⁴

Recent History

Following national independence, the Ilocos Region continued to influence national politics. Five Philippine presidents have been Ilocanos: Elpidio Quirino of Ilocos Sur (1948–1953), Ramon Magsaysay of Zambales (1953–1957), Carlos P. Garcia of Bohol (1957–1961), Ferdinand Marcos of Ilocos Norte (1965–1986), and Fidel V. Ramos of

Lingayen (1992–1998).^{125, 126, 127, 128, 129} The history of civil unrest and revolt throughout the region continued even after Philippine independence. Since 1969, communist insurgents have been battling the government, mostly in and around neighboring Abra Province.^{130, 131, 132} In the Ilocos provinces, insurgent operations appear to have ceased.^{133, 134, 135}



Supreme Court of the Philippines
© Ramon F Velasquez

Government

The Philippines is a presidential republic with three branches of government: the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary.¹³⁶ The president, who is the head of government and the chief of state, appoints a cabinet with the consent of the Commission of Appointments. The president and the vice president, elected on separate tickets, serve a single 6-year term.¹³⁷

The legislative branch is composed of the Congress (*Kongreso*), which has a 24-seat Senate (*Senado*) and a 287-seat House of Representatives (*Kapulungan Ng Nga Kinatawan*). Senators are elected to 6-year terms and representatives to 3-year terms.¹³⁸

The nation's highest court, the Supreme Court, consists of one chief justice and 14 associate justices. The justices are appointed by the president and a 6-member body. Judges may serve only until the age of 70. Lower courts include a court of appeals, a special court to try alleged corrupt government officials (*Sandiganbayan*), shari'a courts for Filipino Muslims, and a series of other regional and district courts.¹³⁹

Each of the nation's 79 provinces has its own government that is autonomous from the federal government, which has limited rights to intervene in provincial governance. The provinces have executive and legislative branches; judiciary responsibilities are under the jurisdiction of the national Supreme Court.¹⁴⁰ The chief executive officer of the province is the governor, who is elected to a 3-year term. Governors may not be elected to more than 3 consecutive terms in office. The vice governor is the president of the provincial legislative body.¹⁴¹ The provinces are divided into cities, municipalities, and *barangays*, the smallest unit of administration. Each city has a mayor, who leads the council for the barangays. The cities also have a vice mayor, a city council, and a commission that represents various community issues, such as those involving the budget, the environment, and education.¹⁴² In 2013, the four provinces of the Ilocos Region had 9 cities, 116 municipalities and 3,265 barangays.¹⁴³



*Philippine media interview US Ambassador
© Stephen Hickok*

Media

Freedom of the press is a constitutional guarantee. Nevertheless, attacks and violence against journalists can be a serious problem.^{144, 145} Most of the nation's print media outlets are privately owned, although the government owns several television and radio stations. Nongovernmental television and radio station ownership rests in the hands of a few wealthy families.¹⁴⁶

Internet access among the general Philippine population is growing, and in 2011 about 29% of residents used the internet.^{147, 148} The government does not restrict access and social media, as well as other sites, are widely available.¹⁴⁹ The country

ranks 14th in the world in terms of mobile phone use with 87–94 million cell phone subscribers.^{150, 151}

Economy

Although the Ilocos Region is largely mountainous, the three northern provinces rely heavily on agriculture, which accounts for nearly 25% of regional GDP.^{152, 153}

Most Ilocano are farmers, and nearly 39% of workers are employed in the agricultural sector.¹⁵⁴ The main crops include rice, corn, garlic, mangoes, and tobacco.^{155, 156}

The fishing industry produces shrimp, tilapia, and milkfish (*bangus*).¹⁵⁷ Livestock include pigs, goats, water buffalo (*carabao*), and chickens.¹⁵⁸

Because of the region's location, tourism and trade are thriving industries. Blanket-weaving and pottery are important cottage craft industries.¹⁵⁹

Despite the importance of agriculture, it accounts for only a quarter of regional GDP, about the same as industry. The largest contributor of GDP at 49% is the service



*Rice farmers
© IRRI Photos / flickr.com*

sector.¹⁶⁰ Industrial mining is another source of revenue. Feldspar, copper, gold, and silica are major products. The forest industry, especially the production of bamboo and rattan, is also important.¹⁶¹

Various plans are underway to expand the region's tourism industry and make the Ilocos Region one of the top destinations in the Philippines. In 2011, Ilocos Norte had more tourist arrivals than any other province, followed by Pangasinan, according to the national Department of Tourism.¹⁶² Further, investments in agriculture and infrastructure are underway to increase agribusiness and raise productivity.^{163, 164, 165} In the Ilocos Region, unemployment remained relatively high at about 9% while 21% of the workforce was underemployed in 2012.¹⁶⁶



Ilocano woman and child
© William Rei Udarbe

Ethnic Groups

The Ilocano make up the nation's third-largest ethnic group and the largest in Region 1. Although they represent about 9% of the national population, they constitute 92–97% of the population of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, and La Union and about 45% of the population of Pangasinan Province.^{167,}

¹⁶⁸ Ilocanos are believed to be descended from the Malay race. Over time, there has been significant mixing with other groups, including Chinese, Indian, and Spanish peoples.¹⁶⁹ The earliest Ilocanos predate the Spanish and are known to have traded with Japanese and Chinese merchants.¹⁷⁰ The Ilocano have a proud history of involvement in nationalist movements and many have become government officials.^{171, 172, 173} The Ilocano have also established themselves as important migrant groups, both in and out of the Philippines. In the 19th century the Spanish chose the Ilocano to help them colonize other parts of Luzon Island and to help spread Catholicism.^{174, 175} In the early 1900s, Filipino workers from Ilocos went to Hawaii to work on the sugar plantations. In only a few years, Filipinos had become the largest ethnic group in the island state.¹⁷⁶ Today the Ilocano language is even taught in some schools in Hawaii and California.¹⁷⁷

The Pangasinan make up the second-most populous group.¹⁷⁸ The name *Pangasinan* can be translated as “a place where salt is made,” referring to the province of the same name. No one really knows the origins of the Pangasinense, but some believe that they came from Java. The earliest Pangasinense conducted trade with Chinese and Japanese merchant vessels. Most are Catholic.¹⁷⁹ Many are farmers who grow crops such as rice, tropical fruit, and tobacco.¹⁸⁰



Pangasinan children
© Cultureight DotCom / flickr.com

The Kankanaey people are located in the westernmost regions of Ilocos Sur and La Union provinces. They live mostly in mountain communities and have a long history of terrace-farming rice, which suggests that the group was in the area long before the arrival of the Spanish. Their belief system is replete with gods and spirits but their supreme deity is Kabunian. The Kankanaey still call upon these gods and spirits in their religious rituals and practices. Rituals are performed by special practitioners called *mambunong* or by female mediums called *manggengey*. Rituals related to agriculture are viewed as central to life. The most important rites include *Manteneng* and *Legleg*, both related to planting and growth, and the harvest ceremony of *pakde*.¹⁸¹



Farmer in their rice terrace
© Stephen Bugno

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Overview: Chapter 1 Assessment

1. The Ilocos Region of the Philippines is located in northwestern Luzon Island.
TRUE

The Ilocos Region of the Philippines occupies about 12,840 sq km (4,958 sq mi) on the northwestern coast of Luzon Island. The region is composed of four provinces: Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan.

2. The typhoon season in the Ilocos Region begins in December.
FALSE

The typhoon season occurs from April to December. In a normal year, several typhoons may hit the provinces.

3. Most of the Ilocos Region is urban.
FALSE

The Ilocos Region is predominantly rural and has only nine cities. Pangasinan Province is the most highly urbanized province and contains five of the nine cities.

4. Agriculture is especially important in the three northern provinces of the region.
TRUE

Although the region is largely mountainous, the three northern provinces rely heavily on agriculture, which accounts for nearly 25% of regional GDP. Most Ilocano are farmers, and nearly 39% of workers are employed in the agricultural sector.

5. Ilocanos are the largest ethnic group in the Pangasinan Province.
FALSE

The Ilocano represent 92–97% of the population of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, and La Union and about 45% of the population in Pangasinan Province.

Chapter 2: Religion

Introduction

Religion in the Philippines is more than a set of beliefs about nature and the supernatural. It has played a major role in the social, political, and cultural development of the nation.¹ The Filipinos are a spiritual people and signs of their faith and piety are ever present.² For the Filipino faithful, there is comfort in the knowledge that there is a powerful being who can guide and sustain them through difficult times and who provides guidance in day-to-day affairs.^{3,4}

Today the Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia.⁵ More than 90% of Filipinos are Christian, with Roman Catholics making up approximately 83% of this group.⁶ The Ilocano are overwhelmingly Christian, although their religious practices are a blend of Christian and indigenous traditions. The majority of Ilocanos are members of the Aglipayan Church, an independent church with its roots in Ilocos Norte.^{7,8}

Religious tourism is an important feature of life in the Ilocos Region, which is a major pilgrimage destination. Churches and shrines as well as religious festivals are prevalent in the area.^{9,10,11} The Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag in Pangasinan Province is an important pilgrimage site in Northern Luzon.¹²



Cathedral in Laoag
© Storm Crypt / flickr.com

Religions



Manobo shaman
© Andy Maluche

Indigenous Beliefs

The indigenous religion of Filipinos was one in which spirits and other supernatural forces governed the world.¹³ Such a supernatural belief system was central to healing practices, harvest rites, and to maintaining a cosmological balance between this world and the afterlife. Spirits were thought to be responsible for both good and bad events. They could be blamed for poor harvests, illness, and bad luck in general.^{14, 15} To curry favor with these invisible powers, every village had resident shamans and soothsayers who marketed their services to those in need. The more successful became renowned for their ability to

develop *anting-anting*, a charm guaranteed to make a person invincible in the face of human enemies.¹⁶

Christianity

In 1565, Spaniard Miguel Lopez de Legaspi arrived and quickly began to convert the population to Catholicism.¹⁷ Throughout the colonial period, religion played a major role in the shaping of cultural and political, as well as religious, life in the Philippines. Spain's missionary priests became the local authority figures; they occupied the true seat of power in the area and supervised affairs throughout the colony. Until the end of Spanish rule, the Church and its authorities held a unique position of power, far beyond what was typical in other colonies.¹⁸

Outwardly the Spanish were successful in converting most of the population, but in reality the



Statue of Miguel Lopez de Legaspi
© Courtesy of Wikipedia

local population refused to give up many of its traditional beliefs and practices. Instead, people melded their beliefs with those of Catholicism, forming a unique brand of “folk Christianity.”^{19, 20}

Like Catholics everywhere, Filipinos celebrate the sacraments, attend Mass, recite the rosary, say grace before meals, and celebrate traditional Catholic holidays.^{21, 22} In addition, there are cults dedicated to the Baby Jesus and the Virgin Mary. Filipinos also venerate both saints and ancestors.^{23, 24}

But not everyone practices Catholicism in the Philippines. Roughly 2% of the population belongs to the Aglipayan Church, which was founded in Ilocos Norte and is sometimes referred to as the Philippine Independent Church.^{25, 26} Most church members are Ilocanos.²⁷ The Aglipayan Church was named after its founder, Gregorio Aglipay, an excommunicated Catholic.^{28, 29} Motivation for the founding of the new church grew out of anger with the Vatican and a strong sense of nationalism.³⁰ Its doctrine, originally influenced by the beliefs and traditions of Unitarianism, is now aligned with the Episcopal Church.^{31, 32}

Exchange 1: Where do you go to church?

Soldier:	Where do you go to church?	saadeeno tee paakeesimsimbaa-am?
Local:	I go to the Aglipayan Church.	maakeesimsimbaa-ak idjaay aagleepayaano.

The Role of Religion in the Government

The Philippine Constitution calls for freedom of religion as well as the separation of church and state.³³ The government does not place official restrictions on the practice of any faith, nor does it provide direct subsidies to religion-based institutions, including the extensive school systems maintained by religious orders and church groups.³⁴

Religious education in schools is permissible provided there is no cost to the government and children have written parental permission. Attendance in such classes is voluntary. Religious groups may dispense materials in public schools.³⁵

During the colonial period, Catholic missionaries became the true power figures in the region, often more powerful than government-appointed officials. Working with the Spanish king, the missionaries spread Catholicism throughout the nation. The clergy possessed broad knowledge of local languages and observed the local people to acquire information about their beliefs and activities. They passed this information on to Spanish government officials, who used it to control the population. Working with the government, the Catholic Church suppressed local religions, although never entirely. Traditional beliefs remained embodied in the new Catholic beliefs that local people adopted.^{36, 37}

After the Philippines gained independence in 1946, the Church remained active and influential in political and social affairs.³⁸ But it could not sustain the level of power it had held.³⁹ Still, today's Catholic Church continues to wield informal power on several issues. For example, a bill to expand birth control was passed after a bitter and divisive campaign: The bill had been stalled for more than a decade by opposition from the Catholic Church and its officials.^{40, 41, 42, 43} The Church also conducts an active campaign to ban divorce. A current bill in the legislature would legalize the practice, but its passage is by no means certain. Other than Vatican City, the Philippines is the only nation in which divorce is banned.^{44, 45}

Influence of Religion on Daily Life



Philippine faith healer
© Tenzelle Mae Abasolo

The influence of traditional animist beliefs exists almost everywhere in the Philippines. Some Filipinos use talismans for good luck.^{46, 47} Among poor Filipinos, many who cannot afford traditional medical care rely on faith healers.⁴⁸ Social events are often opened with a morning prayer, and prayer services are held in malls.⁴⁹ Farmers observe various rituals during the planting and harvesting seasons. Many of these rituals have their origins in traditional religions and are efforts to bring good luck and appease local spirits.^{50, 51} In addition, various holidays and festivals are held throughout the year, particularly by Catholics in the region.^{52, 53}

Religious Holidays

All major Roman Catholic holy days are observed as official national holidays in the Philippines.⁵⁴ The Ilocanos celebrate many religious holidays with festivals and feasts. Each *barangay* usually has a fiesta honoring its own patron saint. The various festivals generally involve parades, music, food, and noisy celebrations.⁵⁵

Semana Santa (Holy Week)

Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday and culminating with Easter, is celebrated widely throughout the Ilocos Region.⁵⁶ On Palm Sunday, the faithful bring palms to church, which are later taken home and hung in doorways to protect occupants from evil spirits.⁵⁷ Holy Thursday (also called Maundy Thursday) commemorates Christ's Last Supper. On this day, many Filipino Christians refrain from eating meat and drinking

alcohol. They attend church services, often visiting different churches throughout the day.^{58, 59} Good Friday is a somber day in the Philippines, and many celebrations involve reenactments of the Passion of Christ (*Sabet*).^{60, 61} Some Catholics observe the tradition of *visita iglesia* on Good Friday, which requires visiting as many churches as possible.⁶² Good Friday practices can involve self-flagellation with ropes embedded with broken glass. Some Filipinos even have themselves nailed to the cross as a sign of their devotion.^{63, 64} On Easter Sunday, people carry statues of Jesus and the Virgin Mary through the streets to the church.^{65, 66, 67}

Exchange 2: Do you go to church with your family?

Soldier:	Do you go to church with your family?	kaakooyug mo kaadee tee paameeleyam kaakooyug mo kaadee tee paameeleyam aa maakeesimsimba?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 3: Happy Easter!

Local:	Happy Easter!	naaragsaak aa paaskoowaa tee panaagoomaar!
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Candles for All Saints' Day
© Daniel Go

All Saints' Day

All Saints' Day is celebrated on the first day of November.⁶⁸ On this day people across the nation remember and honor the dead. Prayers are offered in cemeteries, and fresh flowers and lit candles adorn the polished graves. The deceased's favorite food is prepared and presented alongside the flowers and candles. The Iloco town of Paoay celebrates the day with a unique celebration called *Tumba*, which recalls the traditional Ilocano way to honor the dead. It involves placing food, candles, and perhaps a crucifix on a raised coffin.^{69, 70}

Christmas

Ilocanos call their month-long Christmas celebration *Pascua mi ditoy*.⁷¹ Celebrations include a variety of activities, ranging from carnivals to the lighting of Christmas trees and lantern parades.⁷² Another Ilocano Christmas tradition is *tupig*, a sticky rice cake seasoned with butter, molasses, grated coconut, and sesame seeds. The dish is often given to roving carolers. Many Christmas celebrations throughout the region include *tupig* cook-offs.^{73, 74}

Exchange 4: Merry Christmas!

Local:	Merry Christmas!	naaragsaak aa paaskwaa!
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Christmas is a joyful time filled with prayer, loud music, festivities, and gifts. Nine days prior to Christmas Day, church bells ring before dawn across the country to call people to early Mass. This is the beginning of nine days of devotion known as a novena. Midnight Mass and large family gatherings are traditional at Christmastime.^{75, 76} The final Mass of the season, *Miatinis*, is attended by young and old alike.⁷⁷

Exchange 5: What time is Christmas mass?

Soldier:	What time is Christmas mass?	aanya ng-a oras eete meesa tee paaskwaa?
Local:	At midnight.	eeteeting-aa raabee-ee.

Children and adults go caroling and a *parol*, a star-shaped lantern made from bamboo sticks and colored Japanese paper, adorns every house.⁷⁸

Exchange 6: Thank you for the gifts.

Soldier:	Thank you for the gifts.	aagyaamanaak paaraa dageetee regrigaaloyo.
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Buildings of Worship

Christians worship in church buildings. Typically, churches in the Philippines have a square nave and a bell tower. Inside each church is a central altar with a crucifix. Shrines on each side of the crucifix display statues of saints.⁷⁹ In the Ilocos Region, many churches were built in a style known as baroque earthquake architecture.⁸⁰ These churches are a fusion of local and European designs. Each church has a detached bell tower and strong buttresses to protect the church building in the event of an earthquake. Several of the churches are World Heritage sites.^{81, 82}

Churches

Santa Maria (Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion) was built in 1765. Located in Ilocos Sur, it sits on the lone hill rising above the town square and resembles a citadel. Eighty-two clay-baked brick steps lead up to the church. The structure, which also served as a fortress in its early years, is a National Historical Landmark.^{83, 84}



San Andres Apostol Parish
© Chip Sillesa

Another baroque-style church is San Augustine Church in Paoay, Ilocos Norte. Begun in the late 17th century, the church includes a detached stone bell tower reminiscent of a Chinese pagoda. The church's bell tower did double duty as a watchtower for the Katipuneros during the revolution against Spain and for guerrillas during World War II. A combination of Gothic, baroque, and Oriental styles, the church is built of baked bricks, coral rocks, tree sap, and wood. The church is a UNESCO World Heritage site.^{85, 86, 87}

An image of the dark Virgin of Santa Lucia, said to be miraculous, rests in a niche in the dome of Santa Lucia Church. About 1 m (3 ft) in height, the 18th-century image is venerated throughout the region. Featuring a quasi-Romanesque facade and a four-story bell tower, the church is the only one in Ilocos that features a dome.^{88, 89}

Saint Paul's Metropolitan Cathedral in Ilocos Norte was completed by the Augustinians in 1800 and built in the distinctive Ilocano baroque earthquake style.⁹⁰ The cathedral is the setting of many religious festivities attended by devotees from outside the province. Its octagonal belfry is located 12 m (39 ft) south of the cathedral.⁹¹ The interior of the building has a silver-paneled altar, 3 naves, and 12 minor altars. The communion handrails were forged from brass in China.⁹²



Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag
© Chip Sillesa

Enshrined in the century-old Sinait Church (Iglesia de San Nicolas de Tolentino) is the 17th-century image of the Black Nazarene, a human-size replica of Christ, which was found floating in a sealed casket along the Sinait coast.⁹³ Believed to have aborted a plague that hit Vigan in the 18th century, the shrine draws crowds each year on May 3 for the celebration of the Feast of the Black Nazarene.⁹⁴

Shrines

The Ilocos Region has a number of important religious shrines.⁹⁵ Pangasinan Province is home to the Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag.⁹⁶

According to legend, the Virgin Mary revealed herself to a Filipino farmer and requested that a church be built on the site. An ivory image of our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag, enshrined in the church, is believed to have miraculous powers. The shrine is a major pilgrimage site in the Ilocos Region, and every weekend thousands come to attend Mass and pray the rosary.⁹⁷

Several other shrines can be found, mostly in the provinces of La Union and Pangasinan. The Shrine of Our Lady of Namacpacan in Luna holds the image of Our Lady of Namacpacan, the patroness of Ilocano travelers. The Shrine of Our Lady of Charity is a major religious draw during Semana Santa.^{98,99} Numerous reports of apparitions are associated with the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Pangasinan Province.¹⁰⁰

Behavior in Buildings of Worship

Visitors are generally welcome in churches, but special rules may apply, and if you have a question, it is advisable to ask. Follow any guidelines that are posted when visiting a church. Remain silent if people are praying. Do not bring food or drink into a church and do not take photographs inside or outside without permission.^{101, 102}

Exchange 7: May I enter?

Soldier:	May I enter?	maabaleenak tee sumrek?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Because Filipino Catholics regard statues and images of Christ as sacred, these objects should be approached quietly and with a respectful attitude.¹⁰³

Exchange 8: What time will prayers start?

Soldier:	What time will prayers start?	aaneeya ng-a oras tee roogento tee loowaalo?
Local:	10 a.m.	aalas diyes tee begat.

Exchange 9: Who will lead the prayers?

Soldier:	Who will lead the prayers?	aaseeno tee mang-eetorong tee lowaalo?
Local:	Father Garcia.	nee paadrey garseeya.

Visitors are expected to dress appropriately. Clothes should be simple and modest. Women should avoid wearing bright colors and dresses that rise above the knee. They should also refrain from wearing sleeveless outfits or blouses with a low neckline.¹⁰⁴ Women may wear a chapel veil.¹⁰⁵

Exchange 10: Who conducts the mass this morning?

Soldier:	Who conducts the mass this morning?	aaseenoo tee maang-meesa eetaa ng-a beegaat?
Local:	Father Garcia.	nee paarey gaarseeya.

Exchange 11: Does he say mass in English?

Soldier:	Does he say the mass in English or in Ilocano?	aagmeesa kaadee isoonaa itee eengles weno ilokaano?
Local:	In Ilocano.	Ilokaano.

Men are expected to wear long pants, shoes, and a buttoned shirt with long or short sleeves.¹⁰⁶ Catholic laymen should not wear hats inside church buildings.¹⁰⁷

Exchange 12: I would like to receive communion.

Soldier:	I would like to receive communion.	kayaatko komaa tee aakomoonyon.
Local:	Yes, but have you gone to confession?	wen, ng-em naakompeysarka kaadin?

Exchange 13: What time of day is confession?

Soldier:	What day and time is the confession?	aaneeya ng-a aldaw ken oras tee panaagkompesaar?
Local:	Friday and Saturday at 5:00 in the afternoon.	eetee biyernas ken saabado eetee aala seekno tee maalem.

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Overview: Chapter 2 Assessment

1. More than 9 out of 10 Filipinos are Christian.

TRUE

Today the Philippines is the only Christian nation in Asia. More than 90% of Filipinos are Christian.

2. The Catholic Church wields enormous formal political power in the government.

FALSE

The Catholic Church wields considerable informal power on several issues. For example, a bill to expand birth control was passed after a bitter and divisive campaign. The bill had been stalled for more than a decade by opposition from the Catholic Church.

3. The Iloco celebration of Tumba is a traditional way to honor the dead.

TRUE

The Iloco town of Paoay celebrates All Saints' Day with a celebration called Tumba, which is based on the traditional Ilocano way of honoring the dead. It involves placing food, candles, and perhaps a crucifix on a raised coffin.

4. During the colonial period, people gave up their indigenous animistic practices and fully adopted Catholicism as practiced by the Europeans.

FALSE

Although outwardly the Spanish were successful in converting most of the population, in reality the population refused to give up many of its traditional beliefs and practices. They merged their beliefs with Catholicism, forming a unique brand of "folk Christianity."

5. Women should avoid wearing bright clothing in churches.

TRUE

Women should wear modest attire, avoiding bright colors and dresses that rise above the knee. They should also avoid sleeveless outfits and blouses with low necklines.



Woman harvesting rice
© Danilo Pinzon

Chapter 3: Traditions

Introduction

The Ilocanos share many of the cultural values and traditions of their countrymen. Like Filipinos throughout the nation, the Ilocanos are strongly group oriented, although they also value a certain amount of individualism (agawayas). Ilocanos believe in self-reliance in overcoming life's challenges and prefer to ask for help only from close family members. Nevertheless, they do have a number of mutual aid associations and labor exchange agreements in their communities.¹

The concept of bain (sense of shame) is also important. Ilocanos are highly motivated to abide by social conventions and norms because they do not wish to bring embarrassment on others. Individuals are expected to avoid embarrassing others at all costs.^{2, 3} Unacceptable behavior damages not only the individual's reputation, but also the standing of other people, especially immediate family members. This awareness leads to a high degree of conformity.^{4, 5, 6} Ilocanos detest gossip, and the pressure to



Jejomar Binay shakes hands with civilian
© Paolo Bayas

resist the temptation to envy others is strong. Ilocanos are expected to demonstrate panagdayaw, or respect for the sensitivities of others. For this reason, they remain humble in any discussion of themselves.⁷

Ilocanos enjoy a reputation for being hardworking and determined.⁸ The difficulty of making a living and residing far from commercial centers has led to thrift (kuripot) and a strong appreciation for the value of money.^{9, 10}

Formulaic Codes of Politeness

Greetings and Introductions

Throughout the Philippines, men commonly greet other men with a handshake. Filipino handshakes are often shorter and less firm than American handshakes.¹¹ The left hand may be placed on top of the clasped hands as a sign of enthusiasm.¹² Longer handshakes between men indicate a sign of respect.¹³

Exchange 14: Good morning!

Local:	Good morning!	neymbaag aa beegaatmo!
Soldier:	Good morning!	neymbaagi aa beegaatmo, met!

Exchange 15: Good afternoon!

Local:	Good afternoon!	neymbaag aa maalemoo!
Soldier:	Good afternoon!	neymbaag aa maalemoo, met!

Women also greet each other with a handshake.¹⁴ Good friends may acknowledge each other by raising their eyebrows.¹⁵ Handshakes are not unusual between men and women, but men should let the woman initiate the greeting.¹⁶

Exchange 16: Good evening!

Local:	Good evening!	neymbaag aa raabee-eem!
Soldier:	Good evening!	neymbaag aa raabee-eem, met!

Filipinos generally establish direct eye contact when greeting or conversing with one another. But staring too long or too aggressively could be considered rude.^{17, 18}

Exchange 17: Good night!

Local:	Good night!	neymbaag aa raabee-eem!
Soldier:	Good night!	neymbaag aa raabee-eem, met!

Younger persons are generally expected to address older persons by a title as a sign of respect. If there is no appropriate professional title, a simple sir or madam or a familial title will suffice.¹⁹

Hospitality and Gift-Giving

Guests invited to Filipino homes should plan to arrive 15–30 minutes late.²⁰ Arrival times vary with status, so extremely high-status people may arrive two hours late.²¹ In cities, visits should be planned ahead of time. Visits in rural areas are often spontaneous. Shoes are usually removed when entering Filipino homes.²²

Exchange 18: I appreciate your hospitality.

Soldier:	I really appreciate your hospitality.	dayaawik oonaay tee naasayaa-at aa panaangsanga-eeliyo.
Local:	You are welcome.	aawan tee aanyaamina.

Guests should not refer to the host's wife as "the hostess," which in the Philippines is the same as being called a prostitute.^{23, 24} Unless invited to use her first name, a guest should address the wife of the host by her title or her surname, preceded by Mrs.²⁵

Exchange 19: Thank you for the gift.

Local:	Thank you for the gift.	agyaamanaak tee regaalom.
Soldier:	You're welcome.	awaan tee anyaamanaa.
Local:	It's very nice. You shouldn't have	naaKhapinpeentaas deydaay. Saanka komaa ng-a nang-eeteeden.

Gift-giving is optional except on formal occasions when gifts are expected.^{26, 27} Flowers are welcome, but avoid giving white lilies or chrysanthemums since they are used at funerals. Candy and wine are acceptable gifts.²⁸ Filipinos generally do not open gifts in front of the giver because they do not want to seem greedy or embarrass the person.²⁹

Exchange 20: What is the name of this food?

Soldier:	What is the name of this food?	aanya daaytoy aa kaanin?
Local:	This is adobo.	aadobo daaytoy.

Guests should politely accept offers of drinks because rejecting them signifies poor manners and perhaps even personal rejection of the host.³⁰

When dinner begins, it is the custom to wait to be seated. Guests should not begin eating until after the host begins and invites others to start. Leaving a small amount of food on the plate at the end of the meal indicates that the food was satisfying.³¹

Exchange 21: The food is very good.

Soldier:	The food is very good.	nakaa-im-eemas tee kaanin.
Local:	Thank you.	aagyaamanaak.



*Local business women
© Ilocos Norte / flickr.com*

Gender Roles

Traditional Ilocano culture views men and women as essentially equal. To the extent that there is a preference for a particular gender, the balance tips slightly in favor of female babies. This preference exists because when women are married, kinship networks can be extended without incurring financial burdens. Masculinity is measured by verbal grace, the ability to maintain a sense of humor in public, and the degree of emotional availability to friends and family.³²

Women take part in agricultural chores and men do household chores. Women are trained from a young age to assume the responsibilities of financial management for the household; these skills have helped many Ilocano women acquire work outside the home. Among the Ilocano, women may be the primary breadwinners in the family and men may remain at home as househusbands.³³

In urban areas, men often work in construction, with machinery, and as drivers of passenger vehicles. Women tend to work as teachers, clerks, store owners, marketers, and healthcare providers. Occupational gender lines are blurred because men also work as nurses and teachers.³⁴

Eating and Types of Food

Ilocanos are not particularly finicky about what they eat. Most dishes are either salty or bitter, and rice is an accompaniment at nearly every meal.³⁵ Meat is eaten sparingly and is generally considered to be a luxury. Because vegetables are a staple, the Ilocano have become masters at making vegetable dishes.^{36, 37}

Typically, Ilocano families squat around food that is placed on the floor. Eating with one’s hands is common. Ilocano meals are usually quiet with no talking or other noise

because the Ilocano regard food as a symbol of God's grace. Food should be eaten respectfully and quietly.³⁸ It is considered extremely rude to leave the house while someone is eating because, according to the Ilocano, God's grace will leave the house with the individual.³⁹



Pinakbet

© Shubert Ciencia

Typical Dishes

One of the most significant contributions to the national cuisine is the Ilocano assorted vegetable dish known as pinakbet. Although any mix of vegetables can be used to make the dish, the most common include eggplant, a bitter melon known as ampalaya, okra, string beans, lima beans, and rabanos (radishes).⁴⁰ The vegetables are cooked in water with bagoong (a salty shrimp or fish paste) and tomatoes.^{41, 42}

The most commonly eaten meats include pork, beef, and chicken, although goat and water buffalo (carabao) are also consumed. Meat may be boiled in stews (lauya), marinated with garlic, soy, and a vinegar base (adobo), or broiled over charcoal

(tinuno).⁴³ A favorite Ilocano dish is cooked pig's blood (dinardaraan). Kilawen, another favorite meat dish, is made from the intestines of water buffalo, cow, or goat.⁴⁴ They may be eaten raw or partially cooked and are served with a sauce made from garlic, vinegar, salt, hot pepper, and pig's bile.^{45, 46}

Exchange 22: What kind of meat is cooked for adobo?

Soldier:	What kind of meat is cooked for adobo?	aanyaa ng-a karney tee lootweyn paara adobo?
Local:	Pork or chicken or mixed.	karney tee baaboy weno maanok weno peenaaglo-ok.

Other favorite dishes include inabraw (vegetables cooked in a small amount of boiling water seasoned with bagoong), dinakdakan (grilled slices of pig face and pork brain), igado (pork tenderloin and liver cut into strips and cooked with red bell peppers and green peas), and poqui-poqui (a vegetarian dish made from eggplant, eggs, and chopped tomatoes).⁴⁷

The hardships faced by the Ilocano have encouraged them to be frugal and to waste nothing. Because this behavior extends to their food, they are known for making dishes from ingredients that others might find inedible. One example is buos (ants eggs), which are sautéed in tomatoes and eaten with rice. Sometimes this food is wrapped in banana leaves. Tokak (frog) is another regional favorite. Skinned frogs are soaked in vinegar and

seasoned with salt and pepper, dipped in batter, and deep fried. The Ilocano produce their own liquor, known as basi, made from fermented sugarcane juice.⁴⁸



Woman wearing a hat
© Jeff Werner

Dress Codes

Proper appearance is important throughout the Philippines and dress is generally conservative. As a rule, Filipinos take pride in their dress, and dressing poorly can be a source of embarrassment and shame.⁴⁹ Dress is generally more formal than in the United States, particularly in business settings. Western-style attire is commonly worn.⁵⁰ ⁵¹ Manual laborers and farmers often wear pants and long-sleeved T-shirts. To avoid sunburn on the head and neck, Ilocano wear wide-brimmed hats or a shirt wrapped around the head.⁵² Many businessmen wear the traditional garment known as the barong, a white or light-colored embroidered shirt that is not tucked in. Flip-flops are commonly used as casual footwear.^{53, 54} Young boys usually wear short pants; young girls may wear loose-fitting shirts with short pants or dusters.⁵⁵ Older Ilocano women wear their long hair in a bun while men wear their hair short.⁵⁶

Non-religious Celebrations

There are many festivals in the Ilocos Region that are popular with locals as well as tourists. Most of the festivals celebrate and showcase the region's rich agriculture, food products, and cuisine.⁵⁷ The Ilocanos also celebrate national holidays, which include New Year's Day, celebrated on January 1.

Dates for non-religious holidays fluctuate because non-religious holidays are moved to the nearest Monday if they do not fall on a Monday.⁵⁸

Bataan Day

Araw ng Kagitingan (Day of Valor), or Bataan Day, is a national holiday that falls on April 9 or the closest Monday.⁵⁹ It honors soldiers taken prisoner on April 9, 1942, when Allied forces on Bataan Peninsula surrendered to the Japanese. Along with thousands of Filipinos, American soldiers were forced on the Bataan Death March, walking approximately 100 km (62 mi) to a Japanese prison camp.^{60, 61}

Labor Day

Celebrated internationally, Labor Day (May 1) honors the country's workers.⁶² The first Philippine labor federation, Union Obrera Democratica (UOD), was founded in 1902. Subsequent labor organizations sought to abolish child labor, establish an 8-hour workday, and improve working conditions for women.⁶³

Independence Day

In the past Philippine independence was commemorated on July 4, the date in 1946 when the Philippines became independent of U.S. rule. But the date to celebrate independence was changed to June 12 by President Macapagal in the 1960s to inspire greater national pride. On June 12, 1898, General Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed independence from foreign rule. The July 4 date is still acknowledged as a historic day and is known as Republic Day.^{64, 65}



Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Monument
© Ramon F Velasquez

Ninoy Aquino Day

Ninoy Aquino Day (August 18) recalls the assassination date of former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. Aquino, a committed opponent of then-President Marcos, had just returned from exile when he was shot in 1983. His death sparked widespread rebellion against Marcos and fomented the EDSA Revolution that took place in 1986.^{66, 67}

National Heroes Day

This holiday falls at the end of August.⁶⁸ It recognizes the national heroes who first fought against Spain and helped achieve Philippine independence.⁶⁹

Bonifacio Day

Bonifacio Day at the end of November honors the birthday of Andres Bonifacio, one of the Philippines' most revered national leaders. He led the revolutionary group Katipunan, whose members fought against Spanish rule. Bonifacio was captured by the Spanish and executed in 1897, shortly before his country won independence.^{70, 71}

Rizal Day

Rizal Day on December 30 commemorates the martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal, who fought for independence from Spain.⁷² At a young age, Rizal went to Spain and completed his medical degree. His pro-reform writings gained a large following in the Philippines,

causing Spanish rulers to fear his influence. On December 30, 1896, Spanish officials executed Dr. Rizal for “rebellion, sedition, and forming illegal associations.”⁷³

City Fiestas

Nearly every city and town in the Philippines holds an annual fiesta. These celebrations are part religious and part secular. Many Ilocanos return home to celebrate with their families.⁷⁴ One of the most popular and well known celebrations is the Vigan City Fiesta, which is held for several days around January 25. The festivities include cultural shows, parades, and street dances.⁷⁵ Every February San Fernando City celebrates its patron saint, Saint William the Hermit. Events and festivities, including celebrity appearances, sports competitions, a trade fair, and a beauty pageant, can last for a month.⁷⁶ The Viva Vigan Festival of the Arts, designed to promote awareness of the city’s cultural heritage, occurs during the first week of May. The week-long celebration includes street dancing competitions, fashion shows, traditional games, and parades.^{77, 78}



Fiesta at Vigan City
© eesti / flickr.com

Exchange 30: Are you bringing your family?

Soldier:	Will you be attending the festival?	mapan-kaantoo kaadee idjaay peeyesta?
Local:	Yes.	wen.
Soldier:	Are you bringing your family?	eetoogotmoo kaadee tee paameeliyam?
Local:	Of course.	shiyemprey.

Exchange 31: Will you be attending the fiesta?

Soldier:	Will you be attending the fiesta?	maapankaanto kaadee djaay peeyesta?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.

Food Festivals

The Philippines holds a number of food and agriculture festivals throughout the year. During April and May, the Bangus Festival is held in Dagupan City to celebrate the bangus (milkfish) harvest. The fish are grilled on the world's longest grill, stretching more than 1,000 m (3,280 ft). The festival includes dancing, costumes, and competitions.^{79, 80} The Pistay Dayat Festival, held in May on Pangasinan's Lingayen Beach, is a celebration of the year's bountiful fish harvest. Events include contests and games.^{81, 82} The Bawang (Garlic) Festival is held in May in Sinait in Ilocos Sur. In addition to educational events, there are activities such as a trade fair and cooking demonstrations.^{83, 84}



Pagent at Bangus Festival
© IK.Eccedentesiast / flickr.com

Dos and Don'ts

- Do use titles followed by a surname unless invited to use an individual's first name.
- Do establish direct eye contact, but be careful not to stare because it is considered rude.
- Do motion for someone to come to you by pointing your fingers toward the ground and moving your whole hand toward you.
- Do accept all offers of food or drink to avoid causing your host or colleague to lose face.
- Do bring a gift, small or large, as a sign of friendship when invited to someone's house or to an event. Make sure to wrap the gift.
- Do show appreciation for a host's efforts by tasting as many foods as you can.
- Don't express anger publicly or cause a person to lose face in public.
- Don't begin eating until the host invites you to do so.
- Don't bring chrysanthemums or white lilies when visiting a Filipino household.
- Don't beckon anyone by using a raised or curled finger or hand.
- Don't stand with your hands on your hips since this may be interpreted as a sign of displeasure.
- Don't put feet on furniture; it is considered rude.
- Don't use obscene or indecent language within earshot of Filipinos. Many are familiar with American slang.



Dinagyang Festival
© Jay Abola

Chapter 3 Endnotes

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Overview: Chapter 3 Assessment

1. The Ilocano people place a high value on being frugal.

TRUE

The hardships faced by the Ilocano have compelled them to be frugal. The difficulty of making a living and residing far from commercial centers has led to thrift and a strong appreciation for the value of money.

2. It is inappropriate for men to shake hands with Filipino women.

FALSE

Handshakes are not unusual between men and women, but it is advisable to let the woman initiate the greeting.

3. Filipinos generally open gifts in front of the giver as a display of appreciation.

FALSE

Filipinos, to avoid appearing greedy or embarrassing the person, do not generally open gifts in front of the giver.

4. Most Ilocano food can be characterized as salty or bitter.

TRUE

Most dishes are either salty or bitter, and rice is served at nearly every meal.

5. Ilocano meals are noisy affairs during which families discuss the events of the day.

FALSE

Ilocano meals are usually quiet. There is no talking, laughing, or other noise because Ilocanos regard food as a symbol of God's grace and believe it should be eaten with respect.



Vigan City
© Fitri Agung

Chapter 4: Urban Life

Introduction

Although urbanization has been rapid in the Philippines, it has occurred unevenly throughout the nation. In the Ilocos Region, approximately 18% of the population was urban in 1960. In 2000, roughly 1.6 million of the 4.2 million residents (38%) lived in urban settings.^{1,2} The region has only 9 cities and 116 municipalities. Of the cities, 7 have populations exceeding 100,000. The three largest cities are in Pangasinan Province. In the three northern provinces, the largest cities are San Fernando City in La Union and Laoag City in Ilocos Norte. The province of Ilocos Sur has no city with more than 100,000 people; the largest city, Vigan City, has a population just under 50,000.³

Urban Issues

Despite the relatively small size of the region's cities, they have not completely escaped the normal problems associated with urban growth. A rise in the number of vehicles has led to increased traffic congestion.^{4, 5} The Philippines ranks low in infrastructural development in the Asia-Pacific region, and the areas outside Manila, including the cities of the Ilocos Region, have poor infrastructure.^{6, 7} This lack of infrastructure, which includes poor drainage, has led to floods in the region's urban areas.^{8, 9, 10} Poor access to sewerage, sanitary toilets, and proper sanitation systems increases the risk of disease.^{11, 12, 13} Other problems include the lack of electrical power to most households, the lack of piped potable water, and substandard housing, especially among informal city dwellers.^{14, 15, 16}

Employment and Work

The Northwestern Luzon Growth Quadrangle (NWLQG) encompasses the coastal provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan, and the inland areas of Abra and southern Benguet. The area is being officially advertised as an ideal location for trade with China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) because of its direct access to international sea lanes.¹⁷



Bamboo farm
© IRRI Photos / flickr.com

Currently, the region's economy, particularly that of the three northern provinces, is based on agriculture, which accounts for about 25% of regional GDP.^{18, 19} Nearly 39% of workers are employed in the agricultural sector and most Ilocanos are farmers.²⁰ The largest contributor of GDP (49%) is the service sector.²¹ Industrial mining is another source of revenue. Feldspar, copper, gold, and silica are important products. The forest industry is also important, especially the production of bamboo and rattan.²² Unemployment for the region was 7.6% in 2013.²³

Healthcare

Urban areas generally have adequate healthcare although it may not meet Western standards.^{24, 25} The major cities in the Ilocos Region have hospitals, with the majority located in the more urban Pangasinan Province.^{26, 27} Many hospitals require payment prior to treatment and may turn away those unable to pay.^{28, 29}

A large number of medical workers have had experience or training in the United States. The professional level of nursing is high. The nation operates both a public and a private healthcare system. Public facilities often have older or less technology than private hospitals. Most of the largest and best-equipped hospitals are located near urban centers.³⁰

Exchange 25: Do you know what is wrong?

Soldier:	Do you know what is wrong?	aamon kaadee no aanya tee na-aarami ng-a daakes?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.

There is a shortage of healthcare workers throughout the Philippines because many qualified doctors and nurses choose to move abroad.³¹ Although the impact has been more severe in rural areas, some urban hospitals have been affected as well and are understaffed.³² In 2008, there were 159 doctors in the region, 259 nurses, and 1,014 midwives.³³

Exchange 26: Is there a hospital nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a hospital nearby?	aada Khaadee hospeetaal ng-a aaseedeg?
Local:	Yes, in the center of town.	wen, idjey sentro tee eelee.

Exchange 27: Can you help me?

Soldier:	My knee is broken, Doctor. Can you help me?	naabloo tee toomeng-ko doktor, maataloong-anaak kaadee?
Local:	Yes, I can help you.	wen, maatuloong-ankaa.

Pulmonary infections, including tuberculosis, are a growing concern, as are malaria and dengue fever.³⁴ Waterborne and food-borne illnesses are prevalent. Visitors are advised to boil drinking water and avoid ice cubes, although drinking bottled water is generally safe.³⁵ Swimming in freshwater should also be avoided to reduce the risk of becoming infected with leptospirosis or schistosomiasis, which can lead to serious illness and even death.^{36, 37, 38}



*Hospital in Ibaday
© shawn / flickr.com*

Exchange 28: How are you?

Soldier:	How are you?	komoostakaa?
Local:	Fine, thank you.	neymbaag met, agyaamanaak.



School children

© Global Environment Facility / flickr.com

Urban Education

The Ilocanos place a high value on education and have higher educational achievement indicators than Filipinos throughout the rest of the nation. The rate of functional literacy in the Ilocos Region is 91% for males and 90% for females ages 10–64. The median educational attainment (8 years for both men and women) is one of the highest in the country.^{39, 40} The proportion of the population completing at least elementary education (73%) is also among the highest in the nation.⁴¹

There are no significant differences in attendance rates between the region's rural (86%) and urban (89%) schools based on 2003 data. Primary net attendance in the Ilocos Region (93%) was the nation's highest.⁴² In secondary school, attendance rates drop. In 2003, although the rate was still the highest in the nation, only 77% of students attended secondary school, with females (81%) outnumbering males (73%).⁴³

Education in the Philippines is regulated by the Department of Education, which mandates 6 years of education beginning at age 6. Basic elementary education is divided into 2 components: primary (grades 1–4) and intermediate (grades 5–6). Public elementary school is free. Students receive a certificate of graduation upon completing their studies.⁴⁴ Junior high school and high school make up secondary education; junior high school consists of 4 years of education.⁴⁵ High school consists of 2 additional years after which students may choose vocational school or college.⁴⁶

The Ilocos Region is home to approximately 45 colleges and universities. Most are in urban areas.⁴⁷ Major educational centers include the University of Northern Philippines in Vigan City, Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, and Northwestern University in Laoag City.^{48, 49, 50}

Restaurants

Filipinos love to eat, and Ilocano food can be a real adventure.^{51, 52} Unlike much of the food in the rest of the nation, Ilocano food is based heavily on vegetables. The Ilocanos eat so many greens that they are sometimes referred to as “weed eaters.”⁵³ Ilocano food, which is generally salty or bitter, almost always includes a bowl of rice.⁵⁴

Exchange 29: Are you still serving breakfast?

Soldier:	Are you still serving breakfast?	aagserserbee kayo pay laa-ing tee paameegaat?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 30: I would like coffee or tea.

Soldier:	I would like coffee or tea.	kayaatko tee kaapey weno tchaa.
Local:	Sure.	seegoraadoo.

One dish that appears on almost every restaurant menu is igado (pork tenderloin and liver cut into strips and cooked with red bell peppers, onions, and green peas).^{55, 56}



*Lunch, including igado
© Shubert Ciencia*

Another favorite is bagnet, a dish unique to the region. Bagnet is deep fried pork seasoned only with bagoong, a salty fish or shrimp paste.^{57, 58}

Pinkabet, a dish of stewed vegetables, generally includes eggplant, ampalaya (bitter melon), okra, string and lima beans, and rabanos (radishes).⁵⁹

Other popular dishes are inabraw (vegetables cooked in a small amount of boiling water seasoned with bagoong) and dinakdakan (grilled slices of pig face and pork brain).⁶⁰ Adobo, the unofficial dish of the Philippines, is more correctly thought of as a style of cooking rather than an actual dish. Any kind of meat can be used,

but chicken and pork are among the most common. The meat is stewed after being marinated in a mixture of vinegar, soy sauce, and garlic.^{61, 62, 63}

Exchange 31: I'd like some soup.

Soldier:	I'd like some hot soup.	kayaatko tee naapoodot ng-a sopaas.
Local:	Sure.	seegoraadoo.

Exchange 32: Do you have a dessert?

Soldier:	Do you have a dessert?	aada kaad seenaam-eetchyo?
Local:	Yes, we have sherbet, rice cake, and coconut sweet soup.	wen, aada sorbetas, beebeeng-ka, ken geneta-aanmee.

When dining in a restaurant with Filipinos, wait until the oldest man at the table is served and begins to eat before you begin to eat. In small informal restaurants, you may be asked to share a table. When doing so, it is appropriate to act as if you are seated at a private table. It is entirely acceptable to avoid starting a conversation with the other people at the table if you do not know them.⁶⁴

Exchange 33: Can I have a glass of water?

Soldier:	Can I have a glass of water?	eekanak man tee meysaa aa baasoo aa daanom?
Local:	Yes, sir!	wen, aapo!

Exchange 34: The meal was very good.

Soldier:	The meal was very good.	nakaa-im-eemas tee kaanen.
Local:	Thanks.	paagyaamanak oonaay.

A tip of about 10% is standard in most Filipino restaurants. Be aware that a 10% gratuity is included on many restaurant bills, so additional tips are optional.⁶⁵

Exchange 35: The food tastes so good.

Soldier:	The food tastes so good.	naakaaramramaan tee kaanin.
Local:	Thanks so much.	aagyaamanaak oonaay.

In the Philippines, it is customary for the person who issued the invitation to pay for the entire group. “Going Dutch” is not typical.^{66, 67} It is generally impolite for a woman to pay the restaurant bill at a dining establishment, but if a woman wishes to pay, it is possible to make arrangements before the check arrives. International businesswomen may pay without violating social conventions.⁶⁸

Exchange 36: Put this all on one bill, ok?

Soldier:	Put this all on one bill, ok?	paagmaaymaaysaa-im aamin tee ootaangko, okey?
Local:	Okay.	okey.

Exchange 37: Can I have my bill, please?

Soldier:	Can I have my total bill, please?	pang-a-aasim man ng-a iteedmo tee aamin aa dagopna kanyaak?
Local:	Yes, sir!	wen, aapo!

Markets and Street Vendors

Markets

Most cities have their own markets selling food, souvenirs, and clothing, along with other wares.⁶⁹ Shoppers should arrive early because most vendors tend to go home before lunch.⁷⁰ Public markets are being spruced up all over the region. For example, all the public markets in Ilocos Norte Province are receiving money for rehabilitation and repairs. In Laoag City, the old city market has been replaced with the City Commercial Complex.^{71, 72}



Market
© euke_1974 / flickr.com

Exchange 38: Is the market nearby?

Soldier:	Is the market nearby?	aseedeg kaadee tee chenda-aan?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 39: Do you have this in a different color?

Soldier:	Do you have this in a different color?	adaa kaadee tee sabaalee pay aa kolor eete daaytoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 40: Do you have any more of these?

Soldier:	Do you have any more of these?	adaa-an kaayoo kaadee tee ooraay aanyaa pay kadageetoy?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.

Although prices are often set in Western-style department stores, bargaining is possible in many markets.⁷³ Buyers should remember that causing someone to lose face is extremely rude. Therefore, it is important to build some flexibility into bids so that there is room to maneuver. In this way, both the buyer and seller are assured of saving face.⁷⁴,
75

Exchange 41: I can give you this much money for this.

Soldier:	I can give you this much money for this.	maaykaan-kaa tee aadoo a Khaastoy aa kwarta a paara daaytoy.
Local:	No.	sa-aan.

Exchange 42: We only accept local currency.

Soldier:	Do you accept US currency?	agaw-aawat ka kaadee tee aa kuwarta tee aamereekaa?
Local:	No, we only accept local currency.	sa-aan – lokal aa kuwarta laa-eng tee aw-awaatenmee.

Street Vendors

Street vendors are a common sight.⁷⁶ Often their goods are displayed in a pushcart or carried in a basket. The vendors shout out their wares and encourage shoppers to buy.⁷⁷

Exchange 43: May I examine this closer?

Soldier:	May I examine this closer?	mabaalin kaadee ng-a eksaameenek ng-a nalaa-ing daaytoy?
Local:	Sure.	seegooraado.

Exchange 44: Do they sell fresh fish?

Soldier:	Do they sell fresh fish and vegetables for cooking?	aglaaklakoda kaadee dageete lootloot ng-a presko ng-a eekaan ken naatnaateng?
Local:	Yes, all fresh.	wen, preskoda aam-aamin.

Many street vendors sell food. One dish for which street vendors are well known is the empanada (bread or pastry stuffed with a filling).^{78, 79} Another regional favorite is a noodle soup called miki.⁸⁰ But diners should be careful when buying such food because basic hygiene practices and safe cooking regulations are not always followed. Contaminated food can cause illness from salmonella or E. coli.⁸¹

Exchange 45: Buy something from me.

Local:	Please, buy something from me.	pang-ga-aasim maan taa goomatanka tee ooraay aanyamaan kaanyak.
Soldier:	Sorry, I have no money left.	laading-eetek taa aawan aa poolus tee nabaatee ng-a kwartak.



Street vendor
© therealbrute / flickr.com

Exchange 46: How much longer will you be here?

Soldier:	How much longer will you be here?	kasaanoo pay tee kabaayag mo deetoy?
Local:	Three more hours.	taalo pay ng-a oras.

Money and Currency



Philippine Peso
© Annette Bouvain

The official unit of currency is the Philippine Peso (PHP).⁸² In October 2013, USD 1 equaled about 43 pesos.⁸³ ATM machines are available in most urban areas, but they may be difficult to find in rural settings. Credit cards are widely accepted in larger towns and cities. In small towns and on infrequently visited islands, it is difficult to use them.⁸⁴ Because credit card fraud is widespread, it is important to be vigilant when using credit cards and to keep the card in sight.^{85, 86} Money changers can be found in most city centers and in shopping malls and major department stores. Although they generally offer the best rates, it is safer to exchange money in banks or hotels.⁸⁷

Exchange 47: Do you accept credit cards?

Soldier:	Do you accept credit cards?	agaw-aawat kayoo kaadee kadageetee kredit kard?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.

If buyers need to change large bills, ATMs and banks are available for this purpose in most large cities. Retail outlets and hotels in cities can also change money.⁸⁸

Exchange 48: Can you give me change for this?

Soldier:	Can you give me change for this?	mabaalin ng-a sookleeyaanak paara daaytoy?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.



Traffic congestion
© Ben / flickr.com

Urban Transportation

Transportation infrastructure, especially public transportation, is largely underdeveloped throughout the Philippines.^{89, 90} Traveling to and from cities in the region is normally done by bus, but in the cities themselves, passengers rely on jeepneys, tricycles, and walking.⁹¹

Cars

Cars and cars with drivers can be rented in major cities throughout the region.^{92, 93} Traffic can be congested. Numerous obstacles, including water buffalo, tractors, and pedestrians, impede vehicles. Driving can be dangerous, especially at night, because drivers often travel at high rates of speed and ignore traffic regulations.^{94, 95}

Exchange 49: Is there a gas station nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a gas station nearby?	aada kaadee asedeg ng-a paagaasoleena-aan?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 50: Where can I rent a car?

Soldier:	Where can I rent a car?	sadeenoo tee paagoopaa-aan tee lugaan?
Local:	Downtown.	idjaay sentro tee eelee.



Jeepney
© ibon / flickr.com

Jeepneys and Tricycles

A jeepney is a type of colorfully decorated minibus built on the frame of an old American military jeep.^{96, 97} Jeepneys generally travel along fixed routes, stopping when waved down. They carry 10–20 passengers and stop by request. Jeepneys, which are often crowded and can be dangerous, are not a recommended form of public transportation.^{98, 99} Passengers sometimes sit on the roof of the vehicle and frequently hang out the doors. The arbitrary stops to let passengers on and off can create traffic hazards.¹⁰⁰

Exchange 51: Which road heads to the airport?

Soldier:	Which road heads to the airport?	anyaa tee daalan aa mapaan tee eyrport?
Local:	The road heading east.	daalan ng-a agpadaayaa.

Tricycles are a popular form of transportation in urban areas of the Ilocos. In San Fernando City, more than 1,500 trikes travel the main thoroughfares of the city.¹⁰¹ These motorized vehicles with an attached sidecar can carry several passengers.^{102, 103}

Exchange 52: Do you know this area?

Soldier:	Do you know this area very well?	kabeesaadom kaadee daaytee aa lugar?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Taxis and Buses

Not all cities in the region have taxis. Vigan City, for example, the capital of Ilocos Sur, has no cabs.^{104, 105} Official taxis are metered, so patrons should make sure the driver turns on the meter at the outset. If the driver refuses to do so, it is best to find another cab.¹⁰⁶

Exchange 53: Can I get a cab around here?

Soldier:	Can I get a cab around here	makaalagoonaak kaadee eete taaksee deetoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 54: Can you take me there?

Soldier:	Can you take me there?	maa-eetoludnaak kaadee idjaay?
Local:	Yes, I can.	wen, mabaalin.

Buses connect most of the major cities in the Philippines.¹⁰⁷ Minibuses carry passengers in and around some of the major cities, especially to tourist sites.^{108, 109}



Leonidas_Smith1966_2013

Bus
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Street Crime and Solicitations

Crime in any urban area of the Philippines is a concern. Most crimes are nonviolent and include pickpocketing, confidence games and scams, and credit card fraud. Carjackings, robberies, and violent assaults are relatively rare but do occur.^{110, 111} According to 2012 figures, of the 17 administrative regions in the nation, Region 1 (Ilocos Region) ranked 6th in crime rates, well below those of Manila and less than half those of the nearby Cordillera Administrative Region.¹¹²

Exchange 55: Did these people threaten you?

Soldier:	Did these people threaten you?	beenootbooteng-dakaa kaadee dageetoy aa taataa-wo?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.



Beggars
© Tim Albano

Beggars, blind persons, and other handicapped people are likely to conduct their business in front of churches, public buildings, and in the streets. Although many beggars may be legitimate, some are members of gangs or syndicated crime groups operating in cities.^{113, 114} Many beggars are members of the Badjao ethnic group, who are fleeing the violence and poverty of the Mindanao Region.^{115, 116, 117} Dagupan City has launched a task force to try to help the city's indigent and reduce the number of beggars.¹¹⁸ An anti-mendicancy law, passed in 1978, makes it illegal to beg or to give money to beggars in the Philippines. The law, which stipulates a fine or up to 4 years in jail for begging, is considered unduly harsh by those who are seeking to change the law.¹¹⁹

Exchange 56: Give me money!

Local:	Give me money.	eekanaak tee kuwarta.
Soldier:	No, I don't have any.	sa-aan, awaan tee ooraay aanyaa aa kuwartaak.

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Goat on the road
© Cristian Bortes

Overview: Chapter 4 Assessment

1. According to 2000 figures, most people in the Ilocos Region live in urban areas.

FALSE

In 2000, approximately 1.6 million of the region's 4.2 million residents (38%) lived in urban areas.

2. There are fewer than 200 doctors to serve the entire Ilocos Region.

TRUE

In 2008, there were 159 doctors in the region, 259 nurses, and 1,014 midwives.

3. Most of the hospitals in the Ilocos Region are located in urban areas in the three northern provinces

FALSE

The majority of hospitals in the region are located in Pangasinan Province.

4. The Ilocanos have higher educational achievement indicators than their countrymen.

TRUE

The Ilocanos place a high value on education and have higher educational achievement indicators than Filipinos throughout the rest of the nation.

5. Vigan City has no taxi service.

TRUE

Not all cities in the Ilocos Region have taxis. Vigan City, the capital of Ilocos Sur, has no cabs, so visitors must find other means of travel.



Rice terraces and rural village
© Fiona Wong

Chapter 5: Rural Life

Introduction

The Ilocos Region, particularly the three northernmost provinces, remains largely rural. In 2000, approximately 62% of the region's 4.2 million residents lived in rural areas.^{1, 2} Relative to the rest of the Philippines, the Ilocos Region fares better on a number of significant indicators. For example, although the Philippines ranks 114th among the 187 nations on the Human Development Index (HDI), indicators in the Ilocos Region are generally higher.^{3, 4, 5} Poverty in the region (17%–18%) is lower than the national average (28%).^{6, 7} Ilocos Norte had one of the lowest poverty rates (11%) in the country in 2012.^{8, 9}

To help raise regional living standards, development is focused largely on promoting agribusiness and tourism. Plans are underway to develop regional airports and seaports, improve irrigation systems, control seasonal floods, and improve transportation infrastructure (especially roads).^{10,11}



Man in the forest
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Land Distribution and Land Tenure

Legally, all natural resources and public domain lands belong to the state. These lands comprise agricultural terrain, forest or timber, and mineral lands in addition to various national parks. Only agricultural lands may be privately owned.¹² In spite of attempts to return control over agricultural lands to farmers and an agrarian reform program begun in 1988, most rural Filipinos remain landless. Most land, particularly the most fertile, remains concentrated in the hands of a few wealthy landowners.¹³ But in the Ilocos Region, most

Ilocano farmers do own the small plots of land that they farm.¹⁴ In 2002, average farm size was less than 1 hectare (2.47 acres).¹⁵

Exchange 57: Do you own this land?

Soldier:	Do you own this land?	saaneekwom kaadee daaytoy aa dagaa?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

The existing system of land administration is highly inefficient, and the process of securing and registering land claims can take several years. Nearly one-third of all rural land parcels in the nation remain unregistered, and there is a significant degree of tenure uncertainty regarding rural landholdings.¹⁶

Economy

In the Ilocos Region, agriculture accounts for about 25% of regional GDP and employs roughly 40% of the population. The largest subsector is crop production (60%), followed by livestock and poultry (23%) and fishing (17%).¹⁷

The small size of most farms makes the use of mechanized methods impractical.¹⁸

The major crops in the region are palay (rice), mango, livestock, corn, and tobacco.¹⁹

Cultivation of these and other crops relies heavily on the use of fertilizers and pesticides, many of which are overused or improperly used.²⁰ Such overuse degrades soils, pollutes water supplies, and causes other problems.^{21, 22}

Exchange 58: Are you the only person in your family who has a job?

Soldier:	Are you the only person in your family who has a job?	seeka laa-eng kaadee tee aadaa tee paagsapoolanaa tee paameeliyaam?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.



Livestock farm

© Isabella Abelita / flickr.com

Exchange 59: Did you grow up here?

Soldier:	Did you grow up here?	deemaakelkaa kaadee deetoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

In spite of the lack of arable land, the poor quality of soil, and a lack of irrigation facilities, farmers manage to produce a food surplus.^{23,24} Nevertheless, regional farmers face serious challenges. Tropical storms, cyclones, and resultant flooding also threaten crops.^{25,26,27} To help local farmers meet these and other challenges, a series of innovative reforms are underway. The reforms include improving the management of fields that are dependent on rainfall for irrigation, increasing the number of organic farming ventures, and improving infrastructure.^{28,29,30}

Exchange 60: Where do you work?

Soldier:	Where do you work, sir?	sadeenoo tee paagtrabaahoo-aam, aapo?
Local:	I am a farmer, sir.	maaysaa-ak ng-a agtaaltalon, aapo.



Rural road

© The Wandering Angel / flickr.com

Transportation

Transportation infrastructure in the Philippines remains largely underdeveloped.^{31,32,33} Local roads are generally in poor condition and are mostly unpaved, and many become impassable during the rainy season.^{34,35} Cars and cars with drivers can be rented in major cities throughout the region.^{36,37} Driving in rural areas can be difficult because of obstacles such as water buffalo, tractors, and pedestrians. Night driving, in particular, can be risky because of drivers who travel at high rates of speed and ignore traffic regulations.^{38,39}

Exchange 61: Is there a mechanic nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?	adaa kaadee tee nalaa-ing aa meekaaneeko tee aaseedeg?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Public transportation choices are limited. The most popular means of transportation is the jeepney. Plying the roads with few fixed stops, these colorful vehicles, constructed on the frames of old American military jeeps, can carry up to 20 passengers.⁴⁰ Riding in jeepneys is not recommended because they can pose a serious danger to passengers.^{41, 42} Tricycles (motorized vehicles with attached sidecars) are another major means of getting around, particularly in rural areas.^{43, 44, 45}

Exchange 62: Will the bus be here soon?

Soldier:	Will the bus be here soon?	sumaang-peton kaadee deetoy eetee mabee-it tee bus?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Buses connect larger cities in the region and many smaller towns.^{46, 47}

Healthcare

Adequate healthcare is limited and often difficult to access in rural and remote areas.^{48, 49} In the Ilocos Region, there are approximately 40 hospitals with a total of 2,030 beds.⁵⁰ Because hospitals are located in municipalities, barangay residents have less access to medical care, particularly in emergency situations.⁵¹ Rural residents may seek medical care at either a Rural Health Unit (RHU) or a Barangay Health Center (BHC).⁵² BHCs are typically staffed with volunteer community healthcare workers and midwives. RHUs generally have doctors, nurses, midwives, and medical technologists.⁵³

Most of the healthcare provided in these primary care facilities is preventative and includes childhood vaccinations. In the Ilocos Region, approximately 85% of children have been vaccinated against measles, a rate that is above the national average for rural vaccinations.⁵⁴

Exchange 63: Is there a medical clinic nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a medical clinic nearby?	? aada kaadee tee aaseedeg aa kleenika tee doktor?
Local:	Yes, over there.	wen, sadjaay paay.

Exchange 64: Is Dr. Perez in?

Soldier:	Is Dr. Perez in, Sir?	aapo, aada Khaadee nee doktor peres eetaataa?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.



Barangay Health Center
© Mathias Eick

Many rural Ilocano still rely on the power of faith healers, protective amulets, and herbal remedies. The services of traditional healers are free, but patients are expected to give a donation.^{55, 56} Albularyos, or general practitioners, are the main dispensers of healthcare in rural areas. Albularyos, who believe their power is given to them by the holy spirit, often use traditional herbal medicines to treat maladies. Many open their practices daily but some operate only on Tuesdays and Fridays, the days when they believe their powers are at their height.⁵⁷ Some fuse folk techniques with medical practices such as acupuncture, injections, and prescription medications. In some rural areas, pharmacies may dispense prescriptions written by traditional healers.⁵⁸

Exchange 65: Hi, Mr. Garcia!

Soldier:	Hi, Mr. Garcia!	komoostaa, senyor gaarseeya!
Local:	Hello!	komoostaa!

Exchange 66: Are you doing well?

Soldier:	Are you doing well?	neymbaaga kaadee?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Another type of healer is the hilot, who may be either a midwife or a chiropractic healer. Few have any formal training, and they generally rely on knowledge that is passed down to them. Elements of religious practice are evident. For instance, some massage techniques incorporate symbols of the cross, the crown of thorns, or the rosary.⁵⁹

Prescription medication is beyond the reach of many rural Ilocanos because of the high cost or the lack of an available doctor to write a prescription. Herbal medicines, which are more easily obtained, are often taken instead.^{60, 61} Among regional favorites are malunggay (known as The Ilokano Tree of Life), sambong, ampalaya, and yerba buena.^{62, 63, 64, 65}

Education

The value that Ilocanos place on education has helped them obtain higher educational achievement than their fellow countrymen. Functional literacy in the Ilocos Region is 91% for males and 90% for females ages 10–64, with a median educational attainment of 8 years for both genders.^{66, 67, 68} Rural students



Rural school
© Zer Cabatuan

do about as well as their urban counterparts. Attendance is nearly equal between the region's rural (86%) and urban (89%) schools based on 2003 data. Primary net attendance in the Ilocos Region (93%) was the nation's highest. In secondary school, attendance rates drop. In 2003, although the rate was still the highest in the nation, only 77% of students attended secondary school, with females (81%) outnumbering males (73%).⁶⁹ No significant differences exist between males and females in high school completion rates (51% vs. 49%). Women are more likely to hold an academic degree (57%) than men (43%).⁷⁰

Six years of education is required for all Filipinos. Basic elementary education is divided into two components: primary (grades 1–4) and intermediate (grades 5–6). Public elementary school is free. Students receive a certificate of graduation upon completing their studies.⁷¹ Junior high school and high school make up secondary education; junior high school consists of 4 years of education.⁷² High school consists of 2 additional years after which students may choose vocational school or college.⁷³

Exchange 67: Is there a school nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a school nearby?	aadaa kaadee tee aaseedeg ng-a eskola-aan deetoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 68: Do your children go to school?

Soldier:	Do your children go to school?	? agees-eskwaala kaadee daageeti anaakmo?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Rural Government

The Philippines is a republic with three branches of government at the federal level: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. The nation is subdivided into provinces (79), cities (115), municipalities (1,425), and barangays (43,000), the smallest administrative unit.⁷⁴ In the Ilocos Region, according to 2010 figures, there were 4 provinces, 9 cities, 116 municipalities, and 3,265 barangays.⁷⁵ Each province has an elected governor and vice governor. Cities and municipalities are headed by mayors and vice mayors; barangays are headed by a captain. Each barangay has an elected group of councilors.⁷⁶

Exchange 69: Does your leader live here?

Soldier:	Does your leader live here?	agnaana-ed kaadee tee pang-ooliyo deetoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

In 1991 the Local Government Code was enacted, giving local governments full autonomy from the central government. Local governments can set their own internal rules and regulations.⁷⁷ Numerous rural-based organizations (RBOs) have also been formed throughout the region to assist in development and indigenous affairs. RBOs are designed to strengthen grassroots power in governance and to make government more responsive to local people and their needs. RBOs typically deal with issues of concern to local groups and barangay leaders.^{78, 79}



Local Mayors
© UN ISDR / flickr.com

Exchange 70: Can you take me to your leader?

Soldier:	Can you take me to your leader?	mabaalee ng-a kaadoo-aanak aa mapaan tee pang-ooliyo?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 71: Respected leader, we need your help.

Soldier:	Respected leader, we need your help.	daaydaayawen aa pang-oolo, masaapoolmee tee toolonogmo.
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Checkpoints

Regional checkpoints are common throughout the Ilocos Region, particularly during elections. In 2010, there were more than 8,000 regional police checkpoints.^{80, 81} In addition to counteracting smuggling operations, checkpoints are set up to deter illegal logging and mining activities.^{82, 83, 84}



Election checkpoint
© jose / flickr.com

Exchange 72: Where is the nearest checkpoint?

Soldier:	Where is the nearest checkpoint?	sadeenoo tee ka-aasitgaan ng-a lugaar aa pagooseesaa-an?
Local:	It's 2 kilometers.	doowaa aa keelometro.

Exchange 73: Is this all the ID you have?

Soldier:	Is this all the ID you have?	daaytee laa-eng tee aadaa aa aaydenteepikaashyonmo?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Official protocols for checkpoints have been implemented. According to regulations, checkpoints must be well lit and staffed by uniformed personnel. Drivers are required to

slow down, dim headlights, and turn off interior lights. Drivers should remain in the car, locking all doors, since only visual searches are allowed. In most instances, drivers do not have to open glove compartments or trunks or submit to a body search.⁸⁵

Drivers may be asked to show their license and registration. Drivers should answer questions politely but be ready to report violations immediately.⁸⁶

Exchange 74: Show us the registration.

Soldier:	Show us the (car) registration.	eepaatikaam kaanyaamee tee reheestraashyon tee (kotsey).
Local:	OK.	okey.

Except in extreme cases, drivers and passengers are not required to get out of the vehicle.⁸⁷

Exchange 75: Please get out of the car.

Soldier:	Please get out of the car.	roomwarkaa maan deeta kotsem.
Local:	OK.	okey.

Exchange 76: Are you carrying any guns?

Soldier:	Are you carrying any guns?	aadaa Khaadee tee aweetmo ng-a ooraay aanyamaan ng-aa ig-eegam?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Landmines

The Republic of the Philippines is a signatory of the Mine Ban Policy. The nation reports that it does not manufacture, produce, or export antipersonnel mines. Its entire stockpile was destroyed in 1998, and the military has standing orders prohibiting the use of cluster munitions.^{88,89} Portions of the country, particularly the southern regions near Mindanao, are contaminated with remnants of war resulting largely from insurgencies. Some unexploded remnants are left over from World War II, primarily in the Manila area.⁹⁰

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Overview: Chapter 5 Assessment

1. Nearly two-thirds of the people in the Ilocos Region live in rural areas.

TRUE

The Ilocos Region, particularly the three northernmost provinces, is largely rural. In 2000, approximately 62% of the region's 4.2 million residents lived in rural settings.

2. Improved access to medical facilities means that only a small number of Ilocanos rely on traditional faith healers known as albularyos.

FALSE

Many rural Ilocano still rely on the power of faith healers, protective amulets, and herbal remedies. The services of faith healers are free, but patients are expected to offer a donation.

3. Most rural Ilocanos own their own farms.

TRUE

Although most rural Filipinos remain landless, most Ilocano farmers own the small plots of land that they farm.

4. The smallest local unit of government is the barangay.

TRUE

The Philippines is divided into provinces, cities, municipalities, and barangays, the smallest administrative unit. In the Ilocos Region, according to 2010 figures, there were 3,265 barangays.

5. Rural poverty rates in the Ilocos Region are among the highest in the nation.

FALSE

At 17%–18%, poverty in the region is lower than the national average (28%). In 2012, Ilocos Norte had one of the lowest poverty rates (11%) in the country.



Philippine family

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Chapter 6: Family Life

Introduction

The family is the basic social unit in the Philippines. Its importance and central role in society are acknowledged in Article XV of the national Constitution.¹ Marriage is constitutionally viewed as an inviolable social institution to be protected by the state.^{2,3} Beyond legal proclamations of the centrality of the family, Filipinos value their families and kinship networks. Most families are closer than is typical elsewhere in the world. Family members cultivate deep loyalties and are expected to care for and support one another.^{4,5,6}

Ilocano families share many features in common with the general Filipino family, including the establishment of kinship through both parental lines.^{7,8,9} Although traditional patriarchal values are under pressure because of social and economic

changes, men are still generally considered the head of the family, while women are expected to manage household chores, care for the children, and oversee family finances.^{10, 11, 12}

A holdover from Spanish colonization is the fictive kinship system based on social contracts between godparents and their godchildren. Many of these relationships are formalized during the child's baptism and the appointment of godparents. The ceremony legitimizes the relationship and creates a sense of moral obligation of mutual support equal to that of blood relations. This system builds family and kin relations, not only vertically among grandparents, parents, and children, but also horizontally.^{13, 14, 15}



Philippine family
© Jeral Dillermo

Typical Household and Family Structure

The typical Ilocano household is nuclear, but it is not unusual to have relatives living in the home.¹⁶ Most households are headed by a man and contain an average of about five people.^{17, 18} Family size has decreased over the years because of declining fertility rates. The average Philippine woman has three or four children, although fertility rates among rural women tend to be slightly higher.^{19, 20} Most households contain fairly young people. Nearly 3 out of 4 household members are under the age of 40.²¹

Exchange 77: Does your family live here?

Soldier:	Does your family live here?	agnaana-ed kaadee tee pameeliyam deetoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Exchange 78: Are these people part of your family?

Soldier:	Are these people part of your family?	partee kaadee tee paameeliyam dageetoy aa tataa-o?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.



Working women

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The Status of Women

Partially as a result of the Constitution’s explicit recognition of the role of women in the nation and a guarantee of equality, Philippine women enjoy a higher status than women in many other nations.²² In 2011, the Philippines ranked 8th out of 135 nations in gender equality, and in 2012 it was the only country in Asia to have closed the gender gap in both education and health.^{23, 24} Although patriarchal traditions are still evident, women have made great strides, including the election of two female presidents.²⁵

Exchange 79: Do you have any brothers?

Soldier:	Do you have any brothers?	aada kakaabsaato ng-a lalaakee?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

But the situation is more complicated than data might suggest. In the Filipino culture at large, tradition has dictated that the ideal woman be shy, demure, and loyal. This image is referred to as “Maria Clara,” and contemporary Philippine culture still favors the shy, self-effacing woman, even in business and professional roles.²⁶ Men are viewed as the head of the family, responsible for its economic security, and women are expected to be responsible for the household and the children.²⁷

Exchange 80: How many people live in this house?

Soldier:	How many people live in this house?	maanoo tee agnaana-ed ng-a tataa-o eetee daaytoy a balaay?
Local:	Ten.	saang-apooloo.

Many Ilocano families do not conform to this image. Today there are about 2.2 million Filipinos working abroad, approximately 48% of whom are women.²⁸ About 10% of these are women from the Ilocos Region.^{29, 30} This exodus has affected interactions in Ilocano households and caused Ilocanos to reexamine traditional roles. Fathers have assumed a larger role in parenting duties.³¹ To meet these new demands, Ilocano males have had to assume more traditionally feminine characteristics.³² When women become the main economic providers for the family, especially when they work overseas, men may lose authority in the family and become more withdrawn and detached.³³

Status of the Elderly and Children

Elderly

The elderly are valued in Filipino culture. Throughout their lives, children learn to show deference and respect to older family members.^{34, 35, 36} In an Ilocano family, grandparents are considered special. Parents always consult their own parents, who are regarded as wise counselors, before making a decision. A grandfather's advice is usually considered the best advice. Because of the vital role elders play in family life, children feel indebted to them and strive to take good care of them. Adult children and minor grandchildren share the responsibilities of caring for the older generation and are compliant in dealings with their elders.^{37, 38, 39}



Elderly women

© Global Environment Facility / flickr.com

Exchange 81: Is this your entire family?

Soldier:	Is this your entire family?	paameeliyam kaadee daaytoy aamin?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

Children

Children are welcome additions to Ilocano households, and to the extent that there is a gender preference, the balance tips slightly in favor of females.⁴⁰ Filipino children are indulged. In the home, they are in the company of siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, and other members of the family. Babies are seldom left alone and are often held protectively by their mothers or another family member. Few demands are made on young children, who are expected to learn gradually in an environment that is relatively free of anxiety



Couple at their wedding
© mendhak / flickr.com

or overly high expectations. Raising children is an obligation not only of parents, but also of extended family members. Ilocano parents might send their child to stay for long periods of time with grandparents, aunts, or other relatives.^{41, 42, 43}

Among poor families in the Ilocos Region, some children work to help the family survive. In 2006, nearly 11% of rural Ilocano children worked in agriculture as seasonal farmworkers in tobacco fields and cornfields.^{44, 45} Another 15% worked in places such as malls and grocery stores.⁴⁶ Efforts are underway to end child labor practices and to provide support for poor children.^{47,}

^{48, 49}

Married Life, Divorce, and Birth

Marriage

Among the Ilocano, everyone is expected to marry.⁵⁰ Yet the number of Filipinos who have decided to forego marriage in favor of living together is on the rise.^{51, 52} Most Ilocanos set up their own nuclear household and are expected to be financially independent of their parents.⁵³ The average age of marriage for women in the Ilocos Region in 2008 was reported to be about 23 years of

age.⁵⁴

Exchange 82: Is this your wife?

Soldier:	Is this your wife?	asaawam daaytoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

The presence of children in the marriage represents good fortune and establishes stronger ties between the newly married couple and their families.^{55, 56} The average woman in the Ilocos Region has between three and four children. The first child often comes within the first year or two of marriage.^{57, 58}



Philippine family
© Marvin Abrinica

Many Ilocano women work outside the home after marriage. In 2010, nearly 45% of women were participating in the labor force.⁵⁹ More than half of women aged 30–59 were working in 2010.⁶⁰ Many Ilocano wives stay home in the first years of marriage when the children are young, and then enter the workforce in their 40s.⁶¹

Divorce

Marriage is considered an inviolable social institution by law, and divorce, except among the Muslim population, is legally prohibited.^{62, 63, 64} Although a new law is currently being proposed that would allow divorce, the Philippines remains the only nation outside the Vatican in which divorce is illegal.^{65, 66} Legal separations or annulments are possible under specific conditions.⁶⁷ Annulments, which can be granted by the nation’s civil courts, are increasing, and in 2013 were double the rates of the previous decade. Annulments can sometimes be extremely expensive, costing as much as USD 23,000. The average cost is around USD 1,800. Marriages may be nullified through judicial process or through appeal to the Catholic Church. For Catholics, church nullifications are generally the cheaper option, averaging around USD 35.⁶⁸

Exchange 83: Are you married?

Soldier:	Are you married?	naakee-asaawakaa kaadee?
Local:	No.	sa-aan.



Baby and its mom
© Oxfam International

Birth

Pregnancy and birth are surrounded by tradition and ritual in Ilocano culture. Most births continue to occur at home.⁶⁹ When a woman goes into labor, only the midwife (*mangilot*), the husband and his parents, and the couple's other children are allowed in the house. If the labor is particularly difficult, the husband might turn a ladder upside down or massage crushed ginger on his wife's stomach. After the child is born, twisted rugs are burned in an earthen jar (*bak-ka*) to keep evil spirits away. The baby is given *ampalaya* (bitter melon) juice mixed with castor oil to drive out any evil forces.⁷⁰

Exchange 84: Are these your children?

Soldier:	Are these your children?	anaakmoo kaadee dageetoy?
Local:	Yes.	wen.

The new mother and her baby rest in a *balitang* or inclined bamboo bed. Mothers generally enjoy a 2–3 week resting period known as *dalagan*, during which time the husband is responsible for all domestic tasks. After her *dalagan* ends and the woman bathes, she resumes her household duties.⁷¹

Exchange 85: Many blessings.

Soldier:	Many blessings.	mabindeeshyoonan-kaa eetee aadoo paay.
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Social Events

Weddings

P*anagasawa* (marriage) affirms the bride and groom's *gasat* (fate) and is considered a sacred partnership, ending only with the death of a spouse.⁷² Marriage represents the union not only of the couple, but also the joining of two families.⁷³

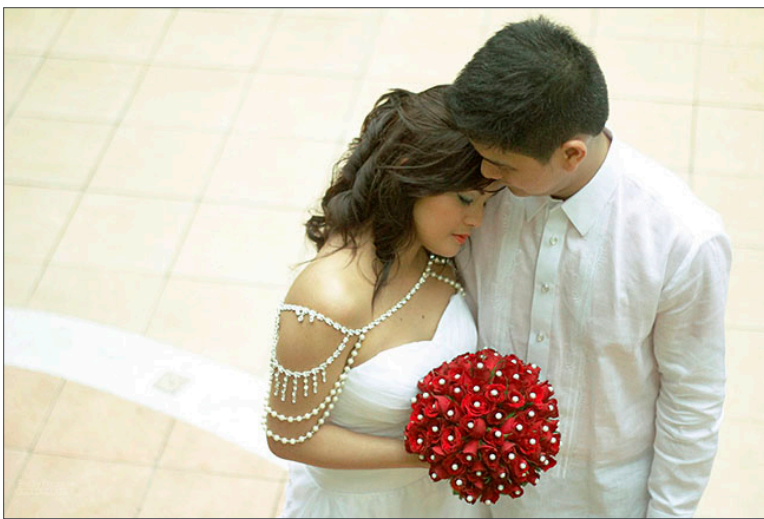
Exchange 86: Congratulations on your wedding!

Soldier:	Congratulations on your wedding!	naraagsak aa kabala-awoo eetee panaagkali-lasaayoo!
Local:	Thank you.	aagyaamanaak.

Before a couple gets married, both sets of parents must agree to the match. After receiving approval from his parents, the groom announces his intentions (*panagpudno*) to his prospective in-laws. The wedding date is set after visiting a *planetario* to determine auspicious dates. Men pay a dowry and provide the wedding dress and all accessories. The groom also gives a cash gift (*parawad*) to the bride's mother.⁷⁴

Exchange 87: I wish you both happiness.

Soldier:	I wish you both happiness.	saapaay kooma taa naraagsakaayoo aa doowa.
Local:	Thank you!	aagyaaminkamee!



Couple at their wedding
© Shelby Punzalan

On the evening before the wedding, a ritual *saka* is held in which the couple greet their sponsors and respective future in-laws. Ilocanos almost always marry in a church.⁷⁵ After the wedding, the couple and their guests enjoy a huge feast (*padaya*). During the feast the husband offers his wife a plate of mung beans as a symbol of fertility. The wife ritually refuses several times before accepting. The bride then offers the beans to her new husband, who also refuses the dish.^{76, 77}

Upon arrival at the groom's home, the couple is greeted by an older unmarried woman standing at the foot of the stairs with lighted candles.⁷⁸ After placing the candles on the family altar, the couple

paces to the top of the stairs, in a ritual to determine who will hold authority in the family. In the last ritual of the day, *mangik-ikamen*, an elderly couple sings the wedding song (*dal-lot*).^{79, 80}

The following day, three rituals occur. In the *atang*, an offering is made to the spirits of departed ancestors. In the *posing* and *mangatogangan*, the groom ceremonially surrenders his personal belongings to his new wife.⁸¹

Exchange 88: Long live!

Soldier:	Long live!	ateedog koma tee panaagbiyaago!
Local:	Thank you all!	aagyaaman-kaamee kadakaayoo aamin!



Funerals

Because Ilocanos believe that *gasat* (fate) determines their life on earth, death is viewed as the fulfillment of destiny. All family members are expected to wear black as a sign of grief. Women wear a black veil (*manto*).⁸² The official mourning period lasts 1 year and begins with a wake, during which time it is forbidden to work or clean the house.^{83, 84}

Cemetery

© Frisno Bostrom

Exchange 89: Please be strong.

Soldier:	Please be strong.	paatibkerem tee rikriknaam.
Local:	Thank you.	aagyaamanaak.

Exchange 90: I sympathize with you.

Soldier:	I sympathize with you.	maariknaak tee eenka rikriknaa-en.
Local:	Thank you so much.	aagyaamanaak oonaay.

Before the funeral, Ilocanos kiss the hand of the deceased. A rooster (or a hen if the deceased is female) is beheaded prior to removing the coffin from the home and thrown into the yard to ensure safe passage into the afterlife.⁸⁵

After the coffin is out of the house, all doors and windows are shut to prevent the soul from disturbing those left behind. They are reopened after the funeral party returns from the cemetery.^{86, 87}

Exchange 91: I would like to give my condolences to you.

Soldier:	I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.	kayaatkoo tee aakeepagladeenyet kenkaa ken tee pameeliyam.
Local:	Thank you so much.	agyaamanaak oonaay.

Exchange 92: God bless you and your family.

Soldier:	God bless you and your family.	bendishyonaaka komaa tee aapo ken tee pameeliyam.
Local:	Thanks to God.	diyos tee aag-ng-eena.

When family members return from the cemetery, they wash their faces and upper body from a basin containing coins along with a traditional Ilocano wine known as *basi*.⁸⁸ The following day, immediate family members wash their hair in a river to remove any powers of the deceased's spirit. After the completion of this ritual, offerings of rice cake (*niniogan*), *basi*, and tobacco are made.^{89, 90} For the next nine nights, a prayer (*lualo*) is offered for the dead. On the ninth day, a feast (*pamisa*) is prepared. A *pamisa* also marks the 1-month and 1-year anniversaries of the death.^{91, 92}



Kids reading
© Jimmy Hilario

Childhood Celebrations

There are numerous significant celebrations associated with children. One of the most important is baptism. At this time, godparents are chosen for the child. The godparents assume responsibility for advising and helping the child throughout life.^{93, 94, 95} The most significant event for Ilocano boys is the rite of circumcision (*kugit*), which occurs around the age of 13. Boys may have the procedure performed at a hospital according to Western medical procedures or they may go to a traditional specialist. In the latter ceremony, the circumcision is performed using a knife, a razor blade, and a wooden mallet. Guava leaves are chewed and used to bind the wound.⁹⁶

Naming Conventions

Children receive a first name, a middle name, and a last name (family name). In the 20th century, the mother's maiden name was often used as the child's middle name. Children also usually have lifelong nicknames, used by family and friends.⁹⁷ Children born out of wedlock traditionally used the mother's last name.⁹⁸ But a 2004 change in the family code allows children to take the father's surname.⁹⁹

Spanish custom designated the manner in which the family names of both the mother and the father became part of a combined surname. For example, in the name José Rizal y Mercado (a national hero), Rizal is the father's last name and Mercado is the mother's. After the United States colonized the Philippines, the family name of the mother commonly became the child's middle name. Eventually the formal name José Rizal y Mercado was changed to José Mercado Rizal.¹⁰⁰

Many last names reflect the Spanish influence in the nation. In 1849, Filipinos were legally required to adopt Spanish or indigenous surnames.¹⁰¹ Many opted for Spanish names, particularly the names of saints, leading to a large number of Filipinos with surnames such as Santos or De la Cruz.^{102, 103} In Vigan City in Ilocos Sur, most surnames begin with the letter *A* or *F*.¹⁰⁴ In 1890, the Spanish governor-general required all native Vigans to take a surname beginning with *A* and all mestizos to choose a surname beginning with *F*.¹⁰⁵

Filipinos tend to prefer creative names for their children.^{106, 107} Composite names such as Luzviminda, taken from the three Philippine regions of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, are becoming popular. Children may be named after deceased relatives, famous movie stars, scientists, popular people, planets, flowers, or even days of the week.¹⁰⁸ Another common phenomenon is repeating a one-syllable first name. This has been further refined so that Bong2, for example, stands for Bongbong, which is the nickname of Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., a Philippine senator.¹⁰⁹



Baby and its mom
© Chewy Chua / flickr.com

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Overview: Chapter 6 Assessment

1. Most Ilocanos live in households with large extended families.

FALSE

The typical Ilocano household is nuclear, although it is not uncommon to have relatives living in the home. Most Ilocanos set up their own nuclear household and are expected to be financially independent of their parents.

2. The elderly are respected and cared for by their families.

TRUE

The elderly are valued in Filipino culture. Throughout their lives, children learn to show deference and respect to older family members. Adult children and minor grandchildren share the responsibilities of caring for the older generation.

3. Few Ilocano wives work outside the home.

FALSE

Many Ilocano women work outside the home after marriage. Ilocano wives often remain home when the children are young and then enter the labor force in their 40s.

4. There is a slight preference for female children among the Ilocano.

TRUE

To the extent that there is a gender preference among Ilocanos, the balance tips slightly in favor of females.

5. Divorce is prohibited in the Philippines except for Muslims.

TRUE

By law, marriage is viewed as an inviolable social institution. Divorce is legally prohibited except for the Muslim population.

Ilocano Cultural Orientation: Final Assessment

1. The Ilocanos are the largest ethnic group in the Philippines.
True or False?
2. The climate in the Ilocos Region is characterized by two seasons.
True or False?
3. The Ilocos Region is entirely mountainous.
True or False?
4. Provincial governments in the Philippines are autonomous from the federal government.
True or False?
5. Significant insurgent activity continues to occur in the four Ilocos provinces.
True or False?
6. The majority of Ilocanos are Catholic.
True or False?
7. The Aglipayan Church emerged out of a sense of Filipino nationalism and dissatisfaction with the Vatican.
True or False?
8. Religion has little effect on daily life in the Philippines.
True or False?
9. The Philippine Constitution guarantees separation of church and state.
True or False?
10. The Ilocos Region is a major pilgrimage center for the nation and home to numerous important religious shrines.
True or False?

11. There is a strong preference for male children among the Ilocano.

True or False?

12. Hardship has forced the Ilocano to create dishes with ingredients that others might not consider fit to eat.

True or False?

13. The Ilocano do not eat pork.

True or False?

14. Although the Ilocano, like their countrymen, are group oriented, they value a certain amount of individualism.

True or False?

15. Ilocano women rarely work outside the home.

True or False?

16. Every province in the Ilocos Region has at least one city with more than 100,000 residents.

True or False?

17. Poor infrastructure in urban areas of the Ilocos Region puts many residents at risk from flooding.

True or False?

18. Approximately 4 out of every 10 persons in the Ilocos Region work in agriculture.

True or False?

19. Ilocano men have a much higher rate of educational attainment than women.

True or False?

20. Most crimes in urban areas are nonviolent.

True or False?

21. Police checkpoints are common throughout the Ilocos Region.

True or False?

22. Each Barangay Health Center (BHC) is generally staffed with a doctor and a midwife.
True or False?
23. Rural-based organizations (RBOs) are designed to strengthen grassroots power in rural areas.
True or False?
24. School attendance rates of rural Ilocanos lag significantly behind those of their urban counterparts.
True or False?
25. The Ilocos Region is one of the most poorly developed areas in the Philippines.
True or False?
26. Ilocano households have an average of approximately five members.
True or False?
27. Filipinos believe that giving traditional names to their children is important.
True or False?
28. Most Ilocano women give birth at home.
True or False?
29. The official mourning period for a deceased family member is 3 months.
True or False?
30. The Philippines ranks low in terms of indicators of gender equity.
True or False?

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