

MAHAPLAG ARCHIVE / PDF READING COPY

Mahaplag's Bol-anon

By Meryjoy P. Coretico

Before Mahaplag's municipal formation to the 1990s

ABOUT THIS READING COPY

The story of Bol-anon vendors who made their way from Bohol to Leyte and built livelihoods and lasting roots in Mahaplag.

Language: English with Cebuano-Binisaya terms preserved

BEFORE MUNICIPAL FORMATION TO THE 1990S

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Prepared directly from documents/MAHAPLAG'S BOL-ANON.md; the supplied text is retained in full.

The Boholano people, also called Bol-anon, refers to the individual born in the island of Bohol. As they can no longer earn a living in the island, many have sought a better future outside Bohol. It was only in these recent years, the touristic potential of the island has been realized, and work has started to develop resorts and hotels to make Bohol's attractions accessible for tourists.

Long before Mahaplag was proclaimed as a municipality, Bol-anons had already set foot on the island of Leyte. They tend to settle in a place where they can sell their goods and do labor works. As places near Bato port are already manifested by other Bol-anons, the newly-arrived group moved forward and settled as ambulant vendors in Baybay, Leyte where some of the Bol-anons were already residing.

“Ambulant vending is a popular source of livelihood in the Philippines. They can either be itinerant or semi-static. Itinerant vendors are those who go around shouting their wares while semi-static ones are those who are semi-fixed positions but may move about as the situation necessitates.” (Galace, 2000)

Narciso “Sisoy” Piscos Sr., Islao Alumbro, Titoy Alumbro, Martin “Ating” Preciados Sr., and Angel “Angi” Narita were semi-static vendors. Due to the decrease of sales, they roam around places near Baybay selling dry goods such as mats, blankets, mosquito nets, and clothes. They came across a Mahaplag. It was then a barangay of Abuyog, Leyte. Days of itinerant vending in the said place, they observed that sales were better than in Baybay so they planned to move in. When they came back, Mahaplag was already proclaimed as a municipality. The municipal hall was then located at the intersection of now Independence and Trasmonte Street. Eventhough they have a spot near the municipal hall, they still went to its barangays to sell their goods on a one-day basis.

During the term of Mayor Jose Dycoco, a public market (now Mahaplag gym) was built. A wide range of products and services were available. Narciso “Sisoy” Piscos Sr., Islao Alumbro, Titoy Alumbro, Martin “Ating” Preciados, Angel “Angi” Narita, Rodulfo “Loklok” Piscos Sr., Romarico “Rex” Piscos, Dolores “Dolor” Piscos, Patricia “Petty” Coretico were among those Bol-anons able to secure a space to sell dry goods in the established public market. Aside from Mahaplaganons, stationed militaries in the municipality helps the favorable sales of the vendors.

In 1980s, the market was destroyed in a major fire. Goods and products were burnt; but no casualty was reported. Vendors were able to retrieve some of their goods while others were not. After the incident, some Bol-anons set up stalls alongside with their retrieved goods. Some also changed their businesses.

During the rebuilt of the public market in 1990s, some Bol-anons remained and secured a spot. Luis Molina, Amy Palmitos, Cesar Narita, Dadang Narita, Neneng Soliba, and Alac Lao, newly-arrived Bol-anons, also secured a spot in the market for selling dry goods.

Unfortunately, another fire on 1994 burnt the market down. The second fire leads to the halt of businesses of some Bol-anons and returned home. Others continued to do business but no longer in a public market. They look for a spot where it is safe from connecting fires. When the business of a Bol-anon prospered, they will ask for help from coBol-anons to offer their services such as domestic helper and salesperson. After sometime, these brought helpers were able to have their business with just "laway ray puhunan". According to the old Bol-anons, this is the smallest form of capital and able to help other Bol-anons succeed. Also, some were married to Mahaplaganons leading to their settlement here.