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## The Contribution of Dr. Florentino H. Hornedo to the Ethno-Cultural History of the Ivatans

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**Abstract:** Drawing inspiration from his Ivatan roots, the late Prof. Dr. Florentino Hornedo, a cultural historian, strongly advocated the preservation of the Ivatan cultural heritage, which he deemed indispensable in understanding and appreciating the Filipino culture. In pursuit of his advocacy, the professor, who was the foremost Ivatan scholar, pursued studies on the different aspects of the Ivatan culture. However, there exists no study that looks into his pioneering efforts in cultural studies on the Ivatans. This paper thus seeks to assess his contribution to the ethno-cultural history of the Ivatans. Appropriating the concept of “Today’s Native is Yesterday’s Visitor,” which was waged by Fr. Frank Lynch, S.J. and to which Dr. Hornedo subscribed, the writer asserts that what the Filipinos are today are explained by how they borrowed and assimilated the foreign cultural elements, and adapted them to local setting. The writer employs the historical method, that is the descriptive-narrative and analytical method. Describing the social organization of the Ivatans at the Spanish contact based on a report written by the Dominican missionaries in 1786, Dr. Hornedo established that the Ivatans accepted Christianity as it presented an “option” to attain peace in the face of the hostilities in their communities. Tracing the evolution of the “traditional Ivatan house,” the savant wrote that the Ivatan made use of borrowed technology from the Spaniards to build houses that would endure the harsh environmental conditions. Concerning ethno-medical practices and beliefs, the guru noted that the Ivatans adopted those beliefs and practices of other cultures and learned how to utilize substitutes for traditional medicines. In his study of Ivatan religious beliefs and practices, Dr. Hornedo made it clear that the Ivatans had been acculturated to Catholic teachings, but he hastened to add that the pre-Spanish beliefs in death and after death and even in the *añitu* still persist.