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Milagros C. Guerrero

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Review Article

Understanding Philippine Revolutionary Mentality

MILAGROS C. GUERRERO

PASYON AND REVOLUTION: POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, 1840-1900. By Reynaldo C. Ileto. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979. 344 pages.

The earlier generation of Filipino historians has tended to see the Philippine Revolution from the vantage point of political history and has accorded to national leaders primary importance in the shaping of Philippine history. In recent years, however, younger scholars have turned their attention to such aspects of social history as the involvement of the peasantry in the Revolution and the nature of anticolonial resistance from "below." Reynaldo C. Ileto's *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1900* is one such attempt at reconstructing the history of the Philippine Revolution and peasant movements from the point of view of the masses. This study also attempts to go beyond a merely descriptive narrative of the historical development of the Philippine Revolution to a structural analysis of it.

The book examines the continuity in the intellectual bases of anticolonial resistance from the Hermano Pule movement in Tayabas in 1841 to the peasant movements during the early American regime. Ileto's central theme is that "the masses' experience of the Holy Week" (p. 15) – the recollection of the *pasyon* and the internalization of the *pasyon* death (i.e., the death of Jesus Christ) – "fundamentally shaped the style of the peasant brotherhoods and uprisings" during the period covered by the study. The *pasyon*, which Ileto believes is the key element in the peasant world view, provided the Christian Filipinos with "a language for articulating its own values, ideals, and even hopes of liberation" (p. 16).

The author sees the *pasyon* as the ideological source of Tagalog peasant movements and the Philippine Revolution. He explicates that the various phases in the life of Jesus Christ have counterparts in the odyssey of the Filipinos to freedom. Christ himself was the role model of rebel leaders like Apolinario de la Cruz, Andres Bonifacio, and Felipe Salvador. The Filipinos, particularly

those who were poor and uneducated, perceived Philippine history through the prism of the *pasyon*: past history was viewed "in terms of a Lost Eden, the recovery of which demanded the people's participation in the *pasyon* of the Mother Country" (p. 317). The *pasyon* world view, then, was the connective ingredient which would explain how and why the Philippine Revolution unfolded the way it did. Only when the people transformed their inner selves (their *loob*) as Christ and are reborn in the brotherhood of man (e.g., Confradia de San Jose, the Katipunan, the Santa Iglesia) can they truly fight for their country's freedom. It was thus inevitable, according to the author, that the *Katipuneros* should express their ideas of nationalism and their desire for independence in the idiom of the *pasyon*.

As an entirely novel approach to the study of the Revolution and Tagalog peasant movements, this book is unusual and generates compelling interest. However, the author's attempt to use the *pasyon* as a metaphor for the development of revolutionary mentality and nationalist consciousness, and his use of literary evidence to prove his thesis, raise a number of questions. How did the peasant rebels transmute the call for personal redemption and the purification of the self into a trumpet for revolt? How necessary and important was such an ideological preparation before accumulated economic and social discontents mobilized the people into rebellion? What levels of commitment does the *pasyon* ideology inspire? Could the same religious ideas undermine the people's will to revolt? What is the ideology that made the peasant actually involve himself in the Revolution? This last vexing question remains a very important one in the study of the Revolution but we should be cautioned that no single factor, motive, or group can provide a satisfactory answer.

The answer to these questions, to my mind, does not lie in loose psychological speculation about the role of the *pasyon* in the history of anticolonial resistance, at least insofar as the southern Tagalog region covered by the study is concerned. The key may be in the understanding of our own cultural and economic development under Spain; against such a back cloth, the *pasyon*'s popularity should be interpreted. Certainly, the culture of the Philippines during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is too large a subject to be considered here, but its socialization and educational aspects need some comment because of their implications for the "politicization" of the masses in the late nineteenth century. What Iletto neglects to mention is that the "cultural apparatus" of the Filipinos under Spain had a distinct religious rather than a secular orientation. The colonization process, and in particular, the implementation of Spain's policy of education, gave the people nothing more than a limited literacy or what may be called the literacy of religious instruction, which drew from catechetical instruction, church rituals, priests' homilies and announcements, novenas and prayerbooks. The language of the older *pasyon*, the metrical romance of Bernardo Carpio and the much later

author's thesis fails in this regard for as numerous documentary sources on *Katapusan Hibik*, which the author uses as his sources for the collective mentality of the Tagalogs, are very similar structurally because the Spanish censorship policy resulted in the entry of very little secular literature into the country, thus providing very few models for the colonial writers to follow or copy. Thus, within their limited range of literate experience, the people's articulation of their discontent, their expression of what may seem to be inchoate libertarian ideology included symbols and nuances found in diverse aspects of the Catholic religion.

SECULAR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN TRADITIONALISM

In his seminal work on protest movements in rural Java, the Indonesian historian Sartono Kartodirdjo points out that secular development could take place within the confines of traditionalism. The cultural inheritance of the Javanese, at the ideological level, was continually reworked in accordance with new circumstances.¹ I am persuaded that a parallel situation also developed in the Philippines, as Spanish oppression became increasingly intolerable through the centuries. To the extent that the peasants can be said to have any political articulateness and ideology, these were oftentimes expressed in religious terms. Of course, this was hardly surprising for the Filipino peasants, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, have seldom been acquainted with any systematic view of the world that was not religious. The *ilustrado* class, on the other hand, by reason of their access to higher education in the nineteenth century, increasingly viewed and expected social change from a secular point of view. It was the lower middle class and the politicized elements of the urban working class, to which Emilio Jacinto and Andres Bonifacio respectively belonged, that mediated the modernizing, Western-oriented goals of the *ilustrado* class with the traditional nativistic goals of the masses.

It should be pointed out, however, that even the *ilustrados*, while already thinking in obviously Western secular terms, also expressed themselves in religious terms and metaphors which, after all, were part and parcel of the Filipino cultural baggage. Certainly, various *ilustrado*-principal rebel leaders throughout Luzon and the Visayas had Masses solemnized to pray for the victory of the Revolution, flew the banner of the Virgin Mary at the head of their ragtag militias and issued edicts and proclamations full of religious invocations and references to Catholic beliefs. Iletto's suggestion that the Filipino elite used the "pasyon language" of the masses only when they intended to deceive the latter seems to be rather problematic. To my mind, the

1. Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java: A Study of Agrarian Unrest in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 191.

the Revolution illustrate, there exists a linguistic unity among divergent groups of Filipinos insofar as the Catholic character of nationalist expression is concerned. Indeed, John N. Schumacher is correct in pointing out that any research on the Revolution which ignores the Catholic character of Filipino society can never fully explain the responses of the people, *ilustrado* and *tao* alike, to colonial rule.²

Ileto, however, is correct in pointing out that "a discontinuity exists in our present understanding of the Revolution, between 'folk traditions' and the liberal ideas of the nineteenth century that are said to have triggered aspirations for change." He attributes this discontinuity to the "social and cultural background of Filipino scholars. Bred in the intellectual milieu of Philippine universities, they have unconsciously inherited the nationalist and revolutionary language of the *ilustrados*" (p. 99). Indeed, the *ilustrado* orientation of our historians, particularly those of the American period, has helped exclude the masses from history and has perpetuated the notion that the *ilustrados* were the sole nation-builders who alone articulated the aspirations of the people while the masses were their blind and passive followers. This orientation has also contributed to the absence or lack of attention to the participation of the masses in the Revolution and to their perception of power authority, and change in Philippine society. But, in recognizing that there is such an imbalance in Philippine historical scholarship, there exists among scholars today the great temptation to glorify the masses. The tendency to view the Philippine Revolution only from the perspective of those "from below" shall achieve for us nothing but a biased and disjointed narrative of the Revolution.

The author seems to chastise those students of history who interpret the spread of the Revolution and the acceptance of the independence ideal by the masses in terms of the patron-client bonds that unite the masses with the upper classes of society (p. 99). Like it or not, however, the truth is that the convergence of the disparate interests of the masses and the elite was one of the many important factors that made possible the Revolution of 1896. The Philippine Insurgent Records so abundantly indicate that in Cavite, Batangas, Manila, Morong, and Laguna – the heartland of the Revolution – where to an extent there was a real mass movement, the ordinary folk fought the Spaniards (and later the Americans) because of the ties that bound them to their *ilustrado*-cacique patrons. In the Ilocano, Bicol, and Visayan regions, this was even more evident. The reports of the provincial governors in 1897,³ as well as various local histories attest to the role played by patron-client networks in

2. John N. Schumacher, S. J., "The Religious Character of the Revolution in Cavite, 1896-1897," *Philippine Studies* 24 (1976): 416.

3. *Memorias sobre la situacion politica de las provincias del archipelago, 1897-1898*, Archivo Historico Nacional (Madrid), Seccion de Ultramar, Legajo 5157. I am grateful to Dr. Norman G. Owen, University of Michigan, who lent me this material while I was doing dissertation research in 1976.

the spread of the Revolution.⁴ Part of Manuel Sastron's description of the snowballing of violence in 1896 reads like a register of the leading citizens of Bulacan, Morong, and Batangas.⁵ More importantly, the student of history who has any familiarity with the data contained in the massive Philippine Insurgent Records cannot but be convinced of the essentially pluralistic and clientelist nature of the Philippine Revolution.⁶

SOURCES USED

To develop the theme that the Filipinos viewed the Revolution through the prism of the *pasyon* and that the *pasyon* inspired the people to Revolution, the author picked out pertinent stanzas and passages from various "texts" (i.e., the *pasyon*, the *Historia famosa del Bernardo Carpio*, legends, and a number of *awit* on the Revolution published during the first decade of this century) and juxtaposed them with the ideas of Bonifacio, Jacinto, and leaders of various peasant movements. The author also relied upon sources which are of doubtful value to the social historian. One notes, for example, his use of Alfonso Santos's highly impressionistic *Rizal Miracle Tales*.⁷

While Iletto's analysis rests on the above sources, little information is given about them. Neither does he systematically evaluate them nor does he indicate how the Filipino people took to heart the *pasyon* and the various *awit*. We do not learn what part or parts of the several *awit* were considered most important by the common people nor whether the *pasyon* was one of the bases of the value system and the behavior patterns of the masses. His examination of the precise causal connections between the ideology of the Katipunan and the *pasyon* is even more deeply problematic. For example, we are given parallels between ideas found in the *pasyon* and those of Bonifacio, Jacinto, and the other Katipunan leaders but it is never explained how such ideas might have emanated from the *pasyon*. To the reader interested in Philippine intellectual history, this latter aspect is certainly very important.

Even more important than the methodology used in the study are its substantive implications. In the present state of historical scholarship, it is doubtful whether we can clearly prove that the entire Revolution (1896-1902), or for that matter, the so-called "First Revolution" (1896-97), was inspired by the *pasyon* ethos. It is true that the Katipuneros in Manila, under Bonifacio's

4. The *Historical Data Papers*, Philippine National Library, 1952-53; Soledad M. Borromeo, "El Cadiz Filipino: Colonial Cavite, 1571-1896," (Ph. D. dissertation, University of California [Berkeley], 1973); Elias M. Ataviado, *The Philippine Revolution in the Bicol Region*, vol. 1 (Manila, 1953), among others.

5. See Manuel Sastron, *La insurreccion en Filipinas y Guerra Hispano-Americana* (Madrid: Impr. de la sucesora de M. Minuesa de los Rios, 1901), pp. 188, 278-86, 352-ff.

6. This is the original title of the collection. It is entered in the catalogue of the Philippine National Library as the *Philippine Revolutionary Papers*.

7. Alfonso Santos, *Rizal Miracle Tales* (Manila: National Book Store, 1973).

leadership, were initiated according to the rituals of the separatist society, such as those described in detail by the author. But Aguinaldo himself points out in his memoirs that at the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896, there were only 500 Katipuneros in Cavite who, unlike their counterparts in Manila, were not initiated according to the prescribed mysterious rituals. The following day, however, the Katipunan swelled to over 1,000 rebels.⁸ Throughout southern Luzon, the masses joined the Revolution; while many did not join the Katipunan, they nevertheless "adhered" to the ideals of the society. I concede the probability that the Tagalog masses were influenced by the pasyon tradition but neither the available evidence in the historical literature nor the materials used by the author prove that the pasyon world view made much appeal, except perhaps to the original Katipuneros.

Moreover, there is a serious problem with regard to the applicability of the pasyon thesis to the entire Tagalog region. For example, Mindoro, a predominantly Tagalog province, did not develop a pasyon outlook, at least insofar as presently available evidence is concerned. Neither does the author provide evidence that in Batangas and Cavite, outside of Caneo's *colorum* followers, the rebels fought under pasyon inspiration. The problem gets all the more serious if we take into consideration the other ethnolinguistic groups where the pasyon became popular only in the late nineteenth century. Thus, while the pasyon might have been popular among the Ilocanos and the Pampangans at the time of the Revolution, it is doubtful whether the moral system of the pasyon had taken root or its world view, as delineated by the author, had ever developed.

As an analytical device, the pasyon thesis fails to distinguish clearly the thinking of the leadership from that of the masses. A more basic criticism of the thesis is that the historian—who is interested in penetrating the collective mentality—is restricted to using only those sources pertinent to, or originating from, the leadership ranks. Thus, even in the book, we gain some insights into the collective thought of the people only through Bonifacio, Jacinto, Mabini, Salvador, Santiago, Alvarez, Tandiaman, and others who, as the author himself points out, were not exactly of plebeian origins.

The first Katipuneros certainly did not belong to the lowest rung of Filipino society. The supremo himself was educated and widely read. He read *The Wandering Jew*, *The Ruins of Palmyra*, and the Spanish translation of *Les Misérables*. He found employment in Fressel and Company, one of those foreign business houses in Manila which became the nurturing ground for young Filipino workers and employees whose entrepreneurial spirit would later make them men of status and influence. Bonifacio's associates were certainly not plebeian: Ladislao Diwa and Teodoro Plata were clerks of court in Binondo and Quiapo respectively; the former was a graduate of the University

8. Emilio Aguinaldo, *Mga Gunita ng Himagsikan* (Manila: C. A. Suntay, 1964), p. 154.

of Santo Tomas. Jose Turiano Santiago, secretary of the first Katipunan supreme council, was a graduate of the same university, and was an accountant and a business agent. Deodato Arellano and Roman Basa, prominent council members of the Katipunan, were clerks in the Spanish artillery corps and the Spanish naval headquarters respectively. A close associate of Bonifacio, Pio Valenzuela, who came from a *principalia* family of Polo, Bulacan, was a medical student when he joined the secret society. Emilio Jacinto, who is regarded as the "brains" of the Katipunan, graduated from the Dominican-run Colegio de San Juan de Letran and then enrolled at the Pontifical University. Moreover, he was the son of a prominent Tondo merchant.⁹

These biographical data suggest that the Revolution was not homogeneously plebian, so far as the first leaders are concerned. Indeed, we must not ignore the significant social differentiation — those aspects which affect the ways by which one group may (or may not) be defined in contrast to another — between the first Katipunan leaders and the masses. But did they both share the same *pasyon* language if there is such a thing? A reply in the positive tends to vitiate the author's view that the "poor and ignorant masses" did not share the same revolutionary ideas as the "better classes." The author himself has not mentioned any work coming from the masses and thus far has contented himself with interpreting the works of the Katipunan leaders whose origins we have just looked into. Even the *pasyon*, which by its circulation had become a popular, seasonal literary fare of the people did not originate from the masses; in fact, the translators, who were responsible for the different versions, were mostly principal-ilustrados.

ASSUMPTIONS AND INFERENCES

The author's thesis suffers from the weight of unproved assumptions and inferences. This is evident in the conceptual confusion arising from the juxtaposition of the Katipuneros' purported perception of the separation of the Filipinos from Mother Spain, on the one hand, and the seemingly parallel themes of separation in both the *Historia Famosa del Bernardo Carpio* and the *pasyon*, on the other. Bernardo Carpio, the hero of the famous awit, discovers his true identity as the son of Don Sancho only after he denounced his false parents. The Filipino people, too, argues the author, would emerge from "a condition of ignorance and suffering" (p. 127), if they repudiated their false parents, the friars and Mother Spain. The poems *Katapusang Hibik ng Filipinas* (The Last Appeal of the Philippines) by Andres Bonifacio and another poem attributed to his brother, Procopio, are singled out as evidence of the Filipinos' rejection of Mother Spain. In Procopio's poem, the Filipinos

9. See for example the synthesizing analysis of Jonathan Fast and Jim Richardson, *Roots of Dependency* (Quezon City: Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1979), pp. 67-71.

ask for Mother Spain's forgiveness for their act of separation from her. Ileto poses the question "why should the Filipinos indulge in this sentimental moment" when the Spaniards had oppressed them "for so long" (p. 129)? One should be reminded at this point, however, that the author cites only one poet who has imaged the Filipino people asking forgiveness from the Mother Country as they separate from her. Are we to equate one man's perception with the perception of the Filipino mass?

There is sadness at the moment of separation, according to Ileto, because "wholeness in Philippine society is commonly spoken of in terms of the bond between mother and child." He avers that the mother-child separation theme was so strongly imprinted in Philippine literature and that the separation of Christ and Mother Mary simply grew out of proportion in the development of the *pasyon* through the centuries, for which he does not give us any documentary evidence. The author goes on to say that "just as the start of Christ's passion is marked by his emotional and painful separation from Mary, so does the struggle of the Filipinos, following the contours of tradition, begin with separation from Mother Spain." At this point, I must confess to some bewilderment. The author's analysis of the Filipinos' separation from Spain was accomplished by intersecting the Bernardo Carpio story with the *pasyon*, a literary license resulting in a misleading imagery. Certainly, the separation image in the *pasyon*, which is replete with love, affection and anxiety cannot be juxtaposed with the parting of the ways of the Filipinos and Spain. On the other hand, the separation imaged in the *Historia Famosa*, which is characterized by hatred and much recrimination, might be the parallel applicable to the Philippine experience. Indeed, the following lines from Bonifacio's *Katapusang hibik* can be interpreted to mean that the Filipinos had always been aware of the oppression and exploitation Spain had been inflicting on them (*ang araw ng poot ng katagalugan, tatlong daang taong aming iningatan* / the sun of the Filipinos' anger, that for three centuries we suppressed). However, like battered but perhaps still loving children, they endured all pain and suffering because they thought Spain might still change her ways. Consider the following stanzas which, in my humble opinion, illustrate the conceptual confusion in the author's analysis.

Sumikat na Ina sa sinisilangan
ang araw ng poot ng Katagalugan,
tatlong daang taong aming iningatan
sa dagat ng dusa ng karalitan.¹⁰

10. I have used the Teodoro Agoncillo translation rather than the author's for the former approximates the imagery intended in Tagalog. See *The Writings and Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (Manila, 1963), pp. 9-10, 75-77.

Mother, in the east is now risen
the sun of the Filipinos' anger,
that for three centuries we suppressed
in the sea of suffering and poverty.

Walang isinuway kaming iyong mga anak
sa bagyong masasal ng dalita't hirap,
iisa ang puso nitong Pilipinas
at ikaw ay di na Ina naming lahat.

We, your children, had nothing to shore up
against the terrible storm of suffering,
the Philippines has but one heart
and you are no longer our Mother.

Sa kapuwa Ina'y wala kang kaparis
ang layaw ng anak dalita't pasakit
pag nagpatirapang sa iyo'y humibik
lunas na gamot mo ay kasakit-sakit.

Other mothers cannot compare with you:
your children's comfort are poverty and sorrows,
when they, in appealing to you, prostrate themselves,
your proffered balm is exceedingly painful.

.....

Ikaw nga, oh, Inang pabaya't sukaban
kami'y di na iyo saan man humanggan,
ihanda mo, Ina, ang paglilibingan
sa mawawakawak na maraming bangkay

You, o, negligent and malevolent Mother,
we are no longer yours, whatever happens
prepare then, Mother, the grave
where many dead bodies will find rest.

Sa sangmaliwanag ngayon ay sasabog
ang barila't kanyon katulad ay kulog,
ang sigwang masasal ng dugong aagos
ng kanilang bala na nagpapamook.

In the world today will explode
guns and cannons like lightning,
the terrible storm of blood that will flow
from their bullets in the struggle.

Di na kailangan sa Espanya ang awa
ng mga tagalog, oh: inang kuhila
paraiso namin ang kami mapuksa
langit mo naman kung kami madusta.

It is no longer necessary that Spain be pitied
by the Filipinos, O traitorous Mother,
it is our glory to die,
it is your glory if you defeat us.

To underscore the overwhelming influence of the Bernardo Carpio story upon Andres Bonifacio, the author strives to prove that Bonifacio's climb to Mount Tapusi, in the mountains of San Mateo, was "a gesture of deepest significance to the Katipunan and to the inhabitants of the region" (p. 127); indeed, the trek to the mountains had "two levels of meaning." "Entombed in the mountain, according to popular belief, was Bernardo Carpio . . ." Not only did Bonifacio succeed in finding a haven for the Katipunan, his climb up the mountain was "a gesture of identifying with the folk hero." Moreover, the author deplores the fact that "previous scholars have not seen anything more in this trip made by Bonifacio and his associates during the Holy Week of 1895" than "a search for a safe haven . . . in the event of difficulties in the struggle" (p. 123).

We all know, however, that there is more to the story of the Katipunan supremo and the Philippine Revolution than all the documents, memoirs, and other sources allow us and I, for one, would very much like to know the whole of Bonifacio's truth. But it is difficult to demonstrate everything that went on inside Bonifacio's head. If it is perceptions of the past that we are looking for, it must be stressed here that the literature on Bonifacio, and by Bonifacio, is rather sparse and it gives us few insights into the activities of the man outside of the well-known aspects of his life and career in Manila and in Cavite. To infer the internal psychological state of an individual from various available data is already extremely dangerous, as psychohistorians have time and again discovered; thus to deduce from one single mountain climbing episode the political motivation of a man is, to say the least, doubly risky if not downright facetious.

Indeed, the author's interpolation is not buttressed by any shred of evidence and may be regarded as creative imagination like that expressed by poets and fictionists. But it is unacceptable to both historians and clinical psychologists. While the literary man may be allowed a long tether in the exercise of his imagination, the historian is not, for he is required to fulfill his function within very rigid limits.¹¹ Thus, he cannot invent what went on

11. C.V. Wedgwood, *Truth and Opinion: Historical Essays* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1960), p. 101.

in the mind of St. Thomas More, Richard III, or for that matter, Rizal or Bonifacio. It seems to me that the author has oversimplified the boundaries that separate literature and history. For while literature creates life, history recreates it. Thus, the author treads dangerous ground when he evaluates the collective mentality during the Revolution largely by indirection, seeing through the isolated cognitive apparatus of the *pasyon* a phenomenological description and analysis of the world which the Filipinos propose to bring into existence. Moreover, the *Historia Famosa* and various revolutionary *awit* cited by the author are works of literature. They can serve to illumine historical events but we have to have incontrovertible proof that the "slice of life" they portray actually happened, particularly when it is used in relation to actual historical characters and events.

THE PROBLEM OF TRANSLATIONS

The imagery achieved by the author in the book is done partly through translation of various texts. Because the analysis of historical events and the presentation of the *pasyon* world view are grounded on the imagery in the *awit* and other sources used by the author, then the processes of translation and interpretation, which are very important aspects of this work, must be subjected to a more careful scrutiny. If the "texts" were translated more faithfully, it seems to me that the *pasyon* thesis would be very weak.

Unfortunately, mistranslations and too literal renditions of Tagalog terms, which alter the nuances of meaning in the original sources, are not infrequent. A few but significant examples will suffice in this essay. Thus we learn that (p. 56) some followers of Apolinario de la Cruz wavered in the face of Spanish harassment perhaps because "darkness is beginning to overcome them" (*baca nadidiliman lamang sila*) which should have been translated as "perhaps because they are confused." What did the author mean by "darkness" here, a natural phenomenon as dusk falling upon the people? To translate "nadidiliman" as "darkness" does not quite capture the emotional state of Hermano Pule's men. "*Nitong mundong kabilugan*" (p. 68) is translated as "in this global world" when perhaps the more appropriate rendition is "in this entire world." "*Hocomang Cavite* (the province of Cavite) is rendered as the "jurisdiction of Cavite" (p. 156) while "*paghihimagsik laban sa Espanya* (pp. 161, 127) is translated as "the war against Spain" instead of "rebellion" or "revolution."

For some undisclosed reason, the author does not translate such terms as *awa*, *damay*, *gulo*, *loob*, *lakaran*, and *liwanag*, as they are used repeatedly in differing circumstances in the book. He does not suggest, however, that these words defy translation. When he fails to translate what seems to be key words in the explication of the *pasyon* world view of the Tagalogs, the author ignores the diverse nuances of meaning which are possible for any word in the

Tagalog language. We need to provide just one example. The word *loob*, according to the author, signifies "inner self," which is connected with ideas of leadership and power, nationalism and revolution (p. 21 and Glossary). *Loob* can weaken and vacillate (p. 57) but prayer, penitence, hard work, and abstinence (p. 292) can purify, control, and give direction to this *loob*. It is a Katipunan idea (p. 143) that unity is achieved only when the *loob* of each Filipino is transformed. But the author misunderstands the following lines (14th stanza) from the awit *Casunod nang Buhay ng Ating Manga Kapatid*:

Ang bilis nang dusa na di magpatantan
nang tanang pinunong na sa bayan-bayan,
doon sa pahirap ay lalong naglatang
ang init nang loob nitong CATIPUNAN.

when he translates it in the following manner:

The grief of all the principals in the towns
was sweeping and unrelenting,
in this mounting hardship the heat of the Katipunan's loob
intensified, burst into flames.

He subsequently explains this intensification as an evidence of the people "coming together in damay, a social experience," whereby the "Katipunan's loob radiates heat and flame, just as Christ and other individuals of exemplary loob radiate liwanag" (p. 167).

The purpose of translation, to my mind, is to approximate the meaning intended by the poet in the original language and one has simply to listen carefully to the meaning implicit in the lines. It seems to me that the last two lines of the stanza in question do not have any mystical meaning which a too literal translation might suggest. Such a translation may bolster the author's *pasyon* thesis and imagery but it certainly fails to capture the sense of the people's mounting anger that the poet himself would have known. Indeed, any reader of the awit (pp. 325-30) cannot fail to perceive this because the terroristic policy of the friars and the colonial authorities during the first weeks of the Revolution, which is described in the first thirteen stanzas, results in the inevitable intensification of implacable anger among the people (*naglatang ang init nitong Katipunan*).

Sometimes, the mistranslation significantly alters the direction and meaning intended by the original sources and also allows an interpretation — which buttresses the book's thesis — that is not confirmed by the text. Thus, in translating Diego Mojica's "*Ang Katapusang Araw ng Agosto, 1896*" (The Last Day of August, 1896), Iletto says that so great was the anger of the people of Cavite, so quickly was their union forged, that it took them only five days to rout the Spaniards (pp. 156-7). Yet the original in Tagalog says that it took the rebels fifteen days. The author points out that Mojica narra-

ted the wresting of the province of Cavite from the Spaniards in one long single sentence because he (Mojica) "did not see fit to break up the account into smaller segments because the lengthy sentence is in itself an image of a complete process — the beginning, the spread and the end of a popular uprising." This may be true but is not the author reading too much meaning in one sentence? Language, according to Friedrich Waismann, "contributes to the formation, and participates in, the constitution of a fact [but this] does not mean that it produces the fact."¹² I suspect, however, that Iletto has not apprehended the fact that lengthy sentence structures were characteristic of nineteenth century Filipino writing, undoubtedly an influence of Spanish writing.

Still on translation, one is saddened by the fact that the author examines his subject matter and his sources with a latitude and a lack of rigor that obscure rather than highlight the development of a revolutionary mentality among the Filipinos. Again, because one word, *kalayaan*, is a key word to the author's analysis of the Katipunan mentality, the meaning he attributes to it merits some consideration in this review. He does not seem to see any distinction between two different terms: *kalayaan* (freedom, emancipation) and *kalayaán* (self-abandonment, state of being very much pampered, libertinage), the rootwords of these terms being *laya* (freedom) and *layâ* (self-abandoned, wilful) respectively. The author suggests that because the word *layâ* does not appear in the eighteenth-century dictionary of Frs. Juan de Noceda and Pedro de San Lucar,¹³ while the word *layao* does, the word *kalayaan* could only have stemmed from the latter. He suggests that Bonifacio, Jacinto, and "probably" even Marcelo H. del Pilar perceived *kalayaan* as a political term (p. 108) that has roots in the word *layao* (meaning "satisfaction of one's needs," "pampering treatment by parents" or "freedom from control") and is therefore inseparable from its connotations of parent-child relationship. He declares that a clear distinction between *layâ* and *layâ* had been made only recently and this is in Jose Villa Panganiban's dictionary-thesaurus, which was published in 1973.¹⁴ For those familiar with, or trained in, the language and who would, therefore, make a distinction between *kalayaan* and *kalayaán* or *kalayaan* (from *layao*), the latter term carries a pejorative connotation of the mother-child relationship which is destructive to the offspring. This meaning is not very recent; in fact, the poet Francisco Baltazar alludes to it in his *Florante at Laura* in the following lines.¹⁵

12. Friedrich Waismann, *How I See Philosophy* (New York, 1968), p. 64.

13. P. Juan de Noceda and P. Pedro San Lucar, *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* (Manila, 1860). It was first published in 1754.

14. Jose Villa Panganiban, *Diksiyunaryo-Tesaurus Pilipino-Ingles* (Quezon City: Manlapaz Publishing Co., 1973), p. 623.

15. Francisco Baltazar, *Pinagdaanang Buhay ni Florante at Laura* (Manila: Reemprezo de Ramirez y Giraudier, 1861), p. 32, Stanza 202.

Ang laqui sa layao, caraniua'i hubad
 sa bait at muni't, sa hatol ay salat
 masaclap na bunga ng maling paglingap
 habag ng magulang sa irog na anac

The author is in error when he asserts that "prior to the rise of the separatist movement [i.e., the Katipunan], kalayaan did not mean 'freedom' or 'independence' " (p. 109). Does he presume that this very meaningful word could have evolved only in the 1890s? He seems to have missed or ignored Pedro Serrano-Laktaw's dictionary which categorically shows that kalayaan, meaning "*libertad*," "*emancipación*," "*kalayaan ng sinomang walang makasupul at sumakop*" should be distinguished from *layaw* (or kalayawan), meaning "*regalón*" (a spoiled or pampered state, usually applied to children), "*talamasahan*," "*deleitar*" (to please, to content), "*deleite*" (lust, carnal appetite) and "*tinatanggap na lugod ng katawan*."¹⁶ Both Baltazar and Serrano-Laktaw antedated the Katipunan.

While Bonifacio in his *Ang Dapat Mabatid ng mga Tagalog* did allude to a precolonial society characterized by contentment and prosperity (*lubos na kasaganaan at kaginhawahan*),¹⁷ there is nothing in this work to suggest that layaw reigned in that society. Granting without conceding that the precolonial past was a time of "bliss and prosperity," of layaw or of "a lost Eden," Bonifacio's Katipunan, contrary to the author's assertion, does not propose to bring it back. The forward-looking aspect of Bonifacio's Katipunan distinguishes it, in fact, from the earlier messianic *katipunan*. According to Bonifacio, for kalayaan to be regained (in this sense, separated from Iletto's synonym of kalayawan), the Filipinos must be vigilant; they must draw from within themselves the strength that has always been there.¹⁸

THE QUESTION OF HISTORICAL FACTS

The uncertainty quite evident in the translation is also clear in the author's handling of historical facts. False and misleading statements, careless remarks and glaring errors of fact, of which this reviewer gives the following brief selection, ought to have been avoided in this well-written work. The author says that the Katipunan was founded in 1894 (p. 102) though, of course, it was established in 1892, while the *Kalayaan* (the Katipunan newspaper), which actually appeared in March 1896, is said to have appeared in January

16. Pedro Serrano-Laktaw, *Diccionario Tagalog-Hispano* (Manila: Impr. y Lit. de Santos y Bernal, 1889), Primera Parte, pp. 182, 337; Segunda Parte, pp. 433, 557-59. Serrano-Laktaw calls particular attention to the word "*agasajar*," another Spanish synonym to *palayaw* (spoiled) in these words "*a uno esmeradamente hasta rayar en oficiosidad indagadora del gusto, que suele causar la perdición de muchos hijos*), Primera Parte,

17. Agoncillo, *Writings*, A. Bonifacio, p. 68.

18. *Ibid.*

1896. We read on p. 191 that "on 7 August 1898, a month after the proclamation of the republic at Malolos"; but it was not until 22 August that Aguinardo decided to move his government to Malolos and it was not until 14 September that the seat of the republic was actually moved to that town. It was Teodoro A. Agoncillo, not Antonio Abad, who wrote the introduction to the latter's book on General Macario Sakay (p. 214), and Sakay, contrary to the author's assertion and the testimony of Bonifacio's wife notwithstanding, did not help run the Katipunan press (p. 215). Alejandro Santiago, who "headed the Katipunan in 1902" was not "a member of Bonifacio's supreme council in 1896" (p. 226); he was perhaps mistaken for Jose Turiano Santiago, who was secretary of the second Supreme Council of the Katipunan. George Coats, on the basis of a news item in the *Manila Times* (28 March 1905)¹⁹ said that the followers of Felipe Salvador "wore long hair and biblical type clothes" but the author misquotes him when he says that these same men were "all dressed like pasyon characters" (p. 290). The author also points out that the Agoncillo translation of the *Kalayaan* was based on Retana's translation and on another translation "presumably by Epifanio de los Santos" (p. 109). Agoncillo himself says that he used the Caro y Mora translation and an English translation by Gregorio Nieva. On p. 112, Iletto says that Jacinto's manifesto is available only in translation yet at the same time, he avers that the translation "seems to be faithful enough to the original." How does he know if he has never seen the original?

The author's failure to subject the information offered by his sources to the obligatory internal scrutiny also helps weaken his thesis. For example, he posits the question (p. 134) "Was *kalayaan* [freedom, independence] ever attained during the Katipunan revolution?" He answers this question by drawing from Santiago Alvarez's awit *Ang Katipunan at Paghihimagsik* (The Katipunan and the Revolution, July 1927) the information that during the difficult years of the war with the United States, the people remembered the first few happy months of the Katipunan revolution.

The people were truly happy, free to enjoy life in all sorts of ways. Food was plentiful; all things were cheap; there were no perversities, no robberies, no thefts, no pickpockets. Everyone had love for his fellowmen and in every place the Katipunan's teaching of brotherly love held sway (p. 134).

This awit, according to the author, "seems to capture the experience of *kalayaan* during the latter days of September 1896 in the liberated town of San Francisco de Malabon, Cavite." Two sources which he cites as corroborating Alvarez's assertion are Diego Mojica's articles in the tabloid *Ang Bayang Ca-*

19. George Coats, "The Philippine Constabulary, 1901-1917," (Ph. D. dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1968), p. 201.

hapis-hapis (pp. 155ff) and an undated awit, *Casunod nang Buhay ng ating Manga Capatid* which is attributed to Julian Tandiam and was probably written in the later 1920s. Alvarez's description of San Francisco de Malabon may be true but numerous documentary sources in the Philippine Insurgent Records, written between 1898 and 1900, which speak of the suffering of the people during the Revolution, do not have such a recollection of such an experience of a "Lost Eden" and do not bear out Alvarez's romantic glorification of the first phase of the Revolution.

I should not be misunderstood here as arguing that the masses did not recognize the dawning of a new era. Rather, I am arguing for a more realistic appraisal of the revolutionary situation and the responses of the people in the late 1890s. I am also pleading for a more objective study of history by the use of the canons of historical methodology. The author bewails the fact that poems, songs, and "even dreams," which he describes as "documents," are ignored by Philippine historians. I agree with him that such materials may be used as indicators of the perceptions and value patterns of any group or movement, but while they can be a source of historical data, such data should be subjected to careful scrutiny.

The peoples of Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, and other provinces in southern and central Luzon took up arms against the Spaniards in 1896-97, undaunted by the superior power of the enemy. Noncombatants supported the rebel militias when they could. But the life that characterized the "ancien regime" continued and it is doubtful whether there was a "return," however briefly, to what the author describes as a "Lost Eden." In Cavite, where we probably have more documents for the first months of the Revolution, burglaries and pilferage continued, discouraged only by strict revolutionary laws. To make sure that the rebels had an abundant food supply, farmers were prohibited from selling their produce outside the rebel camps.²⁰ We do not know how the farmers reacted to this measure. Spanish brutalities, though they certainly strengthened the people's will to fight, continued unabated. By a decree of 31 October 1896, Aguinaldo compelled the municipalities of Cavite to supply the rebel forces with food and other necessities and authorized a war tax to support the rebels,²¹ presaging the taxation policy he could not avoid enforcing as president of the Malolos Republic in 1898. Before the year was out, Governor Camilo Polavieja ordered the implementation of a reconcentration policy in the provinces of Bataan, Bulacan, Manila, Cavite, Batangas and Laguna.²² Consequently, by early 1897, the rebels were already on the defensive. Letters from Maragondon requesting rice supplies from Aguinaldo in April 1897 say that the people were hungry and should be fed by the rebel

20. Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses* (Quezon City: The University of the Philippines Press, 1956), p. 181.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

22. Decree of 23 December 1896 in the *Gaceta de Manila*, 24 December 1896.

government: otherwise they might go over to the enemy ("*lalong masamakung macaisip sa pagcampi sa ating mga caaway*").²³ In the face of this contrary evidence, I am persuaded that the perception of "a return" to "a Lost Eden" was properly Tandiamas's and Mojica's, and may not have been shared by a great number of Caviteños, much less of other Tagalogs.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of how and why the Tagalog peasants thought and behaved the way they did during the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth needs to establish the relationship between attitudes and patterns of thought, on one hand, and the social and economic structures, on the other. In a sense, phenomenological explanations — at least of the kind the author has made — seem beside the point. The growth of the collective mentality should be seen as an articulation of conscious experience within the socioeconomic milieu and should not be treated by an impressionistic analogy with the *pasyon* or an unsystematic culling of evidence from literature.

Despite these faults, which require cautious attention and therefore should be pointed out in any review, the author's attempt to understand Tagalog popular movements is no doubt a meritorious undertaking. While his hypothesis and interpretation sometimes outstrip the data at his command, his book is a welcome addition to the growing collection of studies on peasant movements and the Philippine Revolution. The methodology of the study, particularly the technically controversial procedure of drawing history from literature, will unquestionably generate much discussion and disagreement among Philippine historians. The good critical and objective study of the Filipino collective mentality during the period under study still remains to be written. It is to be hoped that some of the younger Philippine historians will soon accept the challenges — and the perils — of producing the research and the arguments that will refute or strengthen the author's thesis. There is a massive amount of excellent materials awaiting investigation.

23. Letters of Mariano de la Rosa (Office of the Secretary of the Interior), 25 and 28 April 1897 in PIR, Book A-4, Enclosure 18, Microfilm Reel 84.