

Pasyon, Awit, Legend: Reynaldo Ileto's *Pasyon and Revolution* revisited, a critique

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Abstract

This critical re-examination of Reynaldo Ileto's 1979 work *Pasyon and Revolution* argues that Ileto's attempt to reconstruct the categories of perception of 'the masses' using the pasyon as source material was deeply flawed. Ileto treated the pasyon as a literary text, ignoring the significance of its performance and treating it in an ahistorical manner. An attentiveness to performance reveals that the pasyon was a cross-class and linguistically specific phenomenon. This insight dramatically attenuates the argumentative force of Ileto's claim to provide insight into the consciousness of the masses and their participation in revolution. Paying heed to the historical specificity of performance allows us to use other sources, such as the Bernardo Carpio legend and references to Tapusi to explore working class and peasant perceptions of revolution while avoiding the errors of Ileto's earlier attempt.

The publication of Reynaldo Ileto's *Pasyon and Revolution*¹ in 1979 produced a seachange in Philippine historiography. Ileto's work shifted the focus of historical research from the writings and actions of individual members of the elite to the perceptions and revolutionary participation of the lower classes. All subsequent research in Philippine history has been written in the light of *Pasyon and Revolution*. Reference to Ileto's conclusions is de rigueur for a field of studies whose subject matter ranges from the pre-colonial structure of the barangay to the economic policies of the Marcos regime. Benedict Anderson expressed the consensus of academic opinion when he wrote that "Ileto's masterly *Pasyon and Revolution* ... is unquestionably the most profound and searching book on late nineteenth century Philippine history."² Despite the preeminence of *Pasyon and Revolution* in Philippine studies, no one has written a comprehensive examination of the premises, source material, and conclusions of Ileto's work. This paper aims to fill this gap.

The first section of this paper examines the argument of *Pasyon and Revolution* in detail. I find that Ileto's project of reconstructing the ways in which the lower classes of the Philippines in the late nineteenth century perceived the world and their role within it failed to achieve its goal for several reasons. Ileto never clearly defined what class or classes constitute his amorphous analytical category 'the masses.' He ignored how the

1. Reynaldo C Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines 1840-1910* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979).

2. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World* (New York: Verso, 1998), 199 fn. 19.

source material which he studied was accessed through performance. As a result, Ileto read his sources as texts, in an elite manner, and reconstructed categories of perception with no demonstrable relationship to peasant or working class consciousness.

The second section aims to carry forward Ileto's project in the light of this critique. I study the legend of Bernardo Carpio in detail to demonstrate than when read with an attention to the significance derived from its performance, we arrive at a very different understanding of lower class consciousness than that which Ileto found. Rather than a counter-rational expression of peasant millenarianism, the legend was the 'hidden transcript' of subversive historical memory. It celebrated the history of social banditry in the region.

I argue in the third section that consciousness and perception, however carefully reconstructed, cannot in themselves explain dramatic historical events such as the Philippine revolution. To understand the causes of the Revolution and to account for the participation of the lower classes in it, we must give explanatory primacy to objective historical events and to the changes which occurred in the relations of production in the nineteenth century Philippines. These changes shaped consciousness and transformed the ways in which people perceived the world.

1 PASYON AND AWIT

1.1 *Pasyon and Revolution Revisited*

The Philippine revolution has been explained as having been inspired by the ideas acquired by the *ilustrados*, the *mestizo* elite, during their education abroad. These ideas led to the formation of freemasonry in the Philippines which, in turn, gave revolutionary inspiration to a lower-middle class clerk, Andres Bonifacio. Bonifacio founded the Katipunan, a separatist secret society, and led the opening salvos of the revolution. Control of the revolution eventually passed to Emilio Aguinaldo, who had Bonifacio tried and executed. This succession of power was seen by traditional scholarship as either regrettable but necessary, or as the usurpation of the reins of the revolution by the upper classes.³

Pasyon and Revolution studied the ideas and events of the revolution differently, examining the history of Tagalog lower-class movements from 1840 to 1912. This was a time punctuated by both millenarian peasant uprisings and revolutions against Spain and the United States. Earlier scholars had treated these peasant uprisings as separate, local events, with no serious connection to the Katipunan or the Philippine Revolution. Ileto argued that by looking at these events as they would have been perceived by

3. The name *ilustrado* means 'the enlightened,' this is treated by most scholars as a class label for the educated *mestizo* elite. I will interrogate the usefulness of the term *ilustrado* in this paper. The standard works on the Philippine Revolution are Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1956); Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *Malolos: Crisis of the Republic* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1960); Teodoro M. Kalaw, *The Philippine Revolution* (Mandaluyong: Jorge B. Vargas Filipiana Foundation, 1969); and Gregorio F. Zaide, *History of the Katipunan* (Manila: Loyal Press, 1939).

the masses⁴ we could see that the seemingly unconnected and irrational uprisings of the peasantry formed a coherent whole, seamlessly interwoven with the Philippine Revolution. To demonstrate this connection Ileto needed to recreate the ways in which the masses perceived the world. He wrote, “the physical involvement of the masses in the revolution was pretty clear, but how did they actually perceive, in terms of their own experience, the ideas of nationalism and revolution brought from the West by the ilustrados?” (4)

What was needed, according to Ileto, were “alternative, valid meanings” (7) for nationalism, independence, and revolution, meanings which would have been intelligible to the masses and corresponded to their understanding of the world. Without this understanding, peasant movements appear to be irrational and backwards.

To locate these alternative meanings, Ileto looked for new sources and read old sources in new ways. He reread the documents of the revolution with an eye to peasant and lower-class categories of perception, asking the reader to imagine how the masses would have understood them. Through a close study of *awit*, Tagalog folksongs, and *pasyon*, the sung version of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, *Pasyon and Revolution* aimed to “arrive at the Tagalog masses’ perceptions of events.” To do so, Ileto argued, “we have to utilize their documents in ways that extend beyond the search for ‘cold facts.’” (10)

The *pasyon* libretto which Ileto examined, *Pasyon Pilapil* was first published in Tagalog in 1814. It is stylistically the roughest of the three available versions of the *Pasyon*; it was also the most popular. The *pasyon* was composed with the intent of inculcating submission and passivity into the colonized populace, and yet, Ileto argued, it contained passages which allowed them to identify their suffering with that of Christ. “Whether the *pasyon* encouraged subservience or defiance, resignation or hope, will always be open to argument. The fact is that its meanings are not fixed, but rather depended on social context. Thus a historical approach is necessary.” (18)

The *pasyon* gave the masses an idiom for articulating an understanding of the world; it did not provide them with an ideology or a coherent picture of society. This idiom comprised powerful units of meaning, located at the intersection of the masses experience of reality and their participation in the *pabasa*, the sung performance of the *pasyon*. These units of meaning informed how the masses interacted and participated in society.

Ileto’s study of the *pasyon* located these basic units of meaning: the *pasyon* conveyed “an image of universal history,” (14) structured as paradise, fall, redemption, and judgment. A section of the *pasyon* narrated Jesus’ separation from his mother in response to a call ‘from above.’ This separation from family “probed the limit of prevailing social values and relationships” (14) and “paved the way” for “indios … joining a rebel leader who was often a religious figure himself.” (15) Finally, Jesus called his followers from the “lowly, common people,” (16) and was persecuted by the wealthy and the powerful.

4. Ileto’s use of class categories is deeply problematic, as I shall discuss in this paper. For purposes of simplicity, I shall continue to use his phrase, the ‘masses,’ when reconstructing and interacting with his argument. When outlining an alternative hypothesis I shall use a more specific vocabulary to understand the class structure of Philippine society.

The narrative of peasant uprisings begins in a chapter entitled "Light and Brotherhood" which tells the story of the Cofradía de San Jose, a religious sodality founded by Apolinario de la Cruz, a charismatic peasant leader known as Hermano Pule. Stung by the Spanish religious orders' rejection of his application for the recognition of his confraternity, de la Cruz responded by banning non-indio membership in the organization. Alarmed, the authorities moved to shut down the meetings of the Cofradía, sending soldiers to break up the organization. On the slopes of Mount San Cristobal, the members of the confraternity battled the soldiers for ten days. Three to five hundred members of the sodality were killed and another three to four hundred arrested.

Ileto was particularly interested in the perceptions of the Cofradía. To reconstruct the mentality of this group, he read through the hymns and prayers of the sodality and the letters which Apolinario de la Cruz addressed to its members. A constellation of Tagalog words formed out this examination which Ileto claimed were in keeping with pasyon idiom: *liwanag*, radiant light which brings wisdom or insight; *awa*, pity, which evokes a response of *damay*, fellow feeling, which has the added significance of participating in another's work; *layaw*, love, pampering, the satisfaction of necessities; and *loób*, the interior of a thing, a person's will and emotions. *Pasyon and Revolution* drew a distinction between historical time, the tangible events affecting the lives of the masses, and pasyon time, the deeper, invisible structure to history in which suffering, death, and redemption give everyday struggles a profound significance. Ileto claimed that the revolt of the Cofradía was an attempt to synchronize historical time with pasyon time; it was the eruption of the 'pasyon world' into the 'everyday world.'

The connection between the Cofradía de San Jose and later events was neatly summarized in *Pasyon and Revolution*: "The events that culminated in the bloody revolt of 1841 was [sic] not simply a blind reaction to oppressive forces in colonial society; it was a conscious act of realizing certain possibilities of existence that the members were made conscious of through reflection upon certain mysteries and signs. Furthermore, since what we are talking about is part of the *world view of a class of people with a more or less common religious experience*, the connection between the events of 1840-1841 and later upheavals in the Tagalog region can be posited." (30, emphasis added)

In this paragraph there are two explicit assumptions underlying the argument for continuity between the Hermano Pule uprising and subsequent revolts, including that of the Katipunan. The first is that the uprising of 1841 emerged from 'the world view of a *class of people*.' The second is that this class had a 'more or less common religious experience.' Ileto continued, "certain common features of these upheavals, or the way these events were perceived, indicate that connections do exist. These lie perhaps, not in a certain chain of events, but in the common features through time of a consciousness that constantly seeks to define the world in its own terms." (31) The continuity in the history of revolts is thus the result of continuity in consciousness. Whose consciousness? The consciousness of a class. *Pasyon and Revolution* argued that there was a continuity of class consciousness which was the basis of the continuity of the uprisings from 1840 to 1912. But the consciousness of what class? This is a question to which I shall return.

The next chapter, entitled "Tradition and Revolt: The Katipunan," carries the narrative forward fifty years to the founding of the Katipunan, moving from 1841 to an

event which occurred in 1897 in Tayabas. The remnants of Hermano Pule's Cofradía, now known as the Colorum Society, were led by Sebastian Caneo in a large procession entering the provincial capital. They came with the intention of throwing pieces of rope at the *guardía civil*, whom, they believed, would be magically tied up. The *guardía civil* opened fire on the procession, killing many. The rest fled.

This story, rather than the classic narrative of western ideas and *ilustrado* agitation for reform, forms the background of *Pasyon and Revolution*'s account of the Katipunan uprising. Ileto stated, "the fact that a self-educated lower middle class clerk named Andres Bonifacio founded the Katipunan in 1892, is excessively attributed to the influence of *ilustrados* like Del Pilar and Rizal." (79) What we should instead look for was "a way of reconstructing the masses' perceptions of the Katipunan and their role in it." In order to do so, we needed to "cease for the moment to regard the Katipunan as a radically unique phenomenon or as the mere creation of individuals like Bonifacio and Jacinto." (81)

Ileto examined the manifestos published by Bonifacio, Emilio Jacinto, and Pio Valenzuela in March, 1896 in the sole edition of the Katipunan circular *Kalayaan*. A thousand copies circulated among readers in Manila, Bulacan, and Cavite. Between March and the discovery of the Katipunan by Spanish officials in August the membership grew from three hundred to twenty or thirty thousand.⁵ Ileto found that the form and language of Bonifacio's main article in *Kalayaan*, "Ang dapat mabatid ng mga Tagalog" (What the Tagalogs should know), were more important than its content for the purposes of his analysis. Bonifacio, he argued, communicated in his article by using "the *pasyon* form." (83)

Ileto also examined the initiation rituals of the Katipunan. These "appear to be Masonic. But if they were truly so," Ileto asked rhetorically, "could unlettered peasants have embraced the Katipunan as truly their own?" (91) *Pasyon and Revolution* demonstrated that both Bonifacio's article and the initiation rituals of the Katipunan were structured around the ideas of paradise, fall and redemption, or of pre-colonial prosperity, the advent of the Spaniards, and restoration through *kalayaan*. Ileto studied the etymology of this last word, which was of such central importance to the Katipunan that they made it the title of their paper, and found that it signified 'satisfaction of needs' and not simply autonomy.⁶

Pasyon and Revolution moved from the study of initiation rituals to an overlooked episode in the founding of the Katipunan: the sojourn of Bonifacio and eight other leaders during Holy Week, 1895, to "Mount Tapusi" in preparation for the uprising. There, in the legendary cave of the folk hero Bernardo Carpio, they wrote on the wall, "Long live Philippine independence!" This journey, *Pasyon and Revolution* stated, had "two levels of meaning. On one hand, it was purely military, a search for a haven. On

5. PAR, 82, dates the publication of *Kalayaan* to January 1896. This was the date on the masthead of the paper, but the paper was not completed until mid-March. For circulation and membership numbers, PAR cites Valenzuela's claim that 2,000 copies circulated and that 30,000 members joined. The more conservative estimates are given by E. de los Santos. For information on *Kalayaan*, see Jim Richardson, "Notes on Kalayaan, the Katipunan paper," November 2005, accessed May 8, 2009, <http://kasaysayan-kkk.info/studies/kalayaan.htm>.

6. It is interesting to note, however, that the word *kalayaan* was first used in a political context by the *ilustrado* Marcelo del Pilar in 1882 to translate the Spanish 'libertad.' In 1891, Rizal used *kalayaan* in translating *The Declarations of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* to convey *liberté* in Tagalog. *ibid.*

the other, it was a gesture of identifying with the folk hero entombed in the mountain.” (102)

The chapter concludes with the power struggle between Bonifacio and Aguinaldo that emerged when Bonifacio traveled to Cavite, and culminated in his execution on May 10, 1897. Bonifacio demonstrated, in both his writings and his actions, “his familiarity with popular perceptions of change. Folk poetry and drama undoubtedly provided him with basic insights into the ‘folk mind.’ Between him and Apolinario de la Cruz in fact exists a strong affinity.” These insights led Bonifacio to his “preoccupation with ‘sacred ideals’ and moral transformation,” and it was this preoccupation which in turn led to his downfall. (109)

In its later chapters, *Pasyon and Revolution* examined the use of the language of the Katipunan in the radicalism of the masses during the republican phase of the Philippine revolution, the Philippine American War, under Macario Sakay’s revived Katipunan, and in the Santa Iglesia of Felipe Salvador. The masses continued to conceive of the revolution, and their role in it, in the pasyon form used in the early documents of the Katipunan under Bonifacio. “This phenomenon can be understood if we view Bonifacio’s Katipunan as the embodiment of a revolutionary style, a sort of language which enabled the ordinary Indio to relate his personal experience with the ‘national.’” (113)

Ileto neatly summarized his argument, “the continuity in form between the Cofradía in 1841, the Katipunan revolt of 1896, the Santa Iglesia and other movements we have examined can be traced to the persistence of the pasyon in shaping the perceptions of particularly the poor and uneducated segments of the populace. Through the text and associated rituals, people were made aware of a *pattern of universal history*. They also became aware of *ideal forms of behavior* and social relationships, and a way to attain these through suffering, death, and rebirth.” (254, emphasis added)

The pasyon gave the masses “a pattern of universal history” – that is, the pattern of paradise, fall, and redemption – and “ideal forms of behavior” – *damay*, *awa*, and so on. This idiom enabled the masses to understand the world, the revolution, and their participation in it.

1.2 Problematic Class Categories

The historical continuity that *Pasyon and Revolution* found in popular movements from 1840-1910 was a continuity of class consciousness. Before we can examine in detail the sources which Ileto used to reconstruct this class consciousness we must first ask what class or classes make up the ‘masses,’ the ‘underside of Philippine history.’⁷

The relationship between classes changed dramatically in the nineteenth century Philippines. The galleon trade between Manila and Acapulco ended in 1815. The Philippines’ status as a colonial backwater, no more than a hub in trade with China, gradually ended as well. Pre-capitalist relations of production were overthrown by the introduction of foreign, largely British, capital, between the first to the second half of

7. The phrase is from Reynaldo C Ileto, “Rizal and the Underside of Philippine History,” in *Moral Order and the Question of Change: Essays on Southeast Asian Thought*, ed. David K. Wyatt and Alexander Woodside, Monograph Series (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1982), 274–337.

the nineteenth century. What class relations had prevailed in 1841 Tayabas during the Hermano Pule uprising would have borne pale semblance to those of the Katipunan's Tondo fifty years later.

By the 1880s and 90s, Philippine society was awash in class contradictions. Small landholders, tenant farmers, share croppers, agricultural wage workers, an urban proletariat, clerks and professional wage workers – all of these groups jostled uneasily with each other under indefinite rubrics in Ileto's account. *Pasyon and Revolution* lumped these classes together as ‘the masses;’ the underside; those ‘from below;’ the poor; peasants; the ‘common *tao*;’ the ‘illiterate *tao*;’ they collectively share the ‘popular mind;’ the ‘folk mind;’ they are occasionally *indios* who share ‘the Filipino mind;’ they are, quite often, simply the *ilustrados*’ ‘*pobres y ignorantes*.’

These categories are troubling. *Pasyon and Revolution* introduced the phrase *pobres y ignorantes* as “the common *ilustrado* term for the masses,” (18) yet never questioned the validity of the *ilustrado* characterization of the classes with which it was dealing. The ‘masses’ in *Pasyon and Revolution* are a superstitious, illiterate lot. Ileto sought the categories of perception of these *pobres y ignorantes*; he did not, however, question that they were and are backward. This is particularly evident in the introduction to *Pasyon and Revolution*:

We modern Filipinos ... can either further accelerate the demise of “backward” ways of thinking (reflected in the Lapiang Malaya) in order to pave way for the new, or we can graft modern ideas onto traditional modes of thought. Whatever our strategy may be, it is necessary that we first understand how the traditional mind operates, particularly in relation to questions of change. This book aims to help bring about this understanding. (2)

Despite the scare quotes around backward in the above quotation, the masses' modes of thought are clearly pre-modern in Ileto's conception; to belong to the masses is to possess a “traditional mind.” Without a clear sociological definition of the class or classes to which it referred, *Pasyon and Revolution* began with the *ilustrado* notion of ‘*pobres y ignorantes*’ and then asked what consciousness this “group” possessed.

Actual class relations were exceedingly volatile in the nineteenth century Philippines. New classes emerged, old classes disappeared. Subsistence agriculture gave way to cash cropping and commodity production. While class consciousness is notoriously viscous and lags behind objective circumstances, the transformations wrought by capitalism in the decades leading up to the Philippine revolution would have had profound effects on the consciousness of workers and peasants. The uninterrupted continuity in categories of perception that Ileto found stretching from Apolinario de la Cruz in the 1840s to Valentin de los Santos in 1967 thus warrants a healthy amount of suspicion.⁸

8. Valentin de los Santos was a charismatic Bikolano religious leader who led a group of Southern Luzon peasants in a group called Lapiang Malaya in 1967. The Lapiang Malaya marched against the Marcos' government armed with bolos and anting-anting and were shot down by the constabulary on Taft avenue in May 1967. It was the month that Ileto departed the Philippines for graduate school at Cornell.

1.3 *An Elite Textual Hermeneutic*

Pasyon and Revolution studied two main sources to discover the consciousness of the masses: *awit*, Tagalog folksongs; and *pasyon*, the sung version of the passion of Christ. Ileto argued that a close examination of this nineteenth century literature of the masses could reveal the ways they perceived the world. Ileto read these sources as texts in which the basic unit of meaning is the lexeme and allusions are intertextual. This is precisely how an *ilustrado* would have read *pasyon* or *awit*. It does not give us a sense of how peasants and workers would have understood them. In order to address lower class consciousness through an analysis of these works, we must read them in a different manner altogether; we must concern ourselves with their *performance*.

Individual words are the fundamental units of meaning in *Pasyon and Revolution*. They are the masses' categories of perception which we find in both *pasyon* and *awit*. Words like *layaw*, *damay*, *awa*, *loób*, and *liwanag* seem profound to the non-native speaker and circulate untranslated throughout *Pasyon and Revolution*. They acquire a reified sense of meaning far out of keeping with their actual workaday significance. Thus we commonly read sentences like "Since *damay* is a manifestation of a whole and controlled *loób*, the Katipunan's *loób* radiates heat and flame, just as Christ and other individuals of exemplary *loób* radiate *liwanag*." (136) The italicized words fly fast and thick and give the portentous feeling of significance. They attain a magical status: academic anting-anting which render *Pasyon and Revolution* impervious to scholarly criticism.

Ilustrados are not afforded the privilege of communicating in deeply meaningful untranslated words. When Aguinaldo appeals to 'banal na kalayaan,' in a proclamation addressed to workers not to go on strike during the war against the Americans, the phrase is translated as "sacred independence" and no original is included. Ileto dismissed this 'sacred liberty' as an "abstract notion." (124)

This italicized, untranslated Tagalog clings, however, to the speeches of Bonifacio, Jacinto, and other working class leaders even when delivered in Spanish. The katipunero Aurelio Tolentino wrote "Viva la Independencia Filipina!" on the wall of the cave of Bernardo Carpio. Ileto rendered the text in English and then extrapolated the full Tagalog significance of the phrase. The passage is representative of the hermeneutical style of *Pasyon and Revolution*, and is worth reproducing:

We can also understand why Bonifacio's hand trembled with fierce emotion as he wrote on the walls of the cave: "Long live Philippine independence!" This slogan must be interpreted in its entire form – *Panahon na! Mabuhay ang Kalayaan!* – which was the battlecry of the Katipunan. Its common translation as "The time has come! Long live Liberty!" does not quite capture its meaning. *Panahon na!* (It is time!) implies, not only that the revolution has begun, but that a totally new era (*panahon*) is about to succeed the old which has irreversibly winded down. And *Mabuhay* should literally be translated literally as "May it live" or "May it come to life." "Long live" or "cheers" fails [sic] to capture the meaning of the struggle as the experience of hardship in order to redeem or give life to a "dead" or "slumbering" condition called *kalayaan*. (103)

All of this was derived from four Spanish words written by Aurelio Tolentino.⁹ Upon this slight foundation, *Pasyon and Revolution* builds a comparison between the “‘slumbering’ condition called kalayaan” and Bernardo Carpio, whom the masses supposedly saw Bonifacio awakening, an interpretation addressed later in this paper.

If we do not employ an elite textual hermeneutic, but rather attend to the significance derived from the public performance of pasyon and awit, what insights do we gain?

1.4 *Pasyon as Performance*

The text of the passion of Jesus Christ was first translated into Tagalog by Gaspar Aquino de Belen in 1703.¹⁰ This pasyon began with the Last Supper and continued through the death of Christ. In 1814, a second pasyon was written which was known as Pasyon Genesis or Pasyon Pilapil. The latter name was the result of the popular attribution of authorship to Father Mariano Pilapil, who submitted the document for imprimatur in 1884.¹¹ Pasyon Pilapil begins with the creation of the world and concludes with the coronation of Mary in heaven. It was performed in two separate Lenten folk rituals: *pabasa* and *sinakulo*.

Pabasa is the public singing of the pasyon.¹² These performances were sponsored by prominent families and reinforced local hierarchy. The sponsoring family dictated the order of singers and could hire semi-professional pasyon performers. The performance of the pasyon was an extended event occupying the space of several days during Holy Week. Refreshments were provided in keeping with the Spanish colonial meal structure: *desayuno*, *café*, *almuerzo*, *merienda*, *cena*, and *café de noche*.

The audience came and went, talking loudly and eating during the performance. Sections of the pasyon varied in popularity. Audience interest tended to wane with the singing of the story of Cain and Abel, the lineages of Christ, or the *aral*, homilies addressed directly to the audience. It is important to note that much of the vocabulary of Ileto’s pasyon idiom is derived from the *aral*, the least popular, most ignored sections of a performance. Christ’s walking on water and his encounter with Mary on the *Via Dolorosa*, with their magic and drama, were popular and well attended.¹³

The pasyon was sung in *punto*,¹⁴ a pattern of chant which corresponded to the character being sung. Christ was sung in a slow and meek manner, Mary in *tagulaylay*,

9. And not, as Ileto claims, by the trembling hand of Bonifacio. (Teodoro M. Kalaw, *Aide-de-Camp to Freedom*, trans. Maria Kalaw Katigbak [Manila: Teodoro M. Kalaw Society, 1965], 225).

10. On the performance of pasyon see Ricardo D. Trimillos, “Pasyon: Lenten Observance of the Philippines as Southeast Asian Theater,” in *Essays on Southeast Asian Performing Arts: Local Manifestations and Cross-Cultural Implications*, ed. Kathy Foley (Berkeley: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1992); and Nicanor G. Tiongson, *Kasaysayan at Estetika ng Sinakulo at Ibang Dulang Panrelihiyon Sa Malolos* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1975).

11. Trimillos, “Pasyon: Lenten Observance of the Philippines as Southeast Asian Theater,” 8.

12. The pabasa is sung in a *kapilya* (small chapel) or in private homes where shelters are constructed specifically for the purpose. The pasyon is not performed within the church because of the belief that it should not be sung where the host, the communion wafer, is present.

13. There is an instructive comparison in Trimillos, “Pasyon: Lenten Observance of the Philippines as Southeast Asian Theater” of the performance of pasyon and of wayang kulit.

14. Literally, ‘accent’.

a mournful singsong chant residual from the performance of pre-Hispanic epics.

Doreen Fernandez writes, "It is logical to assume that from chanting the pasyon aloud, some towns progressed to assigning parts, then to adding costumes, and finally to having the parts acted out in costume."¹⁵ *Sinakulo* originated from pabasa. Sinakulo was the extended dramatic performance of the pasyon with actors, costumes, marches and special effects.

The staging of sinakulo required a large budget and was sponsored by the wealthiest families in a town. The dramatized pasyon opposed the *banal*, the holy, slow of speech and movement, hands folded and eyes downcast in meekness and resignation, to the *hudyo*,¹⁶ the Jews, who pranced about the stage, gloating, boasting, and were the entertainment of the performance. Innovation in performance was strongly discouraged and the holier the character represented, the stricter was the adherence to text and tradition. Only the hudyo, for whom variation in acting and changes in dialogue were not looked upon as blasphemous, engaged in comic behavior and innovation. To be holy was to accept suffering without complaint; it was to hold unswervingly to the script which God predestined for you.

1.5 *A Linguistically Specific and Class Universal Idiom*

The idiom which Ileto found in the pasyon was linguistically specific and crossed class boundaries. Both of these facts present serious problems for the arguments of *Pasyon and Revolution*.

Rene Javellana compiled an excellent bibliography of pasyon texts and used this bibliography to construct a genealogy of the translation of the pasyon. This genealogy neatly captures the problem of the linguistic specificity of the pasyon.¹⁷ The pasyon was not translated into Pangasinan until 1855; Bikolano, 1867; Kapampangan, 1876; Ilokano, 1889; Hiligaynon, 1892; and Samareño, not until 1916. At least some of these non-Tagalog pasyon were not performed. Vicente Barrantes, a colonial observer commissioned by the Spanish government, wrote that "in Ilocos it is not the passion but the *Lamentations of Jeremias* that is chanted during Lent. The former is not chanted but read, and that privately."¹⁸ Thus, in Ilocos, the pasyon was a very recent introduction, which was not publicly performed, but privately read. It seems likely that the new pasyon librettos were purchased and read largely by the elite.

We see that many regions vital to the progress of the Philippine revolution had only had the pasyon translated into their language a decade or two before the uprising. There was an additional lag between the translation of the text and its adoption in public performance. In the case of Ilocos but seven years lay between translation of

15. Doreen G. Fernandez, *Palabas: essays on Philippine theater history* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996), 16.

16. All villains in the pasyon, including the Roman soldiers, were known as *hudyo*.

17. Rene B. Javellana, "Pasyon Genealogy and Annotated Bibliography," *Philippine Studies* 31, no. 1 (1983): 451–67.

18. Vicente Barrantes as quoted in Horacio de la Costa, *Readings in Philippine History: Selected Historical Texts Presented with a Commentary* (Manila: Bookmark, 1965), 165. Barrantes is a problematic source for information on Philippine theater, as Rizal's scathing response to him makes clear. The facts regarding the performance of the pasyon in Ilocos, however, are accurate.

the pasyon and the outbreak of the revolution. It strains credulity to assume that Ilokanos developed a deep seated pasyon idiom in this time which enabled them to conceive of a pattern to universal history and their role within it. And yet, the revolution in Ilocos was fierce, long lasting, and founded upon peasant and working class participation. This is true also of Samar which did not even receive a pasyon translation until long after the revolution ended. That the 'masses' responded to the revolution in a similar fashion in both Tagalog and non-Tagalog regions would suggest that the pasyon explanation is, at least partially, invalid.

While the pasyon idiom did not cross linguistic boundaries, it was shared by Tagalog speakers of all classes. The elite participated in the performance of the pasyon and the creation of the pasyon idiom. It would have informed their understanding of the revolution just as much as that of the masses. Both the pabasa and sinakulo were events which crossed class boundaries. Their performance arena was a shared space in which landlords and tenants met, not as equals but as hierarchically ranked participants who spoke a common language, that of the pasyon.¹⁹

Thus, the pasyon idiom which Ileto discovers cannot speak to the consciousness of specific class groups, not even to that of the amorphous 'masses.' It was a universal idiom. Rizal understood it as fluently as an "unlettered peasant."

Vicente Barrantes, in his 1889 work *El Teatro Tagalo*, criticized what he saw as the purely derivative nature of Philippine theater, in all its forms: pasyon, sinakulo, awit, and komedyta. All Philippine theater, he claimed, was an imitation of Spanish literature, and a poor imitation at that. José Rizal wrote a fiercely sarcastic response from Barcelona on June 15, 1889. He addressed the topic of the pasyon and awit.

Por pobres y rudas que ellas pudieran ser; por infantiles, ridículas y mezquinas que las tenga V. E., conservan sin embargo para mi mucha poesía y cierta aureola de pureza que V.E no podría comprender. Los primeros cantos, los primeros sainetes, el primer drama que vi in me niñez y que duro tres noches, dejando en me alma un recuerdo indeleble, a pesar de su rudeza e ineptitud, estaban en tagalo. Son, Excentísimo Señor, como una fiesta intima de familia, de una familia pobre: el nombre de V. E que es de raza superior, la profanaría y la quitaría todo su encanto.²⁰

As poor and rude as they maybe; infantile, ridiculous, and mixed compared to those works which belong to Your Excellency, they retain for me, however, great poetry and a certain halo of purity which Your Excellency could not comprehend. The first songs, the first sainetes, the first drama which I watched in my childhood, and which lasted for three nights, left in my soul an indelible memory, for in spite of their rudeness and ineptitude, they were in Tagalog. They are, Exalted Sir, like an intimate fiesta of a poor family: the name of Your Excellency, which is of a superior race, would profane and remove all of their enchantment.

We see in this passage the intimate formative significance that both pasyon and

19. On the role of Holy Week traditions in reinforcing hierarchy, see Victor S. Venida, "The Santo and the Rural Aristocracy," *Philippine Studies* 44, no. 4 (1996): 500–13.

20. Jose Rizal, *Epistolaria Rizalino, Tomo Segundo, 1887-1890* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1931), 196; unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

awit had for the ilustrado exemplar, Rizal. Not only were the ilustrados present during the performance of pasyon, it was an integral aspect of their cultural experience.²¹

Pasyon and Revolution examined the text of the pasyon sans performance. In performance the pasyon was a shared event which reinforced hierarchy and privilege. Rather than a unique window into lower class categories of perception, the pasyon was in fact one of the very few truly cross class idioms in nineteenth century Tagalog society.

But what of awit?

1.6 Awit as Performance

The soldiers of Adelantado Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in the late sixteenth century are believed to have been the first to bring from Mexico the metrical romances of chivalry which were popular in their day. A continued trade in metrical romances flourished in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries via the annual Galleon trade.²² These imported metrical romances had either dodecasyllabic or octosyllabic structure, and assonant verses.

Metrical romances were eventually translated and became awit and *corrido*.²³ Corrido are octosyllabic poems, “which might be sung to the tune of the pasion,” while awit “are dodecasyllabic narratives sung in an elegiac and pleading manner.”²⁴ The monorhymed quatrains of awit are called *plosa*. There is a caesura after every sixth syllable. Every two lines complete a clause, and every four constitute a sentence. Prosody is exact and uniform. These metrical romances were originally propagated orally and were intended to be sung; awit simply means song in Tagalog.²⁵

Awit came to be performed in the eighteenth century as *komedya*, dramas depicting the conflict between Christians and Muslims, who were derogated moros. Komedya became the centerpiece of nearly every town fiesta. Originally written by a folk poet in the town or barrio, in the nineteenth century the komedya became a more

21. Ileto pointed out that there were three Tagalog versions of the pasyon available in the nineteenth century, two quite polished and one, the Pasyon Pilapil, rough and of a poorer literary quality. He chose to work exclusively with the Pasyon Pilapil in *Pasyon and Revolution* because of its “popularity among rural folk.” Might this be the class distinction of the pasyon, the poor and uneducated were familiar with a different version? Again no. Rizal, writing to Mariano Ponce from Paris in March, 1889, composed a short list of Tagalog luminaries which comprised three names: “Pilapil, Pelaez, Burgos.” (Rizal, *Epistolaria Rizalino, Tomo Segundo, 1887-1890*, 154). All three were religious figures. Pelaez and Burgos were associated with the reform of the clergy. Burgos was executed after the failed Cavite mutiny and became identified as a nationalist martyr. Pilapil was associated with the pasyon.

22. Irving Leonard studied the peregrinations of the metrical romances in his two classic works, Irving Leonard, *Romances of Chivalry in the Spanish Indies, with some registros of shipments of books to the Spanish colonies*, vol. 18, University of California Publications in Modern Philology 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1933); and Irving Leonard, *Books of the Brave: Being an Account of Book and of Men in the Spanish Conquest and Settlement of the Sixteenth-Century New World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949).

23. Fernandez, *Palabas: essays on Philippine theater history*, 5.

24. Bienvenido L Lumbara, *Tagalog Poetry, 1570-1898: Tradition and Influences in its Development* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1986), 52.

25. Jovito Ventura Castro, ed., *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures: Philippine Metrical Romances* (Manila: Nalandangan, Inc., 1985), 4.

urbane, polished, and sophisticated form, written by poets such as Huseng Sisiw and Francisco Baltazar. Fernandez writes, "The years between 1820 and 1896 have been called the period of 'first flowering,' during which 'cosmopolitanization, urbanization and Christianization' merged to institutionalize the komedya."²⁶

This first flowering, Resil Mojares argues, represented the culmination of the shift from "oral to written text, and from a living audience to a reading public," it was "also a geographical shift to a proto-urban complex of school and print-shop."²⁷ This shift was driven by the rise of an urban reading public, for whom the possession of awit chapbooks, or *libros caballerias*, with their highly stylized poetry on foreign subject matter, was a mark of class and distinction. The chapbook became an important commodity in the self-construction of the hispanized Chinese mestizo.

Staged as komedya, these urbane awit became the viewing fare of the Manila working class and of rural laborers and peasants. Like sinakulo, komedya required a substantial budget to be performed. It thus required sponsors, patrons drawn from the town elite who would fund the production and receive in return honor and recognition. Each performance would open with a *loa*, a long poem dedicated to the patron saint of the festival at which the komedya was performed and honoring the elite guests in the audience.

The staged komedya was a lengthy affair, performed in segments every evening over the space of three to five days. In Manila there were permanent theaters; Bonifacio was an actor in one of them, the *Teatro Porvenir*. In the provinces the stage was a temporary construction. In either case, however, the stage was constructed according to a standard design. The façade of a palace served as the backdrop, divided down the middle into two colors, which separated the Moro and Christian kingdoms. Spartan props indicated scene changes. The addition of chairs would create a palace court or potted plants a forest. Across the stage would march the actors. Marching played a central role in every production; different characters and different events called for different styles of marching, but no one ever walked. The marches were given folk Spanish names in the script: *regal, paso doble, paseo, karansa, batalya*.²⁸

This script, however, was not available to the general public; it was not even available to the performers. It was called *orihinal* and was hand copied by *escribientes*. There was only one copy of the script in an entire performance and it belonged to the director, who had absolute control over all theatrical goings on. The actors did not memorize the verses of a komedya. They were fed their lines during performance by the *apuntador*, who held the director's script, and, from a hidden location, read each stanza to the actors, who would declaim the lines in *dicho*, a singsong lilt designed to be heard by large audiences without the benefit of amplification.²⁹

26. Fernandez, *Palabas: essays on Philippine theater history*, 61.

27. Resil B. Mojares, *Origins and Rise of the Filipino Novel: A generic study of the novel until 1940* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1983), 68.

28. Fernandez, *Palabas: essays on Philippine theater history*, 67.

29. Vicente Rafael builds a significant section of the thesis of his book, Vicente L. Rafael, *The Promise of the Foreign: Nationalism and the Technics of Translation in the Spanish Philippines* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), on the importance of untranslated bits of Castilian in komedya. The audience's encounter with these untranslated foreign words was vital, he argues, for their imagining of the nation. Without examining the logic of this argument, it is worth noting that these untranslated Castilian words were stage directions which would only have been visible in the one copy of the script which sole property

Komedya were punctuated by *sainete*, comic skits performed during breaks. A favorite character in the komedya was the jester, or *pusong*. Unlike the other characters in the komedya who were not allowed to deviate even slightly from the script, the *pusong* could ad lib freely. He was allowed to make topical jests and political commentary. Such commentary, of course, was not preserved in the text of any komedya for historical analysis. The script of the komedya, with its stylization, authority, and structure, reinforced hierarchy and colonial values. In performance, the role of the *pusong* could often be subversive. We cannot, however, uncover this history through an analysis of the text of awit.

Fray Joaquin Martinez de Zuniga, who arrived in the Philippines in the late eighteenth century, noted that the native komedya tended to "satisfy the sight rather than the sense of hearing."³⁰ In particular, komedya were famous for their spectacular special effects. The audience delighted in fireworks set off on stage, characters lifted into the air with cords, and the brilliant marching patterns of the actors. As with the *pasyon*, the audience of komedya ate during performance, moved around, and talked loudly. They came and went freely and heckled actors who had trouble with their delivery.³¹

1.7 *Bernardo Carpio, awit*

The awit which Ileto examined in detail was the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*. The story of Bernardo Carpio was based upon the sixteenth century Spanish romances of Lope de Vega, in particular *Las Mocedades de Bernardo del Carpio* and *El Casamiento en la muerte*.³² The oldest extant copy of the *Historia Famosa* dates to 1860. Subsequent editions have no changes in them. The more widely available 1919 edition printed by J. Martinez was a verbatim reproduction of the 1860 text. This clearly indicates that there were not multiple versions of the Carpio awit in circulation nor was it a text based upon a pre-existing oral tradition. The *Historia Famosa* is an excellent example of the urbane, sophisticated compositions that came from the school of Huseng Sisiw and Francisco Baltazar in the mid-nineteenth century.

Damiana Eugenio in her work, *Awit and Corrido*³³, neatly summarized the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*. Her summary, which *Pasyon and Revolution* used almost word for word, collapsed together three distinct parts of the story which it would have been analytically useful to treat separately. The first is the narrative, based upon the Spanish text of Lope de Vega which relates the struggles of Bernardo both against the treacherous usurper who has betrayed his father, and against the moros. The second is the conclusion to the awit, which Eugenio treated as a localization and

of the director. How the audience encountered these words remains a mystery.

30. Fernandez, *Palabas: essays on Philippine theater history*, 9.

31. Doreen Fernandez writes that an audience member might "return home briefly to cook dinner, during the play. When she returns, she will not really have missed a major part of the story or skipped a beat of the feeling, not only because the plot is episodic and references are repetitive, but also because it is assumed, predictable, and she hardly needs the actual performance to unfold the story for herself" (*ibid.*, 177).

32. Castro, *Anthology of ASEAN Literatures: Philippine Metrical Romances*, 9.

33. Damiana L Eugenio, *Awit and Corrido: Philippine Metrical Romances* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1987). This work was originally Eugenio's dissertation at UCLA in 1965.

appendix. Bernardo Carpio, having conquered the moros, goes off to fight against ‘idolaters,’ worshippers of *anito* or spirits. He sees lightning strike and two mountains colliding against each other and he plunges in between them, with sword drawn, and the mountains close after him. Finally, Eugenio summarized a ‘legend’ which told how Bernardo Carpio was imprisoned in a cave in San Mateo but would soon be freed and would liberate the oppressed of the Philippines.

There are two problems with the presentation of the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio* in both Eugenio’s work and in *Pasyon and Revolution*. First, they drew a sharp line between the story of Carpio’s struggle against the moros and that of his subsequent struggle against idolatry. The latter section was treated as the localization of a foreign narrative, the “appropriation by the Tagalogs of a Spanish hero.”³⁴ Ileto argued that it is “curiously reminiscent of Colorum rituals.” (101) Many scholars, following Ileto, have gone so far as to treat this section of the awit as coded anti-colonialism; Christianity is seen as imprisoning pre-Hispanic beliefs. What these analyses overlook is the seamless connection between the two Carpio narratives, that of his struggle against the moros and of his subsequent struggle against idolaters. They are a single composition, written in the polished and sophisticated style of nineteenth century urban poetry. That which they treated as a ‘localization’ was in truth the extension of Spanish proselytization from the Moros to irredentist native beliefs. The colliding mountains, *nag-uumpugang bato* (literally ‘colliding rocks’), were a common feature of this belief system. Carpio travels here to fight the *anito* worshippers. He is not trapped at the end of the awit; rather, he enters the mountains to fight against residual pre-Hispanic beliefs. Eugenio and Ileto considered Carpio to be trapped because they read the awit in light of the separate legend.

The second problem in the treatment of this story was the incorporation of the Carpio legend as the conclusion to the awit. As we shall examine in detail below the legend was an entirely separate item, which emerged not from urban poets but from popular culture in opposition to the conclusion of the awit. It was never part of the text of the awit, nor was it ever performed in verse or circulated in written form. Legend is an entirely separate genre from folk poems, and the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio* was never even a folk poem; it was an elite textual composition. That *Pasyon and Revolution* asserted “our uncertainty as to whether or not it appeared in the published awit,” (101-2, fn. 39) clearly indicates a failure to draw a basic distinction in genre. Much can be gained by treating the legend as a separate entity and examining its history without allowing the *Historia Famosa* to color our expectations.

Ileto treated the characters in *Historia Famosa* as metaphors. Carpio learns of the treachery of his stepfather and the imprisonment of his true father. From this story, Ileto argued, came ideas of breaking with false, and of liberating true, parents. These ideas were used by Bonifacio to help break the masses away from their debt of gratitude (*utang na loób*) to Mother Spain. *Pasyon and Revolution* asserted, without any attempt at substantiation, that the masses felt indebted to Spain and conceived of their colonizers as their mother. The history of *remontado* migration, of entire populations fleeing to the mountains, which we shall examine later on, belies the existence of this

34. Reynaldo C. Ileto, “Bernardo Carpio: Awit and Revolution,” in *Filipinos and their Revolution: Event, Discourse and Historiography* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998), 9.

debt of gratitude. If Bonifacio truly was appealing to the masses using metaphors derived from Bernardo Carpio, and there is no evidence given for this, then his appeal would have fallen upon deaf ears.

1.8 *Chapbooks and class*

A glance at the back matter of the chapbooks in which late nineteenth century awit were published is instructive. These chapbooks were printed and sold in Manila by J. Martinez and are the source used by *Pasyon and Revolution* for its analysis of awit. At the back of several of the awit chapbooks one finds a page entitled *Salitaan sa Panyo*, 'speaking with handkerchiefs.' The page details a range of romantic messages that can be communicated by gestures with a handkerchief. "Ihaplós sa caliuáng camáy: Icao ay quinapopootan co"/Wipe across the left hand: I despise you. "Ticlopin ang manga dulo: Hintain mo aco."/Fold the ends: Wait for me. "Pilipitin nang camay na canan: May ibang iniibig aco"/Twist with the right hand: I love someone else. Other gestures with the handkerchief communicated: I have a fiancé, I am married, I am yours.³⁵ In like manner, the back page of another chapbook has the title *Salitaan sa pamaypay*/'Speaking with a fan' in its back matter, where we learn that to abruptly close the fan signified loathing, while to dangle the fan from the right hand was to indicate romantic availability.³⁶ The fan in question is not the large woven *anahaw* fans of the lower classes, but the delicate folding *abanico* fans of the elite. The back matter of the chapbooks makes very clear who was the audience for printed awit. It was the mestizo elite who, as they increased their wealth and power in the course of the nineteenth century, hispanized themselves, attempting to erase their indio and Chinese origins by the acquisition of artifacts, accents, behavior and culture from the Spanish metropole.

Nineteenth century awit was not the reading material of the peasantry or of the urban working class; they accessed these awit as komedya, that is, in performance. *Pasyon and Revolution* found the wrong idiom because it read the wrong sources in the wrong way.

2 LEGEND

2.1 *Reconstructing perception using the Carpio legend*

If the approach to awit and pasyon in *Pasyon and Revolution* is deeply flawed and fails to achieve its goal of understanding the consciousness of the masses, where can we look if we wish to find a source which can achieve this goal? In the legend of Bernardo Carpio, Ileto located a source with great potential for analyzing actual lower class categories of perception. How did he read this legend?

35. *Buhay nang Dalauang Magcasintahan na si Diego Marcilla at ni Isabel de Segura sa Ciudad Nang Teruel* (Manila: J. Martinez, 1916).

36. *Ang Calaguim-laguim na buhay na nasapit ni Samuel Beli-bet na sinumpa nang Dios at gumalagala magpahanga ngayon sa boong liniguidligail ng mundo* (Manila: J. Martinez, 1923).

As mentioned above, *Pasyon and Revolution*, like all other scholarly work written on the subject, treats the legend and the awit as intimately connected; the legend is seen as the popular continuation of the *Historia Famosa*. This approach extends to the legend the elite, textual hermeneutic employed in reading the awit. It also undermines recognition of the legend as a ‘hidden transcript’ of opposition to the urban elite who produced, and read, the awit.³⁷

Like other scholars, Ileto not only conflated awit and legend, but he also combined multiple separate legends and variations of legends into an admixture from which little historical insight can be gained. We must disambiguate and analyze the various sources of the Carpio legend, situate them in their original contexts, and recreate how they would have been performed.

To be clear, the narrative of Bernardo Carpio chasing lightning into the colliding mountains is not a legend. This is part of an urban literary tradition, and was an integral aspect of the original 1860 composition. It represented an attempt to proselytize irredentist native beliefs, which were identified with the nag-uumpugang bato, the colliding rocks. The nag-uumpugang bato, two sheer cliff faces separated by a narrow canyon, are a comparatively common geographic feature in the karst topography of the Sierra Madre massif. They feature prominently in many legends and would thus have been identified by the author of the awit with traditional native beliefs.

The earliest version of the legend which I have been able to locate tells of an ‘old man in the cave.’ Ileto and others treat later fragments of this story as part of the Carpio liberator legend. It is a separate legend entirely. Gironiere’s *Twenty Years in the Philippines* is a source to which we shall return in much detail. It contains an appendix written in English in 1853 by the British explorer H. Hamilton Lindsay. In this appendix Lindsay told of his journey with Gironiere to the cave of San Mateo. He concluded his account by summarizing a legend. No previous scholar has drawn attention to this text, so I shall quote it in its entirety:

They have a curious legend respecting the cavern, which has a singular resemblance to the German tale of the “Three Brothers,” in the Hartz Mountains. An Indian one day entered the cave to catch bats, with the wings of which they compound some sort of medicine. On arriving at the stream of water he saw a venerable old man on the other side, who offered his hand to help him across the stream. The Indian was rather shy of his new acquaintance, and held out the end of his stick, which the old man took, and it instantly turned into charcoal. Upon this the Indian became anxious to return, and thanking the old man for his politeness, told him he did not mean to go any further that day.

The old man then offered him three stones, and, to remove any fear of their burning his fingers, deposited them in the stream. The Indian took them, and retreated as quick as he could, without looking behind him; and, on examining the stones at the mouth of the cave, to his surprise he found them to be three masses of pure gold. The story did not go any further, as to what use he made

37. On the idea of hidden transcripts, see James C Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990).

of his riches. The old Indian who told me this story said it happened long before the arrival of the Spaniards.³⁸

Lindsay would have heard this legend through an interpreter. We do not have the actual text of the legend, evidence of the texture of its performance, or the context in which it was traditionally performed. What we have is a legend summary. It is nonetheless quite useful. It will allow us to separate the various elements which later became identified with the Carpio legend. As Lindsay's account was published seven years before Bernardo Carpio entered Philippine literature in the 1860 *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*, we can safely say that the original San Mateo cave legend had nothing to do with him.

The Carpio liberator legend was first summarized by Jose Rizal in his second novel, *El Filibusterismo*, which he published in 1891. The fifth chapter, *A Cochero's Christmas Eve*, tells of a calesa driver, a *cochero*, who has been detained by the *guardía civil* because he was missing his *cedula*, the obligatory identification card of Spanish colonialism. As he is driving his passenger Basilio to the town of San Diego, they encounter a Christmas procession. The cochero sees the Three Kings in the procession,

And, observing that the black was wearing a crown and was a king like the other two Spaniards, he naturally thought of the King of the *Indios* and sighed. "Do you know, Señor," he asked Basilio respectfully, "if the right foot is free by now?"

Basilio repeated the question.

"The right foot? Whose?"

"The King's!" answered the *cochero* in a low voice with much mystery.

"Which King?"

"Our King, the King of the *Indios*..."

Basilio smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

The *cochero* sighed again. The *Indios* in the countryside treasure a legend that their king, imprisoned and chained in the cave of San Mateo, will one day come to deliver them from oppression. Every hundred years he breaks one of his chains and he already has his hands and his left foot loose; only the right foot remains chained. This king causes earthquakes and tremors when he struggles or is agitated. He is so strong that one can shake his hand only by holding out a bone, which upon contact with him is reduced to powder. For no explainable reason, the natives call him King Bernardo, perhaps confusing him with Bernardo Carpio.

"When the right foot is free," murmured the *cochero*, letting out a sigh, "I will give him my horses. I will place myself at his service and die for him... He will free us from the *civiles*."³⁹

Here we find preserved in Rizal's work a legend about an imprisoned liberator in the 'cave of San Mateo.' Aspects of the legend derive from the Old Man in the Cave

38. H. Hamilton Lindsay, "Testimony of H. Hamilton Lindsay, Esq." chap. Appendix II in *Twenty Years in the Philippines*, by Paul Proust de la Gironiere (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1854), 353-4.

39. José Rizal, *El Filibusterismo*, trans. Soledad Lacson-Locsin (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 36.

legend, namely holding out the bone which upon contact is ‘reduced to powder,’ which corresponds to the stick turning to charcoal in Lindsay’s version of the legend. We are still dealing with a legend summary, however; we do not have the actual text of the legend. Rizal accurately placed the legend on the lips of a member of the working class, a cochero, the driver of a horse-drawn *calesa*.

Claudio Miranda, in a 1911 work on Philippine customs, provides us with additional insight into the legend.

Popular credulity has gone so far as to hope for the liberation of Bernardo del Carpio, one of the fantastic characters of Tagalog legend, imprisoned, according to the imagination of the commoners, between the two enormous rocks of Biaknabató, so that he might exterminate the hunters who defend the Spanish forces. Nothing more is lacking but to free a single foot (*paa na lamang ang culang*) in order to escape – they assure us – and when he is free, the war will be over, for Bernardo del Carpio can do anything.⁴⁰

Miranda’s version of the legend is problematic on many levels. He was at a greater historical remove from the context of the performance of the legend. He was a much less sensitive observer of Philippine society than José Rizal. He refers to Carpio as Bernardo *del* Carpio, the name used in the Spanish version of Lope de Vega; in Philippine literature he is known simply as Bernardo Carpio, the locative has become a surname.

Miranda places Carpio not at San Mateo, but at Biaknabató, another location famed for its nag-uumpugang bato.⁴¹ It seems unlikely that Miranda is recording a geographical variant of the legend; rather, he is simply erring in his summary. He does, however, provide us with an invaluable fragment of an actual performance of the legend: “Paa na lamang ang kulang/only the foot is lacking.”

A version of the legend recorded in 1917 has Rizal visiting the old man in the cave of San Mateo who is revealed to be Bernardo Carpio. Rizal extends a bone to Carpio and it crumbles to dust when he touches it. Rizal returns and informs others that Carpio has only one foot still chained.⁴² In a version of the legend documented in 1940, Carpio is no longer chained, but imprisoned by God “for his sins” and is lying among the dead. A bone is extended to him and he crumbles it to dust. He tells his visitor to devoutly say “Christum” to ward off danger, adding that he would soon rise to save the ‘oppressed people,’ in keeping with the reasons of Almighty God (100).

By the time these last two legends were summarized, Bernardo Carpio had become a residual tradition. Idiolect had come to dominate performance. Elements persist: the

40. “A tanto había llegado la credulidad popular, que, hasta esperaban la liberación de Bernardo del Carpio, uno de los personajes fantásticos de una leyenda tagala, preso, según la imaginación del vulgo, entre las dos enormes rocas de Biaknabató, para exterminar á los cazadores que defendían las avanzadas españolas. No le falta más que soltarse un solo pie (*paa na lamang ang culang*) para escaparse – aseguraban – y cuando esté libre, la guerra habrá terminado, porque Bernardo del Carpio todo lo puede.” (Claudio R. Miranda, *Costumbres populares* [Manila: Cultura Filipina, 1911], 62-3).

41. Biaknabató achieved infamy during the Revolution, after the death of Bonifacio, for the conclusion of a treaty of peace between the Spanish government and the forces of Emilio Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo and his coterie of leaders received 800,000 Mexican dollars for the cessation of hostilities and went into exile in Hong Kong. The rank-and-file continued the revolution against Spain in their absence.

42. Ileto, “Rizal and the Underside of Philippine History,” 41.

bone, San Mateo, etc., but the legend was no longer anchored in a community. These later summaries are of dubious value for recreating legend performance at the time of the Philippine revolution.

We see a dynamic and evolving legend with multiple variants. Ileto, like all other scholars on this subject, collapsed these variants together as a single narrative. Having conflated these variants, what use does Ileto make of the legend? He connected the legend with Bonifacio, telling of Bonifacio's journey in 1895 to the cave of San Mateo. Bonifacio and his katipunero associates traveled to the cave during Holy Week. "Could it be merely coincidental ... that the group chose the Holy Week of April, from Holy Tuesday to Holy Saturday, to make the climb?" (99) *Pasyon and Revolution* inquired. The question implies that the trek of the Katipunan leaders should be linked with religious journeys and pilgrimages, and the collection of anting-anting. But Bonifacio and his companions traveled during Holy Week for a more mundane reason, one which any worker would understand. During Holy Week all business shuts down. This would have been the only opportunity for a group of eight wage laborers to travel together and to do so without raising suspicion.⁴³

It does not matter that the leaders of the Katipunan traveled during Holy Week for purely pragmatic reasons, that there was no "pilgrimage," that Bonifacio did not write on the wall – what is important, according to Ileto, is how the 'masses' would have perceived the event. What do we learn in *Pasyon and Revolution* from the Carpio legend, and Bonifacio's visit to the cave of San Mateo? Sadly, little. According to Ileto, the masses actually believe in existence of Bernardo Carpio. The masses inhabit "a society where King Bernardo Carpio was no less real than the Spanish governor-general."⁴⁴ Bonifacio, by traveling to the cave, was perceived as identifying with this real king, he was seen as trying to awaken him. Bonifacio thus inspired the devotion of the masses. Ileto treated the legend of Bernardo Carpio as a counter-rational, messianic means of mobilizing dissent.

To read legends as embodiments of the actual beliefs of the 'masses' is to read in a manner that is both elite and naïve.

How should we read legend?

2.2 Legend as Performance

To understand the significance of the Carpio legend we must do more than establish the meanings of the words and sayings it contained. We must seek the effect of the legend's performance in its historical social context.

The performance of a legend, when addressed to a community familiar with it, brings to life an entire body of tradition. To grasp the legend's meaning we need to recreate the lost context of oral tradition which lurks behind the extected or summa-

43. A British businessman, living in Manila at the time, wrote: "To-day is the beginning of Easter Week, nearly all of whose days are holidays or holy days. This is one of the closest-observed seasons of the year, and on next Thursday and Friday, if you will believe it, no carriages are allowed to appear in the streets either of Manila or the other cities ... It seems the proper thing to do to make arrangements with some of the English colony [i.e., the other English residents of Manila] to take a trip off into the mountains..." (Joseph Earle Stevens, *Yesterdays in the Philippines* [London: Sampson Low, Marston, & Co., 1898], 58-9).

44. Ileto, "Rizal and the Underside of Philippine History," 63.

rized utterance. Tradition cannot be reduced to intertextuality, it is the entire nexus of ideas and allusions which a culture creates and upon which it thrives.

Oral traditions generally have a great deal of regional variation. For the legend genre in particular it is the geographical referents, the allusions to place, which most commonly vary as the legend spreads. It is striking that the summaries of the Carpio legend preserve the geographic specificity of the caves of San Mateo. Timothy Tangherlini summarized the scholarship on the legend genre in his article, "It happened not too far from here..."

Legend, typically, is a short (mono-) episodic, traditional, highly ecotyphified, historicized narrative performed in a conversational mode, reflecting on a psychological level a symbolic representation of folk belief and collective experiences and serving as a reaffirmation of commonly held values of the group to whose tradition it belongs.⁴⁵

The "high ecotypification" to which Tangherlini refers is geographic, this is why legends "happen not too far from here." Why then did the Carpio legend resist localization away from San Mateo? The answer is that San Mateo was indispensable to the legend. Oral performance invokes the large and invisible body of tradition through the use of metonym, a part representing the whole. A particular fragment of tradition is insistently repeated in performance. When entexted these awkward repetitions are often smoothed over and erased to match the literary sensibilities of the reading audience. These repeated fragments serve as integers which, to an audience alive to the body of tradition being invoked, convey meanings far larger than the actual words suggest.

This metonymic indexicality allows the performer to communicate in a restricted code, one intelligible to others familiar with the code, but seemingly innocuous or nonsensical to those outside it. Thus, the phrase which we found in Miranda's work, "paa na lamang ang kulang/only the foot is lacking" would have served, for those familiar with it, to refer to the entire Carpio legend and its broader meanings; to outsiders, however, it would seem to be meaningless or simply an example of the superstitious credulity of the masses. There is thus a rupture in meaning when metonymic references are listened to outside of their intended register. By failing to pay heed to the register of performance and to the indexical role of certain elements in the legend, Ileto and Rizal arrived at the idea that the masses sincerely believed in the existence of an actual king.

Legend is the "reaffirmation of the commonly held values of the group;" the performance of legend is perlocutionary, it enacts community solidarity. This could be done in the presence of the ruling classes without fear of reprisal. The odd phrase "paa na lamang ang kulang/only the foot is lacking," which Miranda gives us, would have served to invoke the entire Bernardo Carpio legend for those familiar with it, while leaving elite observers mystified.

To those attuned to the register of performance and to its metonymic function, each performance of an element of oral tradition serves not to create new meaning but

45. Timothy R. Tangherlini, "'It Happened Not Too Far from Here...': A Survey of Legend Theory and Characterization," *Western Folklore* 49, no. 4 (1990): 385.

rather to invoke meaning which was already immanent in the tradition. Around what aspects of tradition did the Bernardo Carpio legend strengthen community solidarity? What are the repeated metonymic elements of the legend? The pervasiveness of the Carpio legend throughout the Tagalog speaking provinces and its strong resistance to synchronic ecotypification at the time of the Philippine revolution both point to the geographic elements of legend being of central metonymic significance. What body of traditions would reference to San Mateo invoke?

To anticipate results which I shall substantiate in detail: the Carpio legend was not a counter-rational messianic means of mobilizing dissent; it was a record of resistance. Through the geographical metonym of San Mateo, the Carpio legend preserved and celebrated the memory of social banditry.

2.3 *Pamitinan and Tapusi*

To make clear how the Carpio legend and San Mateo referred to social banditry, we must make the relationship between Pamitinan and Tapusi evident. No scholar has yet studied the relationship of these locations and so it will be necessary to go into some detail. Pamitinan is a mountain and is the location of the caves of San Mateo. Ileto often referred to this mountain as Tapusi. Why? What were these two places?

Sixto de los Angeles, the president of the Provincial Board of Health in the province of Rizal, writing on October 27, 1902, analyzed the sources of the Manila's water supply. The water came from the mountains of Montalban. A parenthetical aside in his report is instructive.

The stream flowing toward Montalban is very small near its source but it receives the water from several branches in the various points where the river passes, some of which are larger than the principal stream, the more important being, from its origin, the following: Lumutan (the name comes from the fact that rain falls throughout the year and the trees are always green), Sare or *Tapusi* (*popular name since immemorial times as an inaccessible den of ladrones*) Uyungan, Dumiri, Taladoy, Tayabasan, Bunbunan, Astampa, Kal, Kayrupa (where a larger stream enters), Kaykaro, and then the caves, distant about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Montalban, at which point the river passes between two mountains, forming the caves. Many people think these caves are the origin of the river, but in fact only one small stream issues from one of the caves. The mountains here form a narrow defile with many large marble stones.⁴⁶

The mountains forming a 'narrow defile' are the 'nag-uumpugang bato' of the Carpio legend. Montalban and San Mateo were adjacent towns and the caves were occasionally referred to as the caves of Montalban. In this paragraph we see that an important source of Manila's water, the San Mateo river, which rushes through the gorge at the foot of Pamitinan and Sasocsungan mountains, has its origins in a region named Lumutan and runs through Tapusi, which was "since immemorial times

46. Sixto de los Angeles, "Exhibit C: Sources of Manila's Water Supply," in *Fourth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission, 1903*, vol. 3 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), 221, emphasis added.

an inaccessible den of ladrones." Ladrones were bandits, widely known as tulisanes. The cave of Bernardo Carpio is in Mount Pamitinan, which is on a spur of the Sierra Madre massif; this spur was referred to as the Mountains of San Mateo. It is the closest encroachment of the Sierra Madre mountains to Manila.⁴⁷

'Lumutan' was another name for the Limutan river valley; it is over forty kilometers from San Mateo, and was separated by uncharted mountainous terrain. How then did Tapusi come to be identified with Pamitinan, so that Ileto and other scholars would speak of Bonifacio's ascent of Mt. Tapusi?

2.4 *Gironiere, Dumas, history and fantasy*

One of the earliest and most important sources for this examination is Paul Proust de Gironiere's work. Gironiere's writings are prickly, problematic sources. Of all the travel narratives written in the Philippines in the nineteenth century, his account was based on the most time spent there. Gironiere lived in the rural Philippines for twenty years from 1819 to 1839, the owner of a plantation on a Laguna peninsula known as Jalajala. His work is regarded as an excellent source on the cholera epidemic of 1820 and the massacre of the French residents, who were blamed by indios for the outbreak. The cholera riots provoked fears of revolution among the Spanish authorities in the wake of events in Mexico.⁴⁸ As Gironiere is a source of much unique information, it is necessary to investigate his credibility.

Gironiere claims in the preface to his work that he was inspired to write his own version of events when he read a *feuilleton* by Alexandre Dumas Père in *Le Constitutionnel*. This feuilleton was subsequently published as *Les Mille et un Fantomes*. Dumas' novel was a mélange of material: several lengthy and unconnected narratives, a memoir of one of Dumas' recently deceased friends, and a story entitled *Les mariages de pere Olifus*. *Les mariages* told of M. Olifus, who, pursued by his mermaid wife, journeys to Bidondo⁴⁹ (*sic*) and meets a Chinese woman, Vanly Tching, whom he marries. He then travels to Halahala [*sic*] where he converses with M. de la Geronnier [*sic*].⁵⁰

In the late 1840's Gironiere had been holding forth in the salons of Nantes, regaling audiences with his tales of adventure in the Philippines and word of his stories reached the intellectually omnivorous Dumas. Stories of banditry were regarded as romantic and were wildly popular in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century⁵¹, and Gironiere

47. On Pamitinan, Sasocsungan and the cave, see Manuel Buzeta, *Diccionario Geografico-Estadistico-Historico de las Islas Filipinas* (Madrid: Imprenta de D. Jose C de la Pena, 1850), s.v Pamitinan; s.v. Mateo (San).

48. Ken De Bevoise, *Agents of apocalypse: epidemic disease in the colonial Philippines* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1995), 29.

49. Binondo, Manila's Chinatown.

50. This story was subsequently published separately from *Les Mille et un Fantomes* and all succeeding editions of *Les Milles* lacked the story of M. Olifus. Thus Andrew Brown's delightful recent translation, Alexandre Dumas, *One Thousand and One Ghosts*, trans. Andrew Brown (London: Hesperus Classics, 2004), with its ghastly ruminations on the persistence of consciousness in guillotined heads does not contain Olifus' narrative or the encounter with Gironiere. *Les mariages* was translated into English and published as Alexandre Dumas, *The Man with Five Wives* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson and Brothers, n.d.)

51. On this point see Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, Revised Ed (New York: New Press, 2000).

told many bandit stories. Stumbling upon himself as a character in *Le Constitutionelle*, Gironiere wrote to Dumas and offered to sell his own story for publication in Dumas' new journal, *Le Mousquetaire*.

Europe had just been rocked by a series of working class revolutions and their bloody suppression by governments. A marked shift occurred in Dumas' writing. An author who previously wrote romanticized yet trenchantly political stories, in historical settings which were but lightly fictionalized, Dumas now wrote a volume of fantasy with ghosts and mermaids and a journey to the exotic orient.

Dumas was well aware of the political reality from which his work was moving away. The opening chapter of *Les Milles et un Fantomes* is masterful in its realistic depiction of the working class. The narrator leaves Paris and travels to Fontenay-aux-Roses. As he passes Grand-Montrouge he sees quarries, where men run in gigantic wheels, engaged in "squirrel-like labor," raising stones from the depths. "[I]f he actually rose one step in height each time his foot rested on a strut, after twenty-three years he would have reached the moon."

He compares the landscape to a Goya engraving and notes that these are the stones that built Paris. The land has an abyss beneath its seemingly beautiful scenery through which a man could fall. "The verdant earth that seems so alluring rests on nothing; you can, if you set your foot over one of these cracks, quite easily disappear."

The populace of these galleries has a separate physiognomy and character. "You often hear of an accident: a prop has collapsed, a rope has snapped, a man has been crushed. On the surface of the earth, this is taken to be a misfortune: thirty feet under, it is known to be a crime ... The appearance of the quarrymen is in general sinister ... Whenever there's any civil commotion, it is rare that the men we have just been trying to depict do not get involved. When the shout goes up at the barrière d'Enfer, 'Here come the men from the Montrouge quarry!' the people living in nearby streets shake their heads and shut their doors."⁵²

From this realistic depiction of working class anger, Dumas turns to a story of ghosts, and a journey to the exotic east. The culmination of this journey into unreality is the encounter with 'Geronniere.'

The revolutions of 1848-49 saw the rise of realism in art; for Dumas, they marked a flight from reality. His later work served as the inspiration for Hoffmann's Nutcracker. There was nothing innocent in this literary choice by Dumas; he dedicated *Les Milles et un Fantomes* to the Orleans dynasty.

Thus, Dumas made a shift in his writing to fantasy and Gironiere's salon fabrications provided the content of that fantasy for him. Gironiere's work told how he single-handedly stopped a war, visited cannibals and headhunters and ate brains with them, and, above all, how he constantly encountered, captured, and conversed with bandits.

While Gironiere was waiting for his stories to be published in *Le Mousquetaire*⁵³, he tried getting them published elsewhere. He published his adventures as *Vingt Années* in 1853. He revised this slightly and republished it as *L'Aventures d'un Breton* in 1855,

52. Dumas, *One Thousand and One Ghosts*, 4-6.

53. In which journal it was serialized in 1855.

adding an appendix.⁵⁴

We have thus from the outset many reasons to be skeptical of Gironiere's writing. His account was the most widely read popular work on the Philippines in the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Many travelers noted in their own accounts the fictional nature of Gironiere's stories; some did so gently, others not so gently.

John Bowring, fourth governor of Hong Kong, wrote in 1859,

I can hardly pass over unnoticed M. de la Gironiere's romantic book, as it was the subject of frequent conversations in the Philippines. No doubt he has dwelt there twenty years; but in the experience of those who have lived there more than twice twenty I found little confirmation of the strange stories which are crowded into his strange volume . . . M. de la Gironiere may have aspired to the honour of a Bernardin de St. Pierre or a Defoe, and have thought a few fanciful and tragic decorations would add to the interest of this personal drama. "All the world's a stage," and as a player thereon M. de la Gironiere perhaps felt himself authorized in the indulgence of some latitude of description, especially when his chosen "stage" was one meant to exhibit the wonders of travel.⁵⁶

Henry Ellis can be read on the subject with amusement. He begins his travels in the Philippines in deep admiration of Gironiere's work and is gradually disappointed on all counts. This disappointment is told in a tongue-in-cheek fashion. On journeying to Lagunita de Socol, he remarks, "Gironiere estimates this hill at 1,200 or 1,500 feet high; we thought, unanimously, that about 100 was nearer to the mark. . ."⁵⁷ Ellis tells of traveling to Jalajala, Gironiere's former estate, of looking for "Tulisanies," [sic] of his assessment of Gironiere's description of a kalabaw/carabao, and of desiring to eat brains, "a la Gironiere," and is each time disappointed and yet still praises Gironiere's book. Cf. ia pp. 15, 88, 91-2, 94-7, 102-3, 191, 207.

Laurence Oliphant remarks wryly of Gironiere, whom he refers to as "that amusing but most audacious romancer," "we trust, for the sake of La Gironiere's credit as a sportsman, that he displayed as much courage with his rifle as he certainly has with his pen."⁵⁸

Finally, the German naturalist, Fedor Jagor, remarks in a footnote on Gironiere, "The raw materials of these adventures were supplied by a French planter, M. de la Gironiere, but their literary parent is avowedly Alexander Dumas."⁵⁹

54. Even this addition has occasional moments that would appear to be playful or fictionalized. In a list of Tagalog words and their French equivalents, Gironiere lists susu as saint (holy). Susu, depending on the accent, means either snail or breast.

55. Rodney J. Sullivan, *Exemplar of Americanism: the Philippine career of Dean C. Worcester* (Ann Arbor: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1991), 56.

56. John Bowring, *A Visit to the Philippine Islands* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1859), 101-2.

57. Henry T. Ellis, *Hong Kong to Manilla [sic] and the Lakes of Luzon, in the Philippine Isles, in the Year 1856* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1859), 103.

58. Laurence Oliphant, *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan in the Years 1857, '58, '59, Second*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1860), 88-9.

59. Fedor Jagor, *Travels in the Philippines* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1875), 29; The original German work, *Reisen in den Philippinen*, was published in 1873. No translator is cited for the 1875 English edition.

2.5 *Gironiere and 'Tapuzi'*

All of that said, Gironiere was a plantation owner in rural southern Luzon from 1819 to 1839. This is a period and a location for which we have few sources. Any accurate material which could be gleaned from his account would thus be unique.⁶⁰ We must, however, approach this material with extreme caution and deep hermeneutical suspicion if we are to recover anything of historical value. Our approach must discard as historically unreliable any portion of the text which glorifies Gironiere.⁶¹

Gironiere wrote of an excursion to 'Tapuzi.' He introduced Tapuzi as "a place where bandits, when hotly pursued, were enabled to conceal themselves with impunity."⁶² It was "situated in the mountains of Limutan. Limutan is a Tagalog word, signifying 'altogether forgotten.'" The name Tapuzi, he stated, meant 'end of the world.'

Gironiere claimed that Tapuzi was formed in Limutan by bandits and men who had escaped from the galleys, who now "live in liberty, and govern themselves ... I have often heard this singular village mentioned, but I had never met anyone who visited it, or could give any positive details relative to it."

In his story he travels with a guide, a former bandit, up a ravine which was defended from above by stones which could be pushed down upon intruders. An immense block of stone falls in front of them; it is a warning. They are then led by guide from Tapuzi to a village of sixty thatched huts. He meets with the 'matanda sa nayon'/village elder, leader of Tapuzi. When Gironiere identifies himself, the old man responds, "It is a long time since I heard you spoken of as an agent of the government for pursuing unfortunate men, but I have heard also that you fulfilled your mission with much kindness, and that often you were their protector, so be welcome."

The 'Tapuzians' feed Gironiere "milled corn and kidney potatoes." This is an accurate description of a diet which swidden agriculture in the Sierra Madre mountains would have allowed. Although the majority of *kaingin* – mountain or jungle fields cleared for planting – are used for rice, occasionally corn is grown instead. The old man tells Gironiere, "Several years ago ... at a period I cannot recollect, some men came to live in Tapuzi. The peace and safety they enjoyed made others imitate their example ..." Tapuzi would thus have been populated by waves of remontado migration. This

60. Gironiere is not only an important source of historical information; he was an important literary influence. He wrote a small privately published work late in his life entitled, Paul de la Gironiere, *Mœurs Indiennes et Quelques Pensées Philosophiques Pendant un Voyage a Majajai (Iles Philippines)* (Nantes: Imprimerie de Vincent Forest et Émile Grimaud, 1862). It received no notice in the nineteenth century, but wound up as item 1184 in T.H. Pardo de Tavera's *Biblioteca Filipina*. The ilustrado community in Madrid would thus have had access to this text. It tells of a journey to Majayjay, the site of the Cofradía de San Jose uprising, and of Gironiere's encounter with a bandit, with whom he has a lengthy discussion about legal and illegal means of changing society. The dialogue parallels the Ibarra-Elias dialogue of Rizal's *Noli* very closely. The work was translated into English as Paul de la Gironiere, *Journey to Majayjay*, trans. E. Aguilar Cruz (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1983). The dialogue with the bandit runs from pages 19 to 31.

61. For instance, Gironiere told a story of shooting a monstrous crocodile. Many ridiculed the story as outlandish. The truth was a bit more complicated. There was an enormous saltwater crocodile shot when and where Gironiere claimed. The skull was sent to Harvard Museum of Natural History and is still displayed there. Gironiere, however, did not shoot the crocodile; an English visitor to the region did. See Thomas Barbour, "An historic crocodile skull," *Copeia* 126 (1924): 16.

62. Paul de la Gironiere, *Twenty Years in the Philippines* (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1962), 113; all of the following is taken from this account pp. 113-7.

corresponds with our few other sources on the matter.

The old man tells Gironiere of the social and economic structure of the village. "Almost all is in common ... he who possesses anything gives to him who has nothing. Almost all our clothing is knitted and woven by our wives; the abaca ... from the forest supplies us the thread that is necessary; we do not know what money is, we do not require any. Here there is no ambition; each one is certain of not suffering from hunger. From time to time strangers come to visit us. If they are willing to submit to our laws, they remain with us; they have a fortnight of probation to go through before they decide. Our laws are lenient and indulgent."

Based on this information, Gironiere describes Tapuzi as "a real, great phalanstery, composed of brothers, almost all worthy of the name ... On the other hand, what an example that was of free man not being able to live without choosing a chief, and bringing one another back to the practice of virtuous actions!" Gironiere is editorializing. His reference to phalansteries and thus to Fourier, is completely out of place. Hermeneutical suspicion dictates that we must throw out all of his material on the social structure of Tapuzi. The line about not knowing what money is, is particularly suspect; it is likely that the remontado population was actively engaged in trade.

The old man continues. Formerly 'Tapuzians' lived "like savages." But the old man had restored Christian practices. "I ... put my people in mind that they were born Christians." He officiated mass, celebrated marriages, and baptized infants. Information in Norman Owen's study of Bicol indicates that remontados would occasionally enter the villages to receive religious services.⁶³ We will discard Gironiere's claims regarding the old man functioning as the village priest.

Gironiere offers to inform the Archbishop of Manila that he might send a priest. The old man declines. "We should certainly be glad to have a minister of the Gospel here, but soon, under his influence, we should be subjected to the Spanish government. It would be requisite for us to have money to pay our contributions. Ambition would creep in among us, and from the freedom we now enjoy, we should gradually sink into a state of slavery, and should no longer be happy." This seems again to be Gironiere editorializing.

None of the Tapuzian women, Gironiere observes, had ever been out of their village, and had scarcely ever left their huts. This statement is absurd.

Prior to Gironiere's departure the old man tells him a legend: "At a time when the Tapuzians were without religion, and lived as wild beasts, God punished them. Look at all the part of that mountain quite stripped of vegetation: one night, during a tremendous earthquake, that mountain split in two – one part swallowed up the half of the village that then stood on the place where those enormous rocks are. A few hundred steps further on all would have been destroyed; there would no longer have existed a single person in Tapuzi; but a part of the population was not injured, and came and settled themselves where the village now is. Since then we pray to the Almighty, and live in a manner so as not to deserve so severe a chastisement as that experienced by the wretched victims of that awful night."

63. Norman G Owen, *Prosperity without Progress: Manila Hemp and Material Life in the Colonial Philippines* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1984).

We are at many degrees of remove from any original legend that Gironiere may have heard. All that we can say to be likely is that there was a legend associated with Tapusi which pertained to a mountain which was split in two. This correlates nicely with the many legends of nag-uumpugang bato. We thus see the legend of the origin of Tapusi associated with the same geographical feature which dominates the Carpio legend of San Mateo. We cannot however treat the text of the legend as it is found in Gironiere's account seriously; it is a continuation of his editorializing. In the end, we must conclude that all of his conversation with the old man is suspect and should be discarded for purposes of historical reconstruction.

Vingt Années was translated by the author and published in the United States in 1854 as *Twenty years in the Philippines*. The English edition did not include a map. *Vingt Années*, however, did. (See fig. 1.) It is a beautiful, A4 sized fold-out map in the back of the book, and is unique in Philippine cartography.⁶⁴ The map clearly indicates the approximate location of Tapuzi, at considerable remove from San Mateo and Pamitinan, in the Limutan valley. Waterways are marked in blue, Jala-jala in pink. The waterway which enters Laguna de Bay at Tanay stretches up between Bosoboso and Tapuzi. Valle Tapuzi sits between two rivers which unite to its south and head eastward off the map. These rivers are not printed in blue, but are clear. At the upper left a winding river is labeled Valle de Lanatin, on the upper right, "Sabang del Rº. Limutan." This fork never reaches the top of the page. The river that they unite to form reads "Rº. Gaudaboso aue desagua en el mar de Binangonan de Lampong." To the right of this river: "Darangitan." [Daraitan]

This location for Tapuzi/Tapusi is historically accurate. It is borne out by a history of the parishes of the religious province of San Gregorio Magno written in 1865 by the discalced Franciscan friar Félix de Huerta. A paragraph buried within the 720 page tome states

LIMOTAN

Some eight leagues distant from the mission of San Andres, to the north across an elevated spine of mountains, is the River Limotan and on its banks is a ranchería [small settlement], which, was gathered by Francisco de Barajas, and made Christian by the signing of a pact on May 6, 1670, and on the next day May 7, in the said year, were baptized the first seven people of the said ranchería. From the year of 1670 to that of 1675 the fervent zeal of the above mentioned Fr. Francisco de Barajas caused many more to join the mission, including the surrounding rancherías named Tapusi, Asbat, Mamoyao, Macalia, Dadanbidig and Maquiriquiri, Bantas, and Binoagan.

This mission grew prosperously until the year 1700, at which time the government had intended to oblige the mission to pay tribute. All fled to the mountains, the mission was completely lost.⁶⁵

64. Paul de la Gironiere, *Vingt Années aux Philippines: Souvenirs de Jala-Jala*. (Paris: Comptoir des Imprimeurs Unis, 1853).

65. "A unas ocho leguas distante de la mision de S Andrés, hacia el N atravesando una elevada cordillera de montes, se halla el rio Limotan y en su margen habia una ranchería, la cual, convino con nuestro R.P. Fr. Francisco de Barajas, hacerse cristiana por escritura firmada el dia 6 de Mayo de 1670, y en efecto el siguiente dia 7 de Mayo, de dicho año, fueron bautizadas la siete primeras personas de dicha ranchería. Desde este

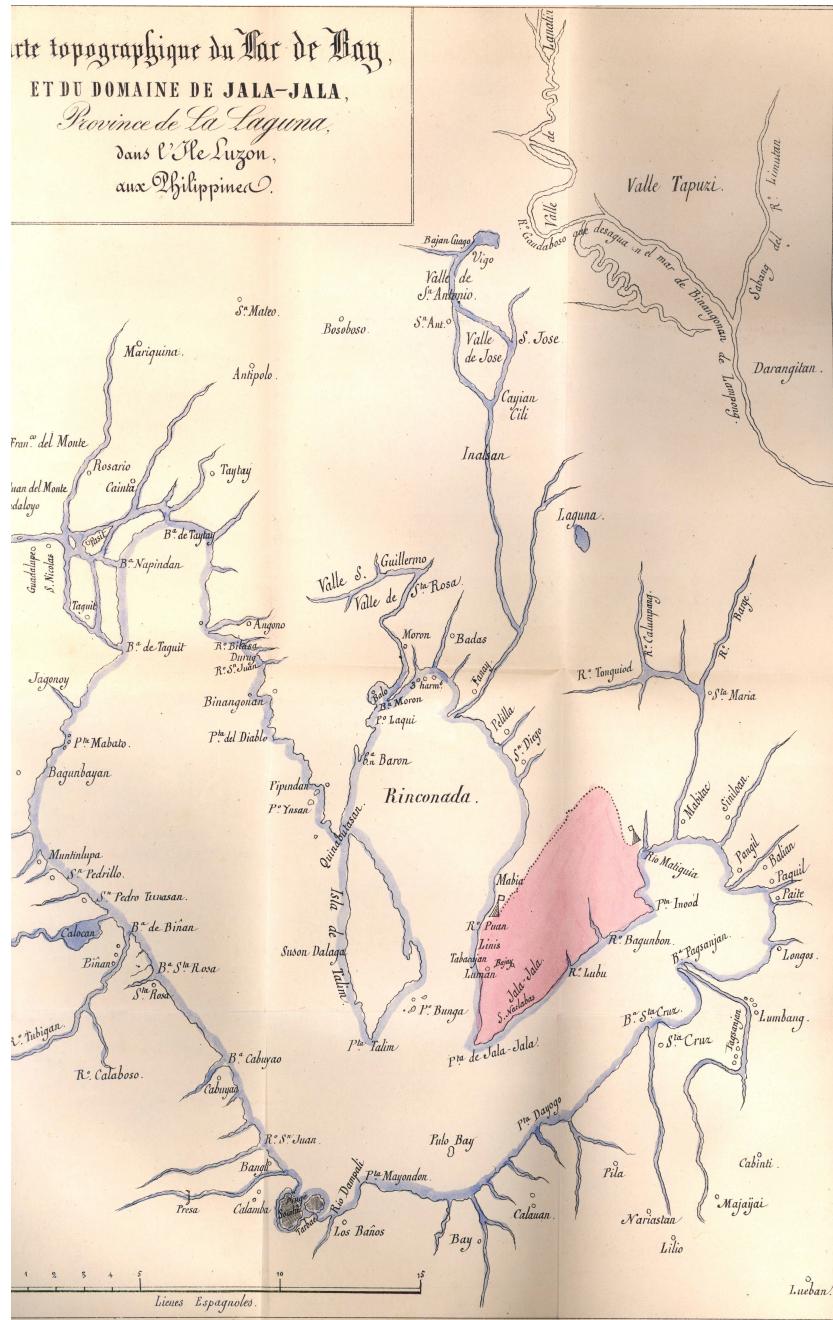


Figure 1: Carte Topographique du Lac de Bay.

Here we see that prior to being an “inaccessible den of ladrones,” Tapusi was a ranchería, a small pueblo. It became part of the Spanish mission of San Andres, in the ‘Limotan’ river valley, but the residents fled to the mountains as remontados in 1700 when forced to pay tribute. Gironiere’s geography is accurate.

Gironiere’s account pared back to its core of plausible historical details reveals a community of remontados, built up by waves of migration, engaged in subsistence corn agriculture, located in the Limutan River valley, with an origin legend based on the same geographical feature as the Bernardo Carpio legend: nag-uumpugang bato.

And what of the cave of San Mateo?

2.6 *Tourist pilgrimages*

Bonifacio’s trek to San Mateo could be situated within a history of ‘pilgrimage,’ but it would be a very different history from that which *Pasyon and Revolution* suggested. There was an established tradition of European tourists traveling to the cave of San Mateo in the nineteenth century.

In a separate section of his book, Gironiere writes of traveling to see the cave of San Mateo. He tells of going between two “monster mountains … equally alike and similar in height.”⁶⁶ His story goes into great detail of the spelunking which he and Hamilton Lindsay undertook, through subterranean chambers and between enormous stalactites. He does not mention Tapuzi in the context of the cave of San Mateo, nor does he mention San Mateo in his journey to Tapuzi. At the time of his explorations the conflation of the two locations had not yet occurred.

Surveying the accounts written by foreigners visiting Luzon in the nineteenth century we almost always find a reference or two to the caves of San Mateo. It was a popular destination among the more bold adventurers to visit Manila.

The Scottish businessman, Robert MacMicking, wrote

Some miles beyond Marquina, there is a most curious cave, of great extent, at the village of San Mateo, which is well worthy of a visit by the curious. Shortly after entering it, the height of the cavern rises to about fifty feet, although it varies continually, – so much so, that at some places there is scarcely height enough for a man to sit upright … The temperature within the cavern was 77°, and without, 86°, being a very considerable change, even in the cool of the evening, on coming out of it, just after sunset. I am afraid to give an estimate as to the extent of this immense cave; it requires, however, five or six hours to partially see its curiosities, and of course would take far more time to investigate it properly. The only living creatures met within it,

año de 1670 hasta el de 1675 fueron agregándose á esta mision por el celo fervoroso del citado Fr Francisco de Barajas, las rancherías circunvecinas denominadas Tapusi, Asbat, Mamoyao, Macalia, Dadanbidig, y Maquiriquiri, Bantas, y Binoagan.”

“Esta mision siguió prósperamente hasta el año de 1700, en cuya época habiendo intentado el Superior Gobierno obligarlos á pagar tributo, se huyeron todos al monte, perdiéndose enteramente la mision.” (Félix de Huerta, *Estado geográfico, topográfico, estadístico, histórico-religioso de la santa y apostólica provincia de S. Gregorio Magno* [Binondo: Imprenta de M Sánchez y Co., 1863], 573).

66. Gironiere, *Twenty Years in the Philippines*, 128.

[sic] appear to be bats, which are not very numerous.⁶⁷.

Joseph Stevens travelled to the cave in May, 1894, less than a year before the Katipunan visited the cave during Holy Week, 1895. He wrote,

After a jolly good bath, and a few preparations, our party of four, with the two boys and two guides, started up a steep valley in among lofty mountains to the so-called caves of Montalvan.[sic] One of our guides was the principal of a village school, who held sway over a group of little Indian girls under a big mango-tree, and he shut up shop to join our expedition. In about two hours and a half our caravan reached the narrower defile that pierced two mountains which came down hobnobbing together like a great gate, grand and picturesque. From a large, quiet pool just beneath the gates, we climbed almost straight up the mouth of the stalactite caves that run no one knows how far into the mountains, starting at a point about two hundred feet above the river.⁶⁸.

It was not just foreign travelers, but business also which was going to the caves of San Mateo. One year prior to Stevens' journey, the San Pedro Mining Company petitioned for the right to collect guano in Pamitinan.⁶⁹ Scientists studied the place. The German geologist Drasche wrote of a journey there. It is interesting that, despite the fact that his work was written entirely in German, he refers to the cave as the "cueva de S. Mateo." This would indicate that this had become the official name of the cave. This is the only aspect of Philippine geology which he treats in this fashion; all other geographical features were translated into German.⁷⁰

2.7 Connecting Pamitinan and Tapusi: Remontado migration

For tourists what they visited was no more than the cave of San Mateo. For Bonifacio, the mountain and the cave "of Bernardo Carpio" were named Pamitinan. Julio Nakpil, a commander of troops under Bonifacio and a famed composer, was stationed in the mountains of San Mateo along with Emilio Jacinto. He fought there under the nom-de-guerre of J. Giliw. In his handwritten manuscript, *Apuntes para la historia de la Revolución Filipina de Teodoro M. Kalaw*, Nakpil wrote of how Bonifacio was fleeing from Aguinaldo in Cavite to San Mateo when he was arrested and executed. Bonifacio's widow, Gregoria de Jesus, was able to escape and reached the San Mateo mountains, joining Nakpil and commanding troops there. She and Nakpil married a year and a half later. Within a month of Bonifacio's execution, Nakpil composed a dance entitled Pamitinan, which he dedicated to the remontados.⁷¹ This was the tradition which

67. Robert MacMicking, *Recollections of Manilla and the Philippines during 1848, 1849, and 1850* (London: Richard Bentley, 1851), 107-8.

68. Stevens, *Yesterdays in the Philippines*, 89-90.

69. Charles H. Burritt, *Abstract of the Mining Laws in force in the Philippine Archipelago* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1902), 113.

70. Richard von Drasche, *Fragmente zu einer Geologie der Insel Luzon (Philippinen)* (Wien: Karl Gerold's Sohn, 1878).

71. This manuscript was translated and edited by Encarnacion Alzona as Encarnacion Alzona, ed., *Julio Nakpil and the Philippine revolution* (Makati: Carmelo & Bauermann, Inc., 1964). Images of Nakpil's hand-

Bonifacio's Katipunan identified with Pamitinan, the history of resistance to Spanish rule, and not a mythical Tagalog king.

Despite the remarkable differences and great distance between the two places, Pamitinan can be associated with Tapusi both historically and geographically. What were these historical and geographical connections?

Some of the remontados of Tapusi came from San Mateo. Nakpil wrote of the remontados from this region, Rizal did also, referring to 'los remontados de San Mateo,' in *El Filibusterismo*.⁷² The US colonial government in the Philippines conducted a census of the population in 1903. On page 474, in a brief glossary, the census defined 'nomads' or 'remontados:' "This term refers to a group of wild Tagálog people, who tradition says ran away from the town of San Mateo, and whose descendants to-day roam the mountains back of Montalbán in association with the Negrito."⁷³

Linguistic evidence suggests that remontado migration connected Tapusi in the Limutan river valley with Pamitinan. In the 1970s Teodoro Llamzon discovered a new language in Daraitan in the mountainous upstream of Tanay, Rizal. This was exactly where Gironiere located Tapuzi, although he spelled the region 'Darangitan.' Llamzon designated the language Sinauna (original or ancient), as he considered it represented an ancient strand of Tagalog; the native speakers called their language Tagarug. In the Ethnologue listing of languages it is classified as Remontado Agta. Agta is a language of the Negrito people of the Sierra Madre and the population of Sinauna speakers is supposed to be descended from intermarried remontado and Negrito populations.⁷⁴ Sinauna has now been identified as an important transitional form between Tagalog and Bikolano. It is mutually unintelligible with Tagalog.⁷⁵

In Southeast Asian linguistics, the *pepet* vowel is the indifferent vowel; it is akin to schwa. *Pepe* is the Javanese word for this vowel. Carlos Conant, in his dissertation of 1913, examined the ways in which this vowel differentiated in different languages in the Philippines, e.g. atəp (roof), becomes atep, atip, atap, and atup.⁷⁶ Llamzon revisited this thesis and examined the role of dialects in this law. He found that the *pepet* vowel has not disappeared from most of the languages that Conant claimed had lost the *pepet* vowel. Conant overlooked the retention of the *pepet* vowel because he failed to

written manuscript and score are included. Relevant material can be found on 12, 45-49, 66 and the score of Pamitinan on 109ff.

72. Jose Rizal, *El Filibusterismo* (Manila: National Historical Institute, 1996), 217.

73. *Census of the Philippine Islands taken under the direction of the Philippine Commission in the year 1903, in four volumes, volume 1: Geography, History, and Population* (Washington: United States Bureau of the Census, 1905), 474.

74. Raymond G. Gordon Jr., ed., *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Fifteenth edition* (Dallas: SIL International, 2005), s.v. "agta, remontado."

75. "In fact, we [Llamzon and Rodrigo Dar] did a lexicostatistical analysis of it [Tagarug/sinauna], Tagalog, and Bicol and found that this was the language that was the missing link in the glottochronological and lexicostatistical numbers from Bisaya to Bicol to Tagalog. In other words, linguists had always noted the consistent degree of difference between Ilonggo and Cebuano and Cebuano and Waray and Waray and Bicol. But the gap from Bicol to Tagalog was so much bigger. Tagarug fit right in between Bicol and Tagalog." (Rodrigo Dar, 23 Jun 1996, <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/soc.culture.filipino/E8nGJSjTPAY> Accessed: May 17, 2009).

76. Carlos Everett Conant, "The *Pepe* Law in Philippine Languages," *Anthropos: ephemeris internationalis ethnologica et linguistica* 7 (1912): 920-47.

examine dialects.⁷⁷

For our present purposes, this line in Llamzon's work is important: "for the Puray dialect, which is geographically located at the back of the Montalban Dam, the regular reflex seems to be ə." Some brief samples of the dialect follow: ipa, dakip, ngipin, pusod, talong, dikit, dinggin, all of which indicate a retained pepet vowel.⁷⁸ Puray is a river slightly beyond Pamitinan; it is a tributary of the San Mateo River.⁷⁹ Thus, in the region of Pamitinan, a Tagalog dialect was spoken which retains the pepet vowel.

That the Limutan river valley was spelled Lumutan in de los Angeles report on Manila's water supply was not an error in transcription; rather, it reflected the ambiguity of the pepet vowel which was retained in both Puray Tagalog and Sinauna. It seems likely that the original semantic significance of the place name was Lumutan (verdant, lush green, mossy). The pepet vowel in the penultimate syllable of a non-enclitic morpheme reflects to i,⁸⁰ and thus L/*e/mut[an] came to be L/i/mut[an] (forgotten).

The Governor of the Province of Rizal wrote on July 8, 1908, in his report to the Governor General of the Philippines,

There are several nomad families in the mountains of Tanay called Dagatagan, Lanay, Panusugunan, and others; in the mountains of Antipolo called Uyungan, *Sare*, and *Lumutan*, and others bordering on the barrio of Boso-boso; in the woods and sitios in the jurisdiction of San Mateo and on the Garay River called Pinauran, Cabooan, Lucutan malaqui. These families are estimated to number 1,000 individuals, it being worthy of note that these people come down to the settlements to sell rattan, gugu, wax, bees' honey, and resin in small quantities.⁸¹

Lumutan is here adjacent to Sare, which was another name for Tapusi according to de los Angeles. The remontado population according to this report ranged from San Mateo to Lumutan and engaged in trade with the settlements. What Ed. C. De Jesus wrote of the remontados of Cagayan applied to those in Tapusi as well: "Whatever their original motives for reverting to their old way of life, the remontados quickly found additional reasons for remaining in the mountains and outside of Spanish control. *Contacts among both the Christian towns and the pagan tribes made them the ideal middlemen for the trade between the two groups*."⁸²

The isolationist hypothesis in anthropology has now been discarded; it asserted that hunter gatherer tribal groups had been living without contact with lowland

77. Teodoro A Llamzon, "The Importance of Dialects in Historical Linguistics: Conant's Pepet Law in Philippine Languages as a Case in Point," in *Actes de XXIX^e Congrès international des Orientalistes: Indonésie*, ed. Denys Lombard, vol. 3 (Paris: L'Asiathèque, 1976).

78. Ibid., 136.

79. D. Santiago Ugaldezubiaur, *Comision de la Flora y Estadistica Florestal, Memoria Descriptiva de la Provincia de Manila* (Madrid: Imprenta de Ramon Moreno Y Ricardo Rojas, 1880), 28.

80. Ronald S. Himes, "The Relationship of Umiray Dumagat to Other Philippine Languages," *Oceanic Linguistics* 41, no. 2 (2002): 275–294, doi:10.1353/ol.2002.0005.

81. *Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War, 1908, in two parts*, vol. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1909), 415; Note that garay is Sinauna for 'waterfall.' (Lawrence A Reid, "Possible Non-Austronesian Lexical Elements in Philippine Negrito Languages," *Oceanic Linguistics* 33, no. 1 [1994]: 42).

82. Ed. C. de Jesus, *The Tobacco Monopoly in the Philippines: Bureaucratic Enterprise and Social Change, 1766-1880* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1980), 116-7, emphasis added.

agricultural populations for centuries, even millennia, and had evolved in linguistic and cultural isolation. It is now apparent that Negrito populations in the Philippines established contact and trade with the Austronesians upon the latter's arrival in the Philippines. Trade contact was frequent; the Negritos provided forest products in exchange for agricultural goods. It was trade with Austronesian agriculture which enabled the Negritos to begin settling the jungles and forests of Luzon, which could not provide "sufficient lipids to supply the nutritional needs of humans in the absence of wild plant starches."⁸³ The frequent trade was facilitated by the creation of a pidgin, whose core words were derived from the status language, which in this case would have been of Austronesian origin. The pidgin was creolized, and then underwent a lengthy period of de-creolization, as the Negrito creole language adapted to the morphology and syntax of the status language. Thus, the Negritos of the Philippines all speak languages with Austronesian structure and vocabulary. They retain, however, a substrate of non-Austronesian lexemes.⁸⁴

With the arrival of the Spaniards, the forest product for agricultural product trade withered. The upstream Negrito populations were isolated from the downstream rice growers.⁸⁵ The remontados, fleeing the Spanish ambit to avoid the onerous impositions of colonialism, became a liminal population which facilitated the resumption of trade between upstream and downstream. In contrast to Gironiere's isolated 'great phalanstery,' whose female population had never been out of the community, the remontados of Tapusi would have been intensely mobile. They were a population engaged in trade throughout the Southern Sierra Madres, ranging from Tanay to San Mateo. They would have carried on trade with both lowland Tagalogs and with the Umiray Dumaget Negritos. Sinauna would have been the language spoken by the rancherías of the mission of San Andres. When the mission was abandoned in 1700, these Sinauna speakers became known as remontados. To engage in trade it was necessary for them also to speak Tagalog, with which Sinauna is mutually unintelligible. This trade Tagalog of the Sinauna remontados was, it seems likely, the source of the Puray pepet vowel, which is unique among Tagalog dialects and corresponds nicely to the Sinauna language.

The remontados of San Mateo would have passed between the nag-uumpugang bato of Sasocsungan and Pamitinan up the San Mateo River to Tapusi. Linguistic and historical data both establish this connection. Bonifacio and his companions were familiar with the history and legacy of Pamitinan, the history of the remontados. The Carpio legend was the folk memory of this flight. The resistance associated with San Mateo did not consist solely of flight, however.

83. Thomas N Headland et al., "Hunter-Gatherers and Their Neighbors from Prehistory to the Present," *Current Anthropology* 30, no. 1 (1989): 47.

84. Reid, "Possible Non-Austronesian Lexical Elements in Philippine Negrito Languages"; this substrate consists largely of the specialized vocabulary for local biota and 'secret' words such as penis, vagina, etc.

85. For notions of upstream and downstream communities, see Bennet Bronson, "Exchange at the Upstream and Downstream Ends: Notes toward a Functional Model of the Coastal State in Southeast Asia," in *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia: Perspectives from Prehistory, History, and Ethnography*, ed. Karl L. Sutterer (Ann Arbor: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1977), 39–52.

2.8 *Tulisanes: San Mateo and Banditry*

Colonial authorities labeled the long-standing tradition of resistance at San Mateo banditry, and the inhabitants of the region, *tulisanes*. Telesforo Canseco, the overseer of the Dominican hacienda in Naic, Cavite, wrote of

the bandits (*tulisanes*) of San Mateo with long beards whom we have called *tulisan pulpul*, are men who are dedicated to robbing and committing crimes and have taken to the mountains (*remontarse*) and have lived for many years in the mountains of San Mateo, where even the Spanish have not been able to reach them.⁸⁶

Noceda and Sanlucar in their 1860 *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* defined tulisan as “*malhechor, salteador; de tulis, agudo*”/evil-doer, highwayman; from tulis, sharp.⁸⁷ The etymon of tulisan is tulis, to sharpen. Tulis is an Austronesian root which developed into the Malay tulisan, writing,⁸⁸ a significance related to the sharpened implement which was used for scratching letters into the leaves of the lontar palm.⁸⁹ Tulis thus had pluripotent significance, waiting to be sharpened into one or the other of at least two possible meanings. As the Spaniards supplanted and destroyed Philippine writing systems, the highly literate native populations were driven to orality; tulis came to mean banditry.⁹⁰

86. “los tulisanes de San Mateo con barbas largas a quien nosotros llamábamos Tulisan pulpul o sea hombres que dedicados al robo y a cometer crímenes se han visto precisados a remontarse y vivir muchos años [sic] en los montes de San Mateo, a donde no han podido llegar todavía los españoles ... ”(Telesforo Canseco, *Kasaysayan ng Paghihimsik ng Mga Pilipino sa Cavite*, trans. Jose Rhommel B. Hernandez [Quezon City: Philippine Dominican Center of Institutional Studies, 1999], 64).

Canseco’s account was written in 1897 as “Historia de la insurrección filipina en Cavite,” and was housed in the Archivo de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas, University of Santo Tomas, Manila. The published version is a Spanish-Tagalog diglot. Hernandez notes “May dalawang uri ng tulisan. Ang una ay tinatawag na ‘Dugong Aso,’ nagnanakaw at pumapatay. Ang ikalawa naman ay ang ‘Tulisang Pulpul,’ nagnanakaw subalit tumatakbo at pumapatay lamang o lumalaban kung kailangan.” ibid., 69, fn. 7 “There are two classes of tulisan. The first is called ‘Dog’s Blood,’ they rob and kill. The second is the ‘Blunt Tulisan,’ they rob but run at kill or fight only if it is necessary.”

87. Juan De Noceda and Pedro De Sanlucar, *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* (Manila: Imprenta de Ramirez y Giraudier, 1860), 416, sv. Tulisan.

88. Isagani Medina, *Cavite Before the Revolution, 1571-1896* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2002), 62, 224 fn. 8; Soledad Masangkay Borromeo, “El Cadiz Filipino: Colonial Cavite, 1571-1896” (PhD diss., UC Berkeley, 1973), 197, fn. 14; George Quinn, *The Learner’s Dictionary of Today’s Indonesian* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001), 1139 sv. tulis. The Proto-Austronesian (PAN) root for sharp is *Cazém, which reflects to the Tagalog *talim* as well as *tulis*, and to the Malay *tajam*. *Talim* is sharp-edged, while *tulis* is sharp-pointed. This is a much more plausible reconstruction than Laurent Sagart’s proposed Proto-Sino-Austronesian (PSAN) root, from which Old Chinese (OC) supposedly derived *loih, “to pencil the eyebrows.” Malcolm Ross, “Some Current Issues in Austronesian Linguistics,” in *Comparative Austronesian Dictionary: An Introduction to Austronesian Studies, Part 1: Fascicle 1, Trends in Linguistics: Documentation 10*, ed. Darrel T. Tyron (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 96-98.

89. This was not an unusual origin for the word for writing. Both the Latin *scribo* and the Greek *grapho* had an etymological significance of ‘to incise with a sharp point,’ while the Sanskrit *likh*, literally meant to scratch.

90. The word tulisan, as banditry, was appropriated by the Spanish. Felix Ramos y Duarte in his 1898 *Diccionario de mejicanismos* defines tulis as “*ladron, ratero*” (bandit, pickpocket). [Felix Ramos y Duarte, *Diccionario de mejicanismos* (Mejico, 1898), sv. tulis.] Tulis, rather than tulisan, had entered Mexican Spanish

Eric Hobsbawm, in his work *Bandits*, writes that social bandits, “are peasant outlaws whom the lord and state regard as criminals, but who remain within peasant society, and are considered by their people as heroes, as champions, avengers, fighters for justice, perhaps even leaders of liberation, and in any case as men to be admired, helped and supported.”⁹¹ This description aptly matches the phenomenon of tulisanes in the Philippines.

On the subject of tulisanes, Henry Ellis wrote,

Brigandage still exists in Luzon to a considerable extent, armed bands of Tulisanies [sic] (hill robbers) patrolling the country levying contributions and plundering with seldom much effectual molestation from the authorities, carrying their depredation in quite an organized form into the suburbs of Manila itself ...

A party of soldiers, under the command of Lieutenant Enciso, in the gray of the morning of the 25th July, managed to surprise a famous brigand leader of the name of Jiminez, who with a part of his band was caught napping in a house *in the neighborhood of the cave of San Mateo* ...

The chief (Jiminez), although in figure an exceedingly slight, small man, had through the daring and determination of his character long held a most perfect sway and control not only over his own particular band but more or less over all the “gentlemen of the craft” in that part of the country, and, it was said, had frequently used his restraining power for good, punishing severely among his followers acts of wanton outrage and restraining them

by the late nineteenth century as a word meaning bandit. The *Diccionario Porrua* attributes the origin of the word ‘tulises’ to a ‘grupo de bandoleros del Edo. De Durango’ who escaped from the jail of the town of San Andres de Teúl, in approximately 1859. Most notable among them was the famous bandolero, El Cucaracho. [*Diccionario Porrua de Historia, Biografía y Geografía de México quinta edición* (México, D.F.: Editorial Porruá), 2013, sv tulises.] From Teúl the dictionary derives the word tulis as bandit. Gironiere, among others, was already using ‘tulisan’ as a Tagalog word for bandit long before these events in Teúl, thus ruling out this etymological reconstruction.

An alternative etymology has been proposed by Paloma Albalá Hernández in her *Americanismos en las Indias del Poniente*. She suggests a Náhuatl origin for the word, deriving tulisán from “*tule*, planta de la que se hace el petate, que etimológicamente procede de la voz náhuatl *tullín* o *tolin*, según Molina (1571) ‘juncia o espadaña’ y según Siméon (1885) *tollin* o *tullin* ‘junco, juncia, carrizo’.” “*tule*, plant from which is made bedrolls, which etymologically proceeds from the náhuatl *tullin* or *tolin*, according to Molina (1571), sedge or bulrush, and according to Siméon (1885) *tollin* or *tullin*, rush, sedge, reed-grass.” [Paloma Albalá Hernández, *Americanismos en las Indias del Poniente: Voces de origen indígena americano en las lenguas del Pacífico* (Vervuert: Iberoamericana, 2000), 106, 173.] No further explanation is given for this proposed etymology, but it would seem that petate, bedrolls, were considered a standard item of the bandolero, and since these bedrolls were made from *tule*, the bandoleros became known as tulis. Teresita A. Alcantara, in Teresita A. Alcantara, *The Spanish American Lexicons in Filipino*, paper presented at Philippine Latin American Studies Conference, Pamantasan Lungsod ng Maynila, December 15-17, 2008, 6, follows the same path for the entrance of tulis into Tagalog. This etymology seems far-fetched.

It would seem likely that the word tulisan traveled from Manila to Acapulco in the final years of the galleon trade. Teul, in the Estado de Durango, was on the west coast of the Mexican isthmus, north of Acapulco. En route, the word also entered Chamorro, as tulisan rather than tulis. Chamorro is an Austronesian language and Chamorro speakers would have found the desinence -an familiar.

Regardless of the path taken by the word ‘tulisan’ in its transpacific peregrination, what is important is that there was a specific historical phenomenon in the nineteenth century in both Mexico and the Philippines with which the word was associated: social banditry.

91. Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, 20.

from unnecessary violence and bloodshed. He carried on a black-mail system, levying contributions principally on the rich, and was not only respected but rather a favourite among the poorer villagers, going amongst them in perfect immunity.⁹²

There is frequently a disjuncture between the reality of banditry and its popular perception. In the late nineteenth century Philippines, banditry was endemic throughout the regions of central and southern Luzon. Banditry reached its greatest heights in Cavite, where the rise of plantation agriculture brought social conflict into sharp focus. The epicenter of tulisan activity in popular consciousness, however, was the mountains of San Mateo, and Mount Pamitinan in particular.

This tradition of resistance was precisely what the Carpio legend invoked. For *Pasyon and Revolution* to state that the masses live in “a society where King Bernardo Carpio was no less real than the Spanish governor-general” is to fail completely to understand the function of legend. The geographical specificity of the legend, the insistence upon San Mateo as the location of Bernardo Carpio, served as a metonym for social banditry and resistance to the ruling class.

2.9 *Conflating Pamitinan and Tapusi: elite error*

How then did Tapusi become not merely associated with but actually conflated with Pamitinan and the cave of Bernardo Carpio, if it is a geographically distinct location?

Santiago Alvarez, when speaking of Bonifacio’s intention to assault Manila from San Mateo refers to Bonifacio’s hiding place in the mountains of San Mateo as ‘Tapusi’.⁹³ Alvarez was a mestizo land-owner from Cavite, whose alliance with Bonifacio in opposition to Aguinaldo reflected the continuation of a long-standing regional rivalry between two ruling class factions. His account is an important one for our understanding of the events in Cavite leading up to the arrest and execution of Bonifacio. The greater the remove of an event or person from Alvarez’ class and geographical ambit, however, the more tenuous are the facts which Alvarez records on the subject. Thus, when Alvarez writes of Maestrong Sebio, a charismatic leader from Bulacan, he misidentifies him as Eusebio Viola, a wealthy mestizo landowner. Maestrong Sebio was in truth Eusebio Roque, a local school teacher.⁹⁴ Another wealthy Caviteño, Carlos Ronquillo, also conflated Tapusi with Pamitinan in his 1898 account of the revolution. There is more involved, however, in Ronquillo’s account than simple error.

Fray Mariano Gil, a Spanish priest, revealed the existence of the Katipunan to the colonial authorities after hearing the confession of a wife of one of the members. In his report he stated that the Katipunan was amassing weapons at Tapusi. Tapusi was not a mountain in this report, nor did it have any geographic specificity at all. It was simply a fabled place of resistance. The response of the Spanish authorities was not to rush to San Mateo, but to hunt for Bonifacio and his companions in Tondo. Gil’s

92. Ellis, *Hong Kong to Manilla [sic] and the Lakes of Luzon, in the Philippine Isles, in the Year 1856*, 170-3, emphasis added.

93. Santiago V. Alvarez, *The Katipunan and the Revolution: Memoirs of a General, with the original Tagalog text*, trans. Paula Carolina S. Malay (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1992), 156.

94. Ibid., 98.

testimony is not evidence for the conflation of Pamitinan and Tapusi but rather for a hazy fear of Tapusi in the minds of the colonial and religious authorities.

Pedro Paterno, writing his self-aggrandizing memoirs on his role in mediating the pact of Biaknabato, stated, "I climbed mount Tapusi, with its famous cave, eternal refuge of tulisanes and afterwards lair of General Luciano San Miguel, who afterwards died gloriously at Pugad-Babuy under the fire of American cannons . . ."⁹⁵ Thus, in 1910 Paterno identified Tapusi with Pamitinan. It is worth pointing out that Paterno, the extremely wealthy and laughably pretentious Bulakeño, could not speak passable Tagalog and was carried in a hammock from Manila to Biaknabato and back again. He never went anywhere near Pamitinan and he certainly did not "climb" anything.⁹⁶

The conflation of Pamitinan and Tapusi occurred among outsiders, those excluded by class from the sociolinguistic register of the peasantry and by spatial and temporal remove from the actual geographical specificity of Pamitinan. Tapusi and Pamitinan were connected, in history and in legend. They were not, however, the same.

On the basis of these conflations, Ileto goes on to identify 'Mount Tapusi' with Meru, a center of power in Southeast Asian conception.⁹⁷ This misses the point entirely. Tapusi was not a mountain, it was not in San Mateo, it had no cave; the idea of Bonifacio's journey being a ritual ascent of Tapusi makes no sense in light of historical evidence.⁹⁸

2.10 *San Mateo: central to Bonifacio's military strategy*

Bonifacio's journey to the cave of San Mateo did place him within a nexus of significance. Bonifacio was aware that this was known as the cave of Bernardo Carpio. He was not awakening a sleeping king, however, nor was he manipulating peasant belief. He was participating in a long-standing history of revolt. There is continuity between social banditry and Bonifacio. This continuity is not to be found in *Pasyon and Revolution*'s atavistic, essentialised counter-rational underside to history, however. It is not a continuity of idiom or ideology. Bonifacio's journey to the cave of San Mateo was an act of identifying with the history of mass resistance of the late nineteenth century.

95. "Subi al monte Tapusi, en donde se halla su famosa cueva, eterno refugio de tulisanes y entonces amparadora del General Luciano San Miguel, más tarde muerto gloriosamente en Pugad-Babuy bajo el fuego de los cañones americanos..." (Pedro A. Paterno, *El Pacto de Biyak-na-Bato* [Manila: Imprenta "La República", 1910], 72).

96. On Paterno, see Resil B. Mojares' excellent Resil B. Mojares, *Brains of the Nation: Pedro Paterno, T.H. Pardo de Tavera, Isabelo de los Reyes and the Production of Modern Knowledge* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2006); and Portia L. Reyes, "A 'treasonous' history of Filipino historiography: the life and times of Pedro Paterno, 1858-1911," *South East Asia Research* 14, no. 1 (2006): 87-122, doi:10.5367/000000006776563686.

97. Ileto, "Rizal and the Underside of Philippine History," 39.

98. This makes even more embarrassing the strange new age academic attempt to 'revive' this tradition. Consolacion Rustia Alaras, a professor of literature at the University of the Philippines, in her work Consolacion Rustia Alaras, *Pamatthalaan: ang pagbubukas sa tipan ng Mahal na Ina* (Quezon City: Bahay-Saliksikan ng Kasaysayan, 1988)) based on *Pasyon and Revolution*, has advocated the revitalization of the nation through sacred sojourns to 'Tapusi' in the steps of Bonifacio, who was a great spiritual leader. She leads these treks every year. These sojourns seem more reminiscent of the wide-eyed jaunts into the wild made by European tourists in the late nineteenth century than anything to do with Bonifacio.

Based on an awareness of its history, Bonifacio recognized the tactical significance of San Mateo's geography and used it to the advantage of the Katipunan at the beginning of the revolution.

In Pasyon and Revolution we read, "Bonifacio himself, as Carlos Ronquillo reports, told his followers that their legendary king Bernardo would descend from Mount Tapusi to aid the Katipunan rebels." (111) The source for this claim is Ronquillo's manuscript, *Ilang Talata tungkol sa Paghahimagsik ng 1896-97*; there is no page number given.

In responding to Milagros Guerrero's critique of his work, Ileto stated

In 1897, Carlos Ronquillo, the personal Secretary of Emilio Aguinaldo, in his "history" of the Katipunan uprising castigated Bonifacio for raising false hopes that an army would descend from Mount Tapusi "to lead his whole army." "This plain falsehood," writes Ronquillo, "was a deception or morale booster (pangpalakas loób) perpetrated by Bonifacio; because at the appointed hour neither men nor arms arrived from Tapusi. Up to now we do not know where this mountain is."⁹⁹

Ileto used this passage in three separate essays. In each case he cited pages 6 and 21 of Ronquillo's unpublished manuscript. In this paragraph there is no longer any reference to Bernardo Carpio. In his stead is Bonifacio's promise that "an army" would lead the "whole army." Not one of the four citations provides the Tagalog original, aside from the phrase 'pangpalakas loób.'

In Ileto's later articles, Ronquillo serves as the example of "the nationalist 'historian' ... a believer in enlightened liberalism." Ronquillo, Ileto states, "already decried this 'dark underside' of Bonifacio's mentality, adding it to the litany of faults that he felt justified Bonifacio's execution at the hands of Aguinaldo and the Cavite elite. Hopefully, historians today will not participate in this bloody execution by insisting upon a singular, reductionist reading of the text that comprises our national hero."¹⁰⁰ Ileto is not questioning the historical accuracy of Ronquillo's statement; he is rather asking that we consider how the 'masses' would have perceived Bonifacio's claim that Bernardo Carpio, or an army, would descend from Mount Tapusi. Ronquillo is thus a representative of bad 'reductionist' historiography; to read history in this fashion is to participate in the murder of Bonifacio.

In 1996, the University of the Philippines press published an excellent edition of Ronquillo's manuscript, thoroughly edited and annotated by Isagani Medina.¹⁰¹ Ileto seems to be paraphrasing a passage and a footnote from the manuscript. Nowhere is there anything that could be considered an exact quotation. The first passage reads

99. Reynaldo C. Ileto, "History and Criticism: The Invention of Heroes," in *Filipinos and their Revolution: Event, Discourse and Historiography* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998), 217; Reynaldo C Ileto, "'Methodological' Implications of a Dispute on Andres Bonifacio," *Anuario/Annales* 1, no. 3 (1982): 12; Reynaldo C Ileto, "Bonifacio, the Text, and the Social Scientist," *Philippine Sociological Review* 32, nos. 1-4 (1984): 27-8.

100. Ileto, "'Methodological' Implications of a Dispute on Andres Bonifacio," 12.

101. Carlos Ronquillo, *Ilang Talata Tungkol sa Paghahimagsik nang 1896-97*, ed. Isagani Medina (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1996).

Because it had been agreed upon, we stopped and waited for the army of Bonifacio that would be coming from Mount Tapusi and were to be firing and would lead the entire army; however, from the agreed upon time to until daybreak it did not arrive.¹⁰²

Ronquillo footnoted Tapusi thus

This statement by Bonifacio was a tremendous lie because neither people nor arms were at Tapusi and even he himself did not arrive there. This was just a cruel deception of the people!¹⁰³

The statement “up to now we do not know where this mountain is” and the parenthetical untranslated phrase, “pangpalakas loób,” are both absent from Ronquillo’s manuscript. Bernardo Carpio is missing as well. This is not the statement of someone who is detecting the “dark underside” in Bonifacio’s mentality; this is an accusation of poor military leadership and of deception. Bonifacio promised troops and he failed to deliver. This is Ronquillo’s accusation. It is also, ironically, a ‘cruel deception.’

Zeus Salazar, in his Agosto 29-30, 1896: *Ang Pagsalakay ni Bonifacio sa Maynila*, examines in detail the claim that “Bonifacio’s plan to attack Manila subsequent to the discovery of the Katipunan was never really carried out.” This planned assault on Manila, “traditional historians” believed “was replaced instead with an attack on San Juan del Monte,” a much smaller, less coordinated undertaking.¹⁰⁴ Salazar’s examination of the dispatches made by the English, German and French consuls in Manila, in conjunction with the existing historical evidence, convincingly demonstrated that the planned assault did, in fact, occur.

Bonifacio had planned a three-pronged assault on Manila – from the north, Caloocan, Balintawak and surroundings; from the south, Cavite; and from the east, from the mountains of San Mateo. On the night of August 29, the assault was initiated by Bonifacio’s forces from San Mateo, the troops in the north likewise attacked. Cavite did not respond to Bonifacio’s orders. Numerous justifications for this failure to follow orders were given in memoirs and subsequent accounts: the orders did not apply to all Katipunan balangays, there was no signal given, the Katipunan lacked the necessary arms.¹⁰⁵ No excuse is quite as dramatic – or as dishonest – as Ronquillo’s bald-faced assertion that “Bonifacio’s forces never came down from Tapusi.” Ronquillo is certainly attempting to justify the execution of Bonifacio, but not because Bonifacio was part of some irrational, dark “underside” of Philippine society. When Ronquillo wrote his memoirs, Bonifacio was dead. By calling Bonifacio a liar and a poor leader, Ronquillo

102. Palibhasa'y salitaan, ay nagagsihinto at inantabayanan ang pulutong ni Bonifacio na manggagaling sa bundok ng Tapusi na pawing barilan na siyang mangunguna sa buong pulutong; subalit nang dumating na ang taning na oras hanggang sa magliliwanag na ang araw ay di dumarating. (Ronquillo, *Ilang Talata Tungkol sa Paghahimagsik nang 1896-97*, 216).

103. Ang sinasabing ito ni Bonifacio ay isang malaking kasinungalingan pagkat ni tao ni baril ay wala sa Tapusi at ni siya naman ay di nakarating doon. Ito'y isang kalupitang pandaya lamang sa tao! *ibid.*, 684, fn. 3; the footnote is by Ronquillo, indicated by the initials CVR.

104. Zeus A. Salazar, *Agosto 29-30, 1896: Ang Pagsalakay ni Bonifacio sa Maynila* (Quezon City: Miranda Bookstore, 1994), 96.

105. For all of these justifications, see *ibid.*, 108-11.

was not merely justifying his execution; he was covering over the perfidy of the Cavite elite.

Not only did San Mateo and Pamitinan figure prominently in the initial assault on Manila, they remained a vital center for operations under the leadership of Bonifacio and his fellow Katipuneros. Numerous sources attest to this.

Mariano Ponce, writing on the 6th of May, 1897, from exile in Hong Kong to Ferdinand Blumentritt, gave notes on details of the revolutionary effort culled from various letters he had received, in particular a letter from a “rebel camp at Baling-Cupang (San Miguel de Mayumo)” He writes

In Pamitinan, in the jurisdiction of Montalban and a half kilometer from it (province of Manila), is one of the best defended Tagalog encampments. Columns proceeded from Manila, Mariquina, Pasig and San Mateo intending to attack it on the 7th and 9th of April; but seeing the situation and defenses of the camp, they retreated a great distance without firing a single shot.¹⁰⁶

Pamitinan was prepared for combat and served as a successful base for the resistance of the Katipunan under Bonifacio’s leadership. It continued to serve as a base of armed struggle long after Bonifacio’s death.¹⁰⁷

3 HISTORY

3.1 *The explanatory primacy of objective historical circumstances*

To locate the categories of perception which informed the consciousness of the urban working class, agricultural day laborers, and the peasantry, we must look for sources other than *pasyon* and *awit*, and we must read in a manner altogether different from the manner of *Pasyon and Revolution*.

If we succeed in locating and interpreting these sources we may be able to begin to understand how the masses would have interpreted their role in the Philippine revolution. We will not, however, learn from this reconstructed consciousness why the masses revolted to begin with. To address this question we must address the historical circumstances that shaped working class and peasant consciousness and that made revolution for them an objective necessity.

Social banditry, the Carpio legend, and the Philippine revolution all emerged in the late nineteenth century out of the dramatic transformations which the working classes underwent. A rapid rise in population occurred beginning in the late eighteenth century and lasting until 1870. Available resources were under tremendous strain.

106. En Pamitinan, comprensión de Montalban y a medio kilometro de este (provincia de Manila), hay un campamento tagalo de los mejor defendidos. Columnas procedentes de Manila, Mariquina, Pasig y San Mateo intentaron atacarlo el 7 y el 9 de Abril; pero viendo la situación y defensa del campamento, se retiraron a gran distancia sin disparar un solo tiro. (Mariano Ponce, *Cartas Sobre La Revolución* [Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1932], 1-3).

107. It was in San Mateo that US Major General Lawton was killed by troops under the command of General Licerio Geronimo. Geronimo had earlier served in the August 29-30th assault under Bonifacio.

From 1870 until the century's end, "the archipelago suffered an unprecedented siege of crisis mortality."¹⁰⁸

Commodity production took hold of every aspect of Philippine life; each region was transformed by capitalist economic relations and export production, most notably sugar, abaca, and tobacco crops.¹⁰⁹ Populations became intensely mobile in response to changing economic circumstances and shifting demands for labor power. This mobility was facilitated by steamboat and railroad transit.¹¹⁰ Mass mobility in turn facilitated the spread of communicable disease. Smallpox, beriberi, malaria, and cholera devastated the human population. Rinderpest wiped out an entire generation of draft animals.¹¹¹

Concepts of space and time, the commonsense ways in which people measure their lives, inevitably shrank in response to this new, intensely mobile, and unpredictable world. These changes also rang the death knell for the central role of pasyon in everyday life; its expiring gasp may have been a long one, but gradually the incompatibility of the interminably slow performance of pasyon with the intensity of the demands of commodity production has reduced the pasyon to a cultural residue.

The latter half of the nineteenth century reveals enough evidence of "ongoing and episodic migration to demolish whatever may be left of the myth of the timeless Asian peasant rooted firmly to his ancestral lands."¹¹² Factory production transformed Manila. Huge masses of people, predominantly women, were employed as factory workers.

It was this mobility of the working population which gave mobility to the Carpio legend. It traveled down the San Mateo River with the workers ferrying timber from the mountains, into the Tabacera factories of Tondo with the women who migrated from San Mateo, out the Pasig River with market vendors on their return upstream, and throughout Laguna, Cavite and Bulacan.

This mobility not only facilitated the spread of the Carpio legend it also increased the banditry to which the legend pointed. Hobsbawm wrote, "What makes peasants the victims of authority and coercion is not so much their economic vulnerability – they are indeed as often as not virtually self-sufficient – as their immobility. Their roots are in the land and the homestead, and there they must stay like trees ... If we want to understand the social composition of banditry, we must therefore look primarily at the mobile margin of peasant society."¹¹³

The social and economic transformations of the nineteenth century simultaneously destroyed peasant self-sufficiency – leaving the rural population intensely vulnerable to changes in the world market – and forced upon them a new, intensely mobile life,

108. Daniel F. Doeppers and Peter Xenos, "A Demographic Frame for Philippine History," in *Population and History: The Demographic Origins of the Modern Philippines*, ed. Daniel Doeppers and Peter Xenos (Madison: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1998), 4.

109. Jonathan Fast and Jim Richardson, *Roots of Dependency: Political and Economic Revolution in the 19th Century Philippines* (Quezon City: Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1979); Owen, *Prosperity without Progress: Manila Hemp and Material Life in the Colonial Philippines*; Jesus, *The Tobacco Monopoly in the Philippines: Bureaucratic Enterprise and Social Change, 1766-1880*.

110. Arturo G. Corpuz, *The Colonial Iron Horse: Railroads and Regional Development in the Philippines, 1875-1935* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1999).

111. De Bevoise, *Agents of apocalypse: epidemic disease in the colonial Philippines*.

112. Doeppers and Xenos, "A Demographic Frame for Philippine History," 10.

113. Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, 34-5.

one without roots in any particular piece of land or homestead. It is no surprise that banditry became rampant during this time. What is important is that many sections of the populace moved beyond this traditional response to an antiquated and collapsing social system and looked instead to the revolutionary anti-colonial politics of the Katipunan.

Isabelo de los Reyes wrote in 1899,

During the past decade the country has been suffering a business recession that has deteriorated the last years. Indigo production is completely paralyzed, and hemp and sugar prices have fallen so much that they can scarcely cover costs. A canker has attacked the coffee plantations and coffee has disappeared from the market. Only rice, which is precisely the article of prime necessity, being the staple food of the Filipinos, has risen in price; and, because of the unfavorable exchange, imported goods.

To this must be added the fact that in June and July of 1896 thick swarms of locusts completely ruined the rice fields, and farmers faced a future that was bleak indeed. They already groaned under the hard yoke of the friar *hacenderos*, who far from remitting even a part of ground rent in consideration of the low prices, the locust plague and the drought, steadily increased it; and so the peasants, driven to desperation, swelled the ranks of the revolution.¹¹⁴

Pasyon and Revolution examines the perceptions of the 'masses' and finds superstitions, amulets, and "a society where King Bernardo Carpio was no less real than the Spanish governor-general." Ileto examined the masses' worldview, demonstrating that it was internally coherent, and possessed its own rationality, or counter-rationality. He took the elite conceptions about the 'pobres y ignorantes' and stood them upon their heads, transvaluing them. Ileto did not, however, undermine these conceptions.

Attentiveness to actual class relations and to the oral nature of peasant literature reveals a very different picture. Here we can see a deep seated historicity to lower class discourses, conducted in a register designed to occlude these discourses from elite perception and interference.

3.2 Conclusion: Bonifacio and Aguinaldo

This can be concretely demonstrated by the examination of a simple question: why did the 'masses' follow Bonifacio and not Aguinaldo? Why did Aguinaldo never gain the popular support that Bonifacio had?

Aguinaldo was a religious man who held Bonifacio's secular worldview in contempt. He spoke a *pasyon* inflected language, with far greater fluency than Bonifacio. Bonifacio, to the best of our knowledge, never had any *anting-anting*; Aguinaldo had several. *Pasyon and Revolution* cites an article from an August 1897 edition of the *New York Herald* which stated

Among other followers he [Aguinaldo] had two youths appropriately dressed

114. Isabelo de los Reyes, as quoted in Costa, *Readings in Philippine History: Selected Historical Texts Presented with a Commentary*, 205.

as pages who accompany him everywhere and who seemed to be considered as persons of no little importance by the others. One of the youths in particular has attracted attention which is explained by others of his followers in this way. This interesting youth possesses the supernatural qualities of anting-anting.

(26)

Finally, and this cuts to the heart of *Pasyon and Revolution*'s categories of class, Aguinaldo, the ilustrado, could not read or write in Spanish. In fact, he took little interest in his education at all. He confessed late in life that he had never read Rizal's *Noli me Tangere* or *El Filibusterismo*.¹¹⁵ This was true not only of Aguinaldo but of many ilustrados. For 'ilustrado' to be a class category it must cease to mean enlightened or educated and must simply refer to a mestizo owner of the means of production.

Bonifacio, the self taught urban worker, could read Spanish. He had read Rizal, Victor Hugo, Eugene Sue, *Lives of the Presidents of the United States*, and books on the French Revolution. He translated Rizal's final poem, *Mi Ultimo Adios*, into Tagalog. He was an educated man.

One of the few definitions of the lower classes that Ileto gives us is on the fourth page of *Pasyon and Revolution*. There he glosses the 'masses' as "the largely rural and uneducated Filipinos who constituted the revolution's mass base." (4) If we ignore the anachronistic use of the word 'Filipino' we are left with a definition that would clearly make Aguinaldo one of the masses and Bonifacio not.

Why then did the masses not passionately follow Aguinaldo? Why did they so identify with Bonifacio? Perhaps one more example from *Pasyon and Revolution* will help us to answer this question.

On the cover of *Pasyon and Revolution* is a drawing, "an artist's composite based on a statue housed in the Santa Clara church (of the Philippine Independent Church) in Sampaloc, Manila, and on Aurelio Tolentino's story of a Katipunero's dream of the Virgin." This story of the dream of the Virgen sa Balintawak forms part of the argument of *Pasyon and Revolution*. An article was published in *La Vanguardia* sometime after the death of Aurelio Tolentino, the Katipunero and playwright, in 1915. It told of a dream in which the Virgin Mary appeared to Bonifacio in native dress and warned him of betrayal. According to the story, Bonifacio acted on the warning and thus avoided arrest. Ileto admitted "the story may be entirely apocryphal," but, he continued, "[t]he point is, such a story was entirely credible to Tolentino's audience. Why was the Virgin in native costume; why was she leading a Katipunero by the hand? Was she the Mother Country herself? For the popular mind there was no clear distinction, no crisis of meaning as one image flowed into the other." (106)

Who exactly were Tolentino's audience, these people of 'the popular mind?' *La Vanguardia* was a Manila based Spanish language paper, which began publication in 1910 in the wake of the closure of *El Renacimiento*. The 'masses' did not read this paper. It was not in *La Vanguardia* that Ileto located this story, however. He found it printed on the back of the novenario of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, *Pagsisiyam sa Virgen sa Balintawak*.¹¹⁶ The novena, a small book of prayers to be prayed over a

115. Ambeth Ocampo, *Bones of Contention: The Bonifacio Lectures* (Manila: Anvil Publishing, 2001), 144.

116. Gregorio Aglipay Y Labayan, *Pagsisiyam sa Virgen sa Balintawak* (Ang Virgen sa Balintawak ay ang

period of nine days, is a remarkable one. While *Pasyon and Revolution* discussed the one page story that formed part of its back matter, it did not touch upon the actual contents. They are worth examining.

Each day's prayer is preceded by a reading. The readings are an introduction to a rationalist approach to religion and to the world. The readings for the second day detail the evolution of life on earth over millions of years, deliberately and explicitly contradicting biblical creation myths. Day three states "salita salita lamang ang mga sinasabi ukol sa paraíso, at sa mga angel, sa infierno, sa purgatorio, sa limbo at sa demonio."¹¹⁷ "What is said about Paradise, angels, hell, purgatory, limbo and demons, is just empty words." The novena examines scientific ideas of the end of the Universe and rebuts notions of the apocalypse. It refutes both Jesus' virgin birth and divinity, and states that he was *kayumanggi*, the brown skin color of indios. "Nang gabi rin na siya'y mabilanggo, ay ipinayo niya sa kaniyang mga tao na gamitin hanggang kалиit-liitang céntimo upang bumili ng sandata, kaya't siya'y nahatulang mamatay, alinsunod sa batas ng mga romano dahil sa paglaban sa pamahalaan ng Roma."¹¹⁸ "On the very night in which he was arrested, he told his followers to use their last centavo to buy arms, and he was condemned to death under Roman law for having rebelled against Roman sovereignty." The Iglesia Filipina Independiente, founded in 1902, as a nationalist, separatist church by Aglipay and Isabelo de los Reyes grew rapidly. Workers and peasants swelled its numbers to one and half million members.

Try as one might to find it, there is no *pasyon* idiom to be located in the early documents of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente; there are no myths of paradise, fall and redemption; no mysterious liwanag, damay, or loób to be found. The IFI was founded on militant politics and, under the leadership of Aglipay and de los Reyes, it openly advocated for immediate independence and for socialism. It did so in terms that, while Tagalog, would be unfamiliar to the reader of *Pasyon and Revolution*. Rather than a static and atavistic idiom which structured the worldview of the 'masses' from 1840 to 1912 and far beyond, what we see here is a dynamic ideology of resistance which was consonant with the objective lived experience of the working class and of agricultural laborers. It was this consonance, this apt articulation of objective experience, which appealed to the 'masses' in the IFI.

Bonifacio did not speak a 'pasyon idiom.' He did not identify with a King hidden in a cave in whom the masses credulously believed. Bonifacio did not wear amulets to ward off bullets. He did, however, articulate the inchoate strivings of revolutionary sections of the peasantry and of the emergent working class better than almost anyone of his generation. This fact explains both his success as a leader and his death at the hands of the landowning class of ilustrados.

Inang Bayan), trans. G. Juan N. Evangelista (Manila, 1925).

117. Aglipay Y Labayan, *Pagsisiyam sa Virgen sa Balintawak* (*Ang Virgen sa Balintawak ay ang Inang Bayan*), 21.

118. Ibid., 35.

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