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Critical Issues in “Understanding Philippine Revolutionary Mentality”

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Notes and Comments

Critical Issues in "Understanding Philippine Revolutionary Mentality"

REYNALDO C. ILETO

Milagros Guerrero's lengthy review of my book *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910*, is bound to be a landmark in Philippine historiography.¹ For not only is it about the book, but it promises to reveal much of what is involved in a "traditional" reading of the book. In fact, the past layers of my own thinking are inscribed in Guerrero's review, and the present reply offers me an opportunity to discuss these "familiar" layers in relation to her particular criticisms. Much of what is involved in her critique is derived from the "traditional," common sense and even institutionalized notions we have regarding the "methodology" and content of history. Her perceived audience is one that shares her conceptual underpinnings — thus her confident assertion that "the methodology of [Ileto's] study will *undoubtedly* generate much discussion *and disagreement* among Philippine historians." (p. 256) The fact that Guerrero's review, stressing traditional views of truth and objectivity, thrives on fertile ground forces me to examine its underpinnings. Hopefully, Philippine historiography as a whole will profit from our exchange.

Unfortunately, a reading or misreading is not all there is to Guerrero's essay. One must try to explain as well the constant hammering away at my alleged mishandling of facts and translations, my failure to observe the basic rules of historical research; in short, my incompetence. In 1976-77 Guerrero, writing in the context of the University of Michigan's Graduate Program, described my doctoral dissertation (on which the book is based) as

¹ "Understanding Philippine Revolutionary Mentality," *Philippine Studies* 29 (1981): 240-56.

“incisive,” representing “an auspicious beginning in the task of reconstructing a Philippine ‘history from below.’” There did not seem to be any question, then, of my adherence to the “canons” of historical research.

Ileto’s use of the records of the Revolution, particularly the personal accounts of various leaders of the peasant movements, has enabled him to capture successfully the heightened expectancy of the peasantry for radical social reforms in the period from 1898 to the first decade of the American regime.²

Some four years later, in the atmosphere of the University of the Philippines’ History Department, she writes that “[Ileto’s] thesis suffers from the weight of unproved assumptions and inferences.” (p. 246) At one point, my analysis is dismissed as “creative imagination like that expressed by poets and fictionists.” (p. 249)³ Hyperbolic statements of this sort, which I shall attempt to disprove point by point in this essay, seem to reflect more a context of academic politics than a dispassionate assessment of my work by a formerly appreciative colleague.

ON THE ROLE OF THE PASYON

At the outset, Guerrero admittedly regards my work as unfamiliar: she calls it “an entirely novel approach,” an attempt “to go beyond a merely descriptive narrative of the historical development of the Philippine Revolution to a structural analysis of it.” (pp. 240, 241) Nevertheless in subsequent analysis the book is subjected to a familiarizing or domesticating process, in an attempt to locate it in terms of what are called “the canons of historical methodology.” (p. 255) The actual and contrived lack of fit between the work and these canons creates the space for much of the review’s litany of faults. Such a space would not have opened up had the reviewer acknowledged the relativity of methodological “canons” — a term best relegated to the ecclesiastical realm — and dealt with the work on its own terms. At various points in the review there is mention of “structural,” “phenomenological,” and “psychological” approaches having been used in the book. But, surprisingly, there seems to be no attempt to grapple with the

² Milagros C. Guerrero, “Luzon at War: Contradictions in Philippine Society, 1896-1902,” (Ph. D. dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1977), pp. 27-28.

³ This is a distinct echo of Teodoro Agoncillo’s historiographic reflections in “Imagination in History,” *Historical Bulletin* 17 (1973): 235.

import of these approaches in historical writing and their particular applications in the book.

The tension between my approaches and Guerrero's own can be seen in her handling of the Pasyon's role or function. Initially, the review appears to quote me correctly: the Pasyon provided lowland Filipinos with "a language for articulating its own values, ideals, and even hopes of liberation." (p. 240) But this fails to note that this is only the *second* function of the Pasyon that I mention. I point out, in connection with Nicanor Tiongson's *Sinakulo*, that the Pasyon was a device "to inculcate among the Indios loyalty to Spain and the Church," and that it encouraged resignation to colonial rule because of the promise of a happy afterlife. (pp. 15-16) The notion that a text is capable of generating multiple meanings in relation to audience or context is something that is admittedly difficult to appreciate for one whose basic approach assumes that words are tied to their singular, proper meanings. Thus the apparent contradiction between the Pasyon as a colonial tool and the Pasyon as a language for liberation is resolved by simply ignoring my reference to the former. This has further implications.

The review seems to note a contradiction between Schumacher's depiction of the "Catholic character of nationalist expression" (which cut through elite-mass differences) and "Ileto's suggestion that the Filipino elite used the 'pasyon language' of the masses only when they intended to deceive the latter." (pp. 242-43)⁴ Since elite and masses shared the same Catholic traditions and modes of expression, is it not inconsistent to hold that the Catholic pasyon could be the source of elite-mass difference? The root of the problem is both Schumacher's and Guerrero's use of the term "Catholic" which seems to presuppose certain institutionalized meanings in mass religious behavior and in the Pasyon. My conscious refusal to use this term in my book was an attempt to guard against the intrusion of familiar "Catholic" meanings prior to the analysis of particular texts and contexts.

⁴ John N. Schumacher, S.J., "The Religious Character of the Revolution in Cavite, 1896-97," *Philippine Studies* 24 (1976): 399-416. See, in particular, footnote 2 for Schumacher's own judgment of my work. It should be noted that the word "only" in the review's statement of my view subtly distorts my position. While cases in which pasyon imagery is used in elite rhetoric are mentioned, the intent to deceive is not always present.

When the elite, in their speeches and writings, called for a mass rising against Spain, they made sense to the masses because, consciously or not, their appeals were framed in traditional terms. Whether one should call "Catholic" certain images of transition in these appeals that derive from the Pasyon, is open to question and perhaps beside the point. For the meanings in these appeals could even go beyond what their authors intended. From Catholic dogmas to the Pasyon to revolutionary appeals to the mass audience, images and concepts underwent subtle alterations such that simple classifications (e.g. Catholic, religious, mystical, etc.), which the reviewer consistently uses, might be said to conceal much more than clarify. Since clear-cut meanings rather than conditions for the possibility of meanings are what apparently is sought, the conclusion is drawn that the Pasyon thesis "fails to distinguish clearly the thinking of the leadership from that of the masses." (p. 245) Precisely! A master text like the Pasyon is capable of generating meanings for the whole of society.⁵ Distinctions between elite and mass thinking can be delineated only in the popular interpretation (using units of meaning in the Pasyon) of concrete historical events such as the elite's capitulation to the U.S. during the latter days of the Republic. The review confuses the text as an isolated unit and the text functioning in changing social contexts.

Eventually, Guerrero's apprehension of the Pasyon's role drifts away from the notion of language. Her query, "what levels of commitment does the pasyon ideology inspire?," is notable for the use of the term "pasyon ideology," which does not appear in the book. The term implies that the Pasyon in itself is an articulation of ideas, while I believe that ideology appears only in the Pasyon's relationship to actual conditions of existence.⁶ The units of meaning that can be found in the Pasyon do not amount to an ideology. The place to look for it is not the Pasyon but the analysis of concrete struggles—the chapters of the book.

⁵ For an excellent discussion from a historian's perspective of recent modes of approaching texts see Dominick LaCapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History and Reading Texts," *History and Theory* 19 (1980): 245-76.

⁶ See Louis Althusser's discussion of ideology in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), pp. 127-86.

PASYON AS LANGUAGE

When I am chided for engaging in “loose psychological speculation about the role of the pasyon in the history of anticolonial resistance” (p. 241), Guerrero reveals a basic difference between our approaches to language and consequently how the Pasyon functions as a language. My approach has nothing to do with psychology, at least in its traditional preoccupation with conceptions of the self or subject as originator of meaning. The Pasyon language is outside the subject, in society, delimiting the individual construction of meaning (at least for those immersed in its world; the *ilustrados*, on the other hand, could stand apart from it and “use” it). Perhaps it is this failure to distinguish between psychology and language that blocks Guerrero’s understanding of the layers of meaning in Bonifacio’s climb of Mount Tapusi and his entry into the cave of the legendary King Bernardo Carpio. Such meanings were not created by the individual Bonifacio – Bonifacio’s psychological make-up is never discussed in my book. My concern was rather the significance of the mountain-climbing episode for the folk in the environs (the news of the event spread quickly). Whether Bonifacio intended it or not is irrelevant to the web of meanings in which his gestures were located.⁷

Another drift in Guerrero’s understanding of the Pasyon is towards its status as an actual influence or cause. The drift is clearly discernible in her claim that the theme I develop is “that the Filipinos viewed the Revolution through the prism of the pasyon and that the pasyon inspired the people to Revolution.” (p. 244) There are two very different propositions here, the latter of which is Guerrero’s own, viewing literature (a category to which, she claims, the Pasyon properly belongs) as an “inspiration” for human activities. This misreading of the Pasyon’s role leads to the query whether it can ever be proven that the Katipunan uprising “was *inspired* by the pasyon ethos.” (p. 244) My book has not proved, she adds, that in Batangas and Cavite the rebels under Miguel Malvar, outside of the Colorum, “fought under pasyon

⁷ An extended analysis of this part of Guerrero’s review with reflections on Philippine historiography in general will be found in Reynaldo C. Ileto, “Methodological Implications of a Dispute on Andres Bonifacio,” paper read at the Annual Symposium of the National Research Council of the Philippines, Division XIII, 6 November 1981, to be published in the *Proceedings*, 1982.

inspiration.” (p. 245) Finally, the review claims that my “examination of the precise *causal connections* between the ideology of the Katipunan and the pasyon is even more deeply problematic.” (p. 244) These criticisms are deceptive, for they rest on the proposition, which I deliberately avoid, that the Pasyon is an “inspiration” or “cause.”

Guerrero can hardly be faulted for slipping into a cause-and-effect mode of understanding the past, for that has always been a *sine qua non* of traditional historiography. The idea of ordering phenomena in cause-and-effect chains presumes, of course, a certain time sequence; the alleged causal event must actually occur and it must precede the effect.⁸ Now, in the first place, there is no such thing as a “Pasyon ideology” that can be circumscribed as a cause. Secondly, Pasyon language does not precede Katipunan language, or vice-versa. It makes no sense to construct on a temporal scale two modalities of a social discourse. What we can show is the way “Katipunan ideology” was articulated in a social milieu whose basic units of comprehension can be delineated in a “reference myth” – the Pasyon.⁹ Similarly, we cannot say very much about the Pasyon as “inspiration,” but we can delineate in the speeches, songs, poems and recollections of the Revolution the repetition, largely on an unconscious level, of Pasyon categories of perception. Then we can begin to understand, not the Pasyon’s effect, but the efficacy of elite appeals for revolution such as the concluding lines of Gen. Malvar’s proclamation of 1901:

... at cahiman na uari na sa caniyang (San Josef) pagtatanquilic ay dumating tayo sa catapusan ng pacay, pagcaualat ng manga nacacahadlang sa guitna ng linalacaran. Huag ilingon ang mata sa licod, ititig sa ating hina-

⁸ A good discussion of how historians have utilized the concept of causation can be found in Lee Benson and Cushing Strout, “Causation and the American Civil War: Two Appraisals,” in *Studies in the Philosophy of History*, ed. George Nadel (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965). History, however, “has long since abandoned its attempts to understand events in terms of cause and effect in the formless unity of some great evolutionary process, whether vaguely homogeneous or rigidly hierarchized,” Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1972), p. 230.

⁹ Historians, including the well-known Fernand Braudel, have increasingly profited from Claude Levi-Strauss’ insights. On the “reference myth,” see “Overture” to *The Raw and the Cooked* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 37. Also Hans Kellner, “Disorderly Conduct: Braudel’s Mediterranean Satire,” *History and Theory* 18 (1979): 218-19.

harap, at paliuanaguin ang ating pinatutunguhan at calalaguian . . . (p. 203) (. . . and may it happen that with his (St. Joseph's) patronage we arrive at the end of our mission, tearing down the obstacles on the path we traverse. Do not look back, fix your gaze upon what lies ahead, and illumine our present state and destination . . .)

THE OTHER BOOK

In the second and third pages of her review, Guerrero gives us what amounts to an outline of how she would have approached the subject herself, and it is in relation to this "other book" that my own is situated. She begins with the curious assertion that I neglect to mention that the "cultural apparatus" of the Filipinos under Spain "had a distinct religious rather than a secular orientation." (p. 241) I say "curious" because it would seem that the importance of the Pasyon as the *de facto* social epic of the Tagalogs under Spanish rule implies a "religious" orientation. She continues with several pronouncements that are in fact stated or assumed in the book: that because of the constraint of Spanish censorship and the relative absence of non-religious texts, disparate texts like the Pasyon, the Bernardo Carpio awit, and Bonifacio's poem "Katapusang Hibik," have structural similarities; and that the people's articulation of their discontent "included symbols and nuances found in diverse aspects of the Catholic religion." (p. 242) Well and good. But as she goes along, it becomes clear that: first, the analytical implications of texts having "structural similarities" are not understood; thus, pp. 246-47 try to demonstrate my "conceptual confusion" in intersecting the Pasyon, Bernardo Carpio awit and Katapusang Hibik, but succeed only in revealing a basic confusion about structure and content, perception and empirical reality, text and context. Second, that the intention is to highlight a dichotomy between a religious view of reality inculcated by colonialism and a growing secularity that characterized ilustrado thought. This would be the starting point of the "other book"; the events of the revolution could then be ordered in terms of a movement from a colonial-religious world view toward a modern-secular one.

Perhaps Philippine scholarship has not reached the stage where we can fault such an uncritical view of religious/secular and other traditional dichotomies. After all, they have become part and par-

cel of the vocabulary of the "modernizing elite" to which historians are supposed to belong. But when our goal is to view history "from below," such constructs originating from the ilustrados must be put in question. One would be hard put to prove that the *tao* in the nineteenth century regarded his world view as "religious." Perhaps if he took a time tunnel to the mid-twentieth century and looked back, a difference between "religious" and "secular" might be perceived. The point is that Guerrero takes the categories "religious/secular" as self-evident and universal when they actually were constructed by European intellectuals trying to make sense out of the effects of industrialization on feudal values and agricultural societies.¹⁰ That such categories can be applied to nineteenth century Philippines is not self-evident and can be done only within critical limits. Or better still, why not derive categories from within the sociocultural milieu itself? In constantly falling back on categories that are familiar and seemingly universal, Guerrero reveals what she knows about "phenomenological approaches."

In the endorsement (p. 242) of Sartono Kartodirjo's "seminal work" *Protest Movements in Rural Java* (1973)¹¹ Guerrero places herself within a historical tradition originating with Eric Hobsbawm's *Primitive Rebels* (1959).¹² In this truly seminal work, Hobsbawm attempted to classify social movements in Italy and Spain in a kind of evolutionary plane from pure social banditry (reformist, prepolitical) to millenarianism (utopian, religious) to their ultimate form in modern revolutionary movements. He took the vantage point of modern, revolutionary proletarian consciousness as that which everything should develop into or else they would be failures. Thus he discussed movements in terms of their degree of rationality, organization and political sophis-

¹⁰ See Hildred Geertz, "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I" [critique of historian Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic*], *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6 (1975): 71-89; and Keith Thomas's reply in the same issue, pp. 91-109.

¹¹ It seems to me, as well as to many other students of Southeast Asian history, that Sartono's earlier work, *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888* (The Hague, 1966), better qualifies as a "seminal work."

¹² I am grateful to Prof. Ben Anderson of Cornell University for helping me think through the problem of *Primitive Rebels* in 1973. Some of his views on Hobsbawm, Benda/Castles, and Sturtevant can be found in his essay "Millenarianism and the Saminist Movement," in *Religion and Social Ethos in Indonesia* (Melbourne: Monash University, 1977).

tication. His book can be called seminal not only because it spawned similar studies but also because of the tension between the author's sincere desire to understand "primitive rebels," who left little by way of archival documents, and the unabashedly "modern" criteria of judgment he used to order the meagre data. Hobsbawm's successors have sometimes forgotten that his aim was to understand how movements *evolved* from past failures to present successes; he took the view "from above" (modern political organizers) rather than "from below."

Hobsbawm's evolutionary construct was applied to Southeast Asian peasant movements by the late Harry Benda¹³ who influenced, among others, Sartono Kartodirjo's *Protest Movements* (which is dedicated to Benda), David Sweet's 1970 essay on the *Cofradia de San Jose*,¹⁴ and David Sturtevant's *Popular Uprisings in the Philippines* (1976).¹⁵ In fact, Guerrero's call for a Kartodirjo-type study of Philippine movements is rendered superfluous by the existence of Sturtevant's work. By cleverly (or perhaps unconsciously) sidestepping Sturtevant, the criticisms I make of the latter in my Introduction (pp. 8-9) and implicitly throughout the book can be ignored and, also, the stamp of originality can be given to the "other book."

GREAT AND LITTLE TRADITIONS

Basically, both Guerrero (p. 242) and Sturtevant apply to the study of Philippine protest movements the familiar dichotomy between a Great Tradition (rational, secular, political, forward-looking, modern) and a Little Tradition (rural, nativistic, religious, backward-looking, pre-political). Guerrero's resistance to many of my interpretations (pp. 242, 243-44, 246, 253) can be attributed to her rigid identification of the Katipunan with a Great Tradition and peasant movements with a Little Tradition — classifications which are challenged in my book. For while I acknowledge the usefulness of the construct particularly for present-day organizers

¹³ "Peasant Movements in Southeast Asia," *Asian Studies* 3 (1965): 420-34.

¹⁴ "A Proto-Political Peasant Movement in the Spanish Philippines: The *Cofradia de San Jose* and the Tayabas Rebellion of 1841," *Asian Studies* 8 (1970): 94-119. The use of the term "proto-political" indicates the genre to which the essay belongs.

¹⁵ Sturtevant's framework is already set in his 1969 Ph. D. dissertation, "Philippine Social Structure and its Relation to Agrarian Unrest," Stanford University.

who seek practical lessons from past failures (were they failures in all senses of word?), it does not take us very far in understanding the mentality of the inarticulate; in fact, the use of terms like religious, traditionalist, nativistic, and even clientelist — all found in Guerrero's review — may serve as justification for our own failure to decode the language and gestures of peasant rebels.

Having suggested an approach akin to Sturtevant's, Guerrero confirms her rejection of my alternative approach by asserting that in taking the perspective of those "from below" I have unduly glorified the masses and produced a "biased and disjointed narrative of the Revolution." (p. 243) The assumption here is that there is a "Golden Mean" in historical research: balance the "from below" with the "from above"; produce a "narrative" that does not jolt the senses. This is what history had become in the hands of passive academicians during Nietzsche's time: "The original note sang of action, need, and terror; the overtone lulls us into a soft dilettante sleep. It is as though the heroic symphony had been arranged for two flutes for the use of dreaming opium smokers."¹⁶

The "Golden Mean" would appear to be "patron-client ties." Those "from below" joined the Revolution, Guerrero insists, out of loyalty to their "ilustrado-cacique patrons." She continues: "Like it or not . . . the truth is that the convergence of the disparate interests of the masses and the elite was one of the many important factors that made possible the Revolution of 1896." Facts are marshalled to show that the Philippine Revolution had an "essentially pluralistic and clientelist nature." (pp. 243-44) What is deceiving about all this is the parallel claim that I deny the existence of patron-client ties in my "history from below." Guerrero simply ignores my discussions on pp. 11-12, 199, 204-5, 227 and 286. Debt relationships, genuine or fictive kinship ties, *utang-na-loob*, loyalty, and so forth, certainly permeated the dominant modes of political mobilization during the Revolution. But is that all there is to it? Is that the "essence"? Typically, on page 204 of the book I conclude "that although recruitment into Malvar's army may have taken place along patron-client ties . . . it appears that the masses also had a vision of the future that they were fighting for." In other words, while there is no denying the sociological

¹⁶ *The Use and Abuse of History* (1874) (New York: The Library of Liberal Arts, 1949), p. 36.

reality of patron-client ties, this is not equivalent to how people thought. Furthermore, we must probe into the limits of such ties and not equate them, as Guerrero seems to do, with the "normal" or "natural" state of things.

Given the nature of the "facts" used by Guerrero, it is understandable why her analysis of popular participation should get stuck in a clientelist model. Landé, Grossholtz and other who used the model in explaining Philippine politics were, after all, interested in behavioral patterns.¹⁷ Few of them had a working knowledge of the indigenous languages or a truly "inside view" of the culture. To Guerrero's claim that the "massive" Philippine Insurgent Records demonstrate the "essentially pluralistic and clientelist nature" of the Revolution, my reply would be "yes," *but* we must account for the small but significant amount of records that challenge the dominant paradigm. Ilustrado and colonial writings which dominate our archival collections naturally lend themselves to a construction of the history of popular movements on a clientelist model. To write a history "from below" requires a conscious effort to resurrect the "excess" data that is disguised in a purely clientelist construct – to help bring about what Foucault has termed the "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" which were "present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematizing theory."¹⁸

Guerrero's "other book" would place political clientelism at the forefront. That "other book," however, is one that I already have written: my 1971 monograph on Datu Utto (*the Patron*) and the nineteenth century resistance of the Maguindanao to Spanish intrusions.¹⁹ Using Spanish records for the most part, it was not too difficult to reconstruct Datu Utto's sources of wealth – mainly slaves, weapons and gold – and other factors such as his personal valor and kinship networks that enabled him to mobilize his people. The role of Islam, however, complicated the neat patron-

¹⁷ See pp. 11-13 of my Introduction for a critique of the behaviorist models put forth by Carl Lande, Charles Kaut, Jean Grossholtz and others associated with the early Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC).

¹⁸ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-77 (New York: Pantheon, 1980), pp. 80-81.

¹⁹ *Magindanao, 1860-1888: The Career of Datu Uto of Buayan* (Cornell Southeast Asia Program #81, 1971). The "model" used was J.M. Gullick, *Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya* (London School of Economics, Monographs on Social Anthropology #17, 1958).

client analysis of the movement: *panditas* and *hajis* were urging men to fight in order to defend the Dar-ul-Islam and to attain Paradise. Did they fight, then, as good clients or as good Muslims? The kinds of sources I had to work with, and my superficial acquaintance with Maguindanao culture, kept me from going deeper into the subject. Hence I turned to popular movements in Luzon. Guerrero would face the same problems in a purely "external" view of the Revolution. It is true that when the Katipunan phase was at its peak, patrons and clients were swarming all over. But I have shown that "clients" were not mere passive acceptors. They saw a certain logic in their participation, and this logic already contained the possibility of a political divergence from traditional patrons. True enough, during the Republican period and after, elite patrons were increasingly abandoned in favor of "poor and ignorant" chiefs and "fanatical" leaders. Guerrero, of course, knows this but attributes this behavior to material conditions that caused the interests of elites and masses to diverge.²⁰ Again, perfectly valid, but this has little to do with perceptions from below. Guerrero's criteria of assessment belong to the "other book," while I have attempted to probe beneath the surface.

"DUBIOUS" SOURCES AND AUTHORIAL CONTROL

In her critique of the sources used in my work, Guerrero's strategy is to deal with the more controversial, because unfamiliar, types of sources (e.g. the Pasyon, various *awit*, folklore, poetry) *in isolation*, giving her audience the false impression that "Ileto's analysis rests on the above sources." (p. 244) She neglects to point out that texts of this sort are always used in tandem with conventional sources such as personal correspondence, colonial reports, memoirs and the like, which actually comprise the bulk of my documentation. The synchronic analysis of texts is necessary in order to more efficiently utilize the documentary evidence. As I state in the Introduction, "once we have gained some idea of the structure of the popular mind, data from conventional sources like official reports and outsider accounts can be fruitfully used." (pp. 14-15) The point is that instead of relying on "common

²⁰ See Guerrero's Ph. D. dissertation, chapters 3 and 4. In her review, Guerrero rather inexplicably forgets that our works complement each other; at least this is how we used to regard them. See my comments on p. 146 of the book.

sense” criteria or reified notions of nationalism and revolution, we must first establish actual units of meaning through textual analysis. A careful reading of Guerrero’s critique reveals the constant intrusion of “common sense” beliefs and reified categories.

The basic misapprehension is that the Pasyon *by itself* or *awit by themselves*, to be valid as sources, should tell us how the masses thought during the Revolution. Thus Guerrero constantly refers to the *content* of these “literary” sources as patently religious or imaginary (fictive) and therefore without any possible connection with the “realities” of nationalism and revolution. (see pp. 246-49) She fails to see that texts such as the Pasyon and the Bernardo Carpio awit, the two most popular texts in the Spanish Philippines (a fact which Guerrero, without contrary evidence, takes great pains to dispute)²¹ provide the historian with an access to structures (not contents) of thought. These can then be used to illumine texts from the Revolution itself. For example, when Agoncillo reproduced in full a translation of Bonifacio’s manifesto, “Ang Dapat Mabatid ng mga Tagalog,” it was in order to illustrate Bonifacio’s “sheer bravado and cold logic,” his “fanatical zeal” that affected the masses more than did Jacinto.²² The manifesto is presented, without analysis, as a self-evident document reflecting the state of mind of its author. In my eight-page analysis of the same document (pp. 102-09), however, I am able to discuss the contextual significations of the words and imagery used by Bonifacio, and in particular the temporal ordering of the speech in a Lost Eden /Fall /Redemption sequence – a structural feature of the Pasyon. Is this merely Bonifacio, or have we not begun to discuss the masses?

LITERATURE AND HISTORY

Having zeroed in on a certain segment of my diverse sources Guerrero is able to contend that because the Pasyon, awit, myths, songs and poems belong to the realm of “literature,” they tend to be “of doubtful value to the social historian” (p. 244) and there-

²¹ See Guerrero’s review, p. 245. This is surely the most questionable section of her essay since a region with friars and churches that did not have some version of the Pasyon has yet to be shown. Guerrero ignores my evidence and fails to provide her own.

²² *The Revolt of the Masses* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1956) pp. 91-92.

fore my use of them beyond the culling of historical data (p. 250, 255) renders my whole analytical enterprise doubtful. About the proper use of these sources, I have already commented. There is, however, a less obvious phenomenon that needs to be reflected upon: the repetition throughout the review of the category "literature" in opposition to "history." To Guerrero, literature signifies the imaginary, the fictive, the subjective, all of which at one point or another she associates with some aspect of my sources or my work. On her side is installed the category "history," which signifies truth, objectivity, reality. "It seems to me," she says, "that [Ileto] has oversimplified the boundaries that separate literature and history. For while literature creates life, history re-creates it, . . ." (p.250).

My use of Alfonso Santos' "highly impressionistic" *Rizal Miracle Tales* is given as an example of my penchant for "literature." (p. 244) For isn't Santos a well-known literary man? Therefore the data on Rizal is highly imaginative and unreliable. What Guerrero omits to mention is that *Rizal Miracle Tales* is a collection of myths about Rizal gathered mainly from old people in Calamba, many of them belonging to the *Watawat ng Lahi* group. Whether Santos embellished the stories or not is beside the point, for the mythical features are clearly delineated in them. There is something to Levi-Strauss' remark that the substance of myths "does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the story which it tells."²³

The content of Guerrero's stance vis-a-vis "literature" can actually be ignored, but not what this stance reveals about her anxieties concerning history. From the Renaissance to the early nineteenth century, historiography had been regarded as a literary art, more precisely a branch of rhetoric. It was recognized that the historian's discourse, no matter how "factual" the level, was basically a verbal performance, a fictive discourse. In the nineteenth century, however, came the attempt to make history into a discipline by renouncing its literary origins. And yet it was not to be exactly a science either, since its narrative or story-telling aspect was deemed essential.²⁴ This traditional anxiousness of historians to somehow

²³ *Structural Anthropology* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967 ed.), p. 206.

²⁴ Hayden White, "The Discourse of History," *Humanities in Society* 2 (Winter 1979): 2-3, 13-14; Shelly Errington, "Some Comments on Style in the Meanings of the Past," *Journal of Asian Studies* 38 (1979): 238-39.

be on the side of "science" (truth and objectivity) while remaining subject to the vicissitudes of language in narrative discourse, underlies Guerrero's application, in her reading of my work, of the literature/history dichotomy. When, as in her critique of my treatment of Bonifacio and Bernardo Carpio (p. 249), she fails to grasp the logic of a semiotic analysis, she falls back on the accusation originally hurled at nineteenth century historical novelist: fictionist!

"A more basic criticism of the thesis," says Guerrero, "is that the historian — who is interested in penetrating the collective mentality — is restricted to using only those sources pertinent to or originating from, the leadership ranks." (p. 245) She spends much effort in demonstrating the non-plebeian origins of Bonifacio, Jacinto and other Katipunan leaders — a fact which, she admits, "[Ileto] himself points out." Precisely. There is no attempt on my part to hide the "middle class" origins of the authors of many texts I use because the notion of author as originator of meanings in popular texts is not as self-evident as Guerrero thinks. Foucault and Barthes have eloquently stressed that our common sense notions of "authorial control" are formed by the post-Renaissance tendency of authors to think of their writing as an expression or even extension of their individuality. Medieval authors, and our own authors of *awit* and *corrido*, were certainly no individualists! The texts I use, including Bonifacio's speeches, were part of a collective enterprise, expressing not an individual point of view but a general outlook, the product of the culture at large. It was around the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe that the value of a text began to depend on information like author, date, place and circumstances of writing, and so forth.²⁵ Should we read into nineteenth century Tagalog writings a certain Western-derived view of authorship? I think I have shown amply enough that Katipunan manifestos and awit literature, though bearing certain author's names, were immersed in the prevailing collective discourse of their time. And, always, my analysis has proceeded from text to context, and vice-versa. Guerrero's critique founders in her wrestling the so-called "literary evidence" from their proper contexts

²⁵ Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977); Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp. 142-43. Both works are translated from the French.

and her attempt to fix meaning in some absolute, original, author-centered plane.

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

"Unfortunately, mistranslations and too literal renditions of Tagalog terms, which alter the nuances of meaning in the original sources, are not infrequent. A few but significant examples will suffice in this essay." (p. 250) This is a very sweeping charge by Guerrero. Unfortunately, in the "significant examples" she gives, it can be shown that there is either a misrepresentation of the original or a conceptual confusion on her part. Except for three examples which can only be described as petty (e.g. "Nitong mundong kabilugan," she insists, should be translated as "in this entire world" rather than "in this global world"!), let me address each of her points.

Guerrero's first example illustrates a strategy that appears again and again in her review namely, taking a word or statement out of the context in which its meaning is derived and translating it in her own terms. On page 56, I quote Apolinario de la Cruz advising his wavering (*loob na naguurong-sulong*) brethren "to think, because 'perhaps darkness is beginning to overcome them' (*baca nadidiliman lamang*) or perhaps because they have 'become forgetful in these times' (*nacalilimot sa panahong ito*)." Guerrero lifts out the section *baca nadidiliman lamang* and faults my translation for implying that "a natural phenomenon as dusk" has fallen upon people. The correct translation, according to her (p. 250), is "perhaps because they are confused," because this truly "captures the emotional state" of the men.

But is it an "emotional state" that we are trying to capture? Guerrero's reduction of *nadidiliman* to its psychological register is made possible (and, to her audience, made plausible) by the severance of *nadidiliman* from the clause *mag-isip-isip* ("to think") that precedes it and *nacalilimot* ("become forgetful") that follows it. Only by restoring *nadidiliman* to its discursive context can the translation, "perhaps darkness is beginning to overcome them," make sense, for "thinking" and "forgetting" are, in Apolinario de la Cruz' discourse, states of being in relative light or darkness. Guerrero conveniently ignores the fact that the sentence in question belongs to a ten-page section entitled "Apolinario's Teachings"

which examines the opposition between light (*liwanag*) and darkness (*dilim*) that runs through Apolinario's letters and the Cofradia's prayers and rituals and serves to organize their thinking. In the context of the chapter (titled "Light and Brotherhood"), and the whole book for that matter, "light" and "darkness" are no mere signifiers (i.e., they are no longer "natural phenomena") but have attained the status of signs, filled with signification by the Cofradia and the society's conventional codes.²⁶ Given the place of *nadidiliman* in the language of the Cofradia, Guerrero's ready translation, "they are confused," is reductive and unnecessary.

"For some undisclosed reason, [Ileto] does not translate such terms as *awa*, *damay*, *gulo*, *loob*, *lakaran*, and *liwanag*, as they are used repeatedly in differing circumstances in the book. He does not suggest, however that these words defy translation." (p. 250) On the basis of such assertions, one wonders whether Guerrero has examined my book with the care and impartiality she faults me for lacking. On page 331 of the book is a glossary wherein all of the terms she mentions are translated or defined. But this is only a last resort, an emergency tool, for reorienting the reader (especially the non-Filipino) who has difficulty in holding on to the definitions elaborated upon in the text. If Guerrero had treated the book in its entirety instead of concentrating on chapters three and four, she would not have failed to note that the book is also an archaeology of the words she cites. For example, if we look up *damay* in the index, we will find six lines devoted to the entry, because throughout the book the layers of meaning in the word *damay* are revealed in particular contexts. The definitions of such words (they certainly defy translation) are constantly subject to subtle plays of meaning — a dreadful situation for historians who cling to the illusion of some unambiguous referent or "thing itself" that is tied to a word or sign. But it is precisely because meanings cannot be fixed in some transcendental plane that the archaeology of words like *awa*, *damay*, *loob* and the like must be undertaken. Historians unaware of the intrusion of Western notions of subjectivity and the self into the present-day, common sense apprehension of such terms (e.g., is *awa*, "pity," an outpouring of the self, or is it a manifestation of inner strength or power?) can complete-

²⁶ See Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in *Mythologies* (1957) (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), pp. 109-59.

ly misconstrue their function in the Philippine revolutionary mentality.²⁷

DIVERSE NUANCES OF MEANING

Guerrero insists that when I fail “to translate what seems to be key words in the explication of the pasyon world view of the Tagalogs, [I] ignore the diverse nuances of meaning which are possible for any word in the Tagalog language.” (p. 250) This compulsion to find English equivalents of key words appears to contradict her earlier acknowledgement that some words defy translation. In any case, let us look into the single example she gives to illustrate her case — the status of *loob* in the following stanza of an awit of the Revolution:

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

The grief of all the principales in the towns
was sweeping and unrelenting
in this mounting hardship the heat of the Katipunan's *loob*
intensified, burst into flames. (p. 166)

Guerrero's contention is that the last line, “ang init nang loob nitong CATIPUNAN,” should be translated as “the implacable anger among the people.” This is arrived at, she argues, by listening carefully “to the meaning implicit in the lines,” in order “to approximate the meaning intended by the poet in the original language.” (p. 251)

Aside from the question, which I deal with elsewhere, as to whether we ought to concern ourselves with authorial intentions in awit literature, two points can be raised concerning Guerrero's translation: first, she has treated that particular stanza in isolation; second, her criteria of interpretation are extraneous to the logic of the awit itself. She implies that nothing could be more natural, to the poet and the audience, than that colonial policy produced

²⁷ Anthropologists have always led the way in these matters. See the excellent discussion of *liget* (passion, chaos, separation, confusion, uncontrolled anger, etc.) and *beya* (knowledge, form, control, etc.) in the Ilongot construction of their world, in Michelle Z. Rosaldo, *Knowledge and Power: Ilongot Notions of Self and Social Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

popular anger. Perhaps. But is the awit simply a reflector of that empirical fact? Why the need for the awit form? Guerrero's translation sidesteps the issue of the awit's – and, by extension, the popular audience's – *difference* by assimilating it into her conceptual universe: the signifiers “init nang loob” and “Catipunan” are tied to familiar signifieds, namely, “an internal state of anger” and “a revolutionary secret society.”

Interestingly enough, it is the psychological register of *init nang loob* that captures Guerrero's imagination – a reflection of modern scholarship's preoccupation with the self as the locus of emotions. Based on the awit's own units of meaning, however, *init nang loob* (heat of loob) and *naglatang* (intensified, burst into flames) are key images that are repeated throughout in varying forms and cannot be translated reductively. This is hardly the place to summarize my thirty-page analysis of the awit; suffice it to say that these images are intimately tied in with an idea of power as radiant energy that can be concentrated in the individual loob (as in Jesus Christ and Bernardo Carpio) or in a union of loob (as in the Cofradia and the Katipunan).²⁸ Various aspects and refractions of this notion of power “from below” are described throughout the book, and it is only within this field that my apparently “literal” translations, which so disturb Guerrero because she treats them in her own, familiar terms, make sense.

Following the dispute on *init nang loob*, Guerrero boldly asserts that “sometimes, the mistranslation significantly alters the direction and meaning intended by the original sources and also allows an interpretation – which buttresses the book's thesis – that is not confirmed by the text.” (p. 251) And yet, what sort of evidence is given? She takes my translation of Mojica's “*Ang Catapusang Arao ng Agosto 1896*” and notes that instead of translating “*labing limang arao*” as “fifteen days” that it took for the Caviteños to rout the Spaniards, I write “five days.” I admit to the error, which must have occurred in the typing of an earlier draft, but Guerrero concludes from it that the mistranslation was deliberate in order for me to say that the people's anger was so great, etc., that it took them so little time to win. Nowhere, in my

²⁸ See entry “Power” in my Index. I also discuss this, with particular reference to the Bernardo Carpio myth, in “Tagalog Poetry and Image of the Past in the War Against Spain,” in A. Reid and D. Marr, eds., *Perceptions of the Past In Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Heinemann, 1979).

analysis (pp. 157-58) do I even imply that. My attention is focused on the idiom of redemption that undergirds Mojica's "historical" account. Whether the event took five, fifteen or even thirty days is completely irrelevant to the image of a "complete process" that I describe. Ironically, spotting an isolated error allows Guerrero an interpretation – which buttresses her review's thesis – that is not confirmed by the text.²⁹

The second evidence of mistranslation and misinterpretation on my part is also derived from my handling of Mojica's text. A question of congruence of form and content, I note that the long, single sentence in which the Cavite rising is narrated, "is itself an image of a complete process – the beginning, the spread and the end of a popular uprising." (p. 157) Guerrero considers this a ridiculous inference since, after all, "lengthy sentence structures were characteristic of nineteenth-century Filipino writing, undoubtedly an influence of Spanish writing." (p. 252) Well, in the first place, why does the complete text of Mojica's contain short sentences too? What does the difference between the extremely long first sentence and subsequent, short sentences, signify? Secondly, the point of my analysis is to show that "rather than being pure narrative, the account tries to capture through language the experience of 1896." (p. 157) Traditionally, historians have ignored the manner in which events are spoken or written about in their preoccupation with the events themselves. It is assumed that the Western genre of history, as a chain of events temporally, logically or causally constructed, is universal – thus the attitude that attention paid to the language of texts only draws us away from the main task which is to reconstruct events. In a history "from below," however, the main task actually shifts toward a description of unfamiliar modes of historical awareness. The way events are strung together in a text, and even the sounds that emanate from an oral account of the past, are all capable of signification.³⁰

²⁹ A similar "slip" occurs on pp. 247-49, wherein she reproduces Agoncillo's translation of Bonifacio's poem *Katapusang Hibik* because my own translation allegedly strays from Bonifacio's meanings. In fact, the translation I use is basically Bienvenido Lumbera's, and the difference between his and Agoncillo's is insignificant.

³⁰ An exciting foray into the relationship between the form of medieval chronicles and the world view of the literate man of the times is William Brandt's *The Shape of Medieval History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). See also Errington's work, cited in n. 24 above.

LAYAW AND KALAYAAN

The critique of my translations climaxes with an attempt to "set the record straight" on my analysis of the word *kalayaan*. Here, Guerrero announces, is a convincing example of how I examine my subject and sources "with a latitude and a lack of rigor that obscure rather than highlight the development of a revolutionary mentality among Filipinos." (p. 252)

Basically, our difference can be traced to her belief that words can be assigned fixed meanings. *Kalayaan*, therefore, *must* mean "liberty and independence," as distinct from *kalayaán*, which means "self-abandonment, state of being pampered." I, on the other hand, look into the archaeology of *kalayaan*, particularly the play of meanings it engages with *kalayaán* and *kalayawan*, which signify "satisfaction of one's needs," "pampering treatment by parents" or "freedom from control." "Liberty and independence" constitute only a layer of *kalayaan*'s meanings. Seemingly oblivious of the word plays that Tagalog speakers often engage in, Guerrero fails to capture the import of Jose Villa Panganiban's comment (*Diksyunario-Tesaurus*, p. 623) that "those untrained in language make no such distinctions" between *kalayaan* and *kalayaán*. Here Panganiban is referring to everyday users of the language who are not aware of the fine distinctions and complex rules that linguists like to underscore.

Not only is *kalayaan* assigned a unitary, liberal-nationalist meaning by Guerrero, but the term *layaw* is also tied to "a pejorative connotation of the mother-child relationship which is destructive to the offspring." To prove that this was *layaw*'s meaning in the nineteenth century, she quotes Francisco Baltazar (1861):

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

One raised in *layaw* is often devoid
of prudence and reason, lacking in judgment
a bitter fruit of faulty caring
the parent's regret over their beloved son.

Of course we all know these familiar lines from *Florante at Laura*. In fact, they have become so domesticated that their position in

the awit has all but been forgotten. The stanza appears in the context of Florante's narration of his past life to his rescuer Aladin. Having recalled his happy, carefree childhood under the loving care of his parents, Florante shifts to his father's words of explanation (seven stanzas) as the son, having reached the proper age, is about to be sent to Atena to study. "Ang laqui sa layaw," in the awit, refers to the consequence of failing to move on to the next stage of life, which is the cultivation of learning and courage through schooling or apprenticeship with a master. Thus, Florante has to experience separation from his beloved mother in order to study under Maestro Antenor.

Because the stanza in question is taken out of context, Guerrero is able to identify *layaw* itself with a destructive mother-child relationship when, in fact, a negative connotation only arises when *layaw* is prolonged beyond a certain stage of the life-arc. Florante's separation from his mother is precisely what sets off his boyhood as a "Lost Eden," a time of *kalayawan* or *kalayaán*, which is recalled not pejoratively but fondly and nostalgically in no less than eighteen stanzas (178-195) of the awit. These very same memories of *layaw*, of the bliss and wholeness of childhood under a mother's protective care (*lingap*) are tapped by Bonifacio in his writings, particularly his poem *Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Lupa*, because of the transposition that can be made from natural mother to Inang Bayan (Mother Country).³¹ What better way to move people than to make them look back to a past condition of contentment and prosperity (*lubos na kasaganaan at kaginhawaan*) under Inang Bayan in the same way that they remember their childhood, so that they will be inspired to rescue the now-oppressed Mother? Guerrero takes great pains to deny that the effectiveness of *kalayaan* as a popular rallying cry derives from its ability to capture what is meaningful in the past as well as to provide an inviting image of the future.

Finally, I am allegedly "in error" in saying that "prior to the rise of the separatist movement [i.e., the Katipunan], *kalayaan* did not mean 'freedom' or 'independence.'" In the first place, the insert [i.e., the Katipunan] does not appear in my text. Its addition by Guerrero distorts the meaning of the original by locking the evolution of *kalayaan's* meaning to a certain date (1892). She

³¹ This is discussed fully in Iletto, "Tagalog Poetry," cited in n. 28.

is then able to point to the definition of *kalayaan* as "libertad" and "emancipación" in Pedro Serrano-Laktaw's 1889 *Diccionario*, in order to prove me wrong. In actual fact, at the risk of sounding petty, I did not specify a date or an organization.

Ironically, Serrano-Laktaw only serves to strengthen my argument. Clearly, talk of separation from Spain was rife in the late 1880s and I am not surprised that an 1889 dictionary by an ilustrado should infuse *kalayaan* with a European-liberal meaning. What is more telling, to my mind, is that Guerrero cannot produce a pre-1880s dictionary with such a definition. What, then did *kalayaan* mean prior to all this talk about separation? Furthermore, even if the ilustrado Serrano-Laktaw clearly distinguished *kalayaan* from *kalayawan* in 1889, this ignores the actual operation of *kalayaan* and *layaw* in texts addressed to the masses. Bonifacio, it will be recalled, was himself a victim of ilustrado propriety.

ON THE HANDLING OF FACTS

Consistent with Guerrero's attempt to undermine my credibility while situating herself on the side of "truth and objectivity," is her insinuation that the book's readability may conceal the author's mishandling of facts: "False and misleading statements, careless remarks and glaring errors of fact, of which this reviewer gives the following brief selection, ought to have been avoided in this well-written work." (p. 253) Typographical errors and occasional inaccuracies in the data presented are to be expected in any book and more gracious reviewers point these out in order to improve the book in subsequent editions. But to provide a "brief selection" of errors implying that the book is shot through with them and that its main ideas are thereby undermined, is a serious assault that necessitates my point by point treatment of the "glaring errors."

In fact, I was in error when I gave 1894 instead of 1892 as the date of the Katipunan's founding. And I mistakenly wrote "the proclamation of the republic at Malolos" when I meant "the proclamation of independence at Kawit." Further editing might have spotted these "slips" which, by the way, do not alter the arguments. The third and last error which I concede is my failure to acknowledge, in a footnote, that Agoncillo wrote the introduc-

tion to Abad's book on Sakay. (p. 214) Why the fuss, though, over my failure to acknowledge Agoncillo in a footnote? Here, perhaps, Guerrero reveals more than she intends. Her deference to Agoncillo's judgments is evident in her handling of no less than four of my "errors," which I shall presently discuss.

On the date of the newspaper *Kalayaan's* initial appearance, there is some basis for my acceptance of the date January 1896. Agoncillo himself says (*Revolt*, p. 332) that "all historical writers including Epifanio de los Santos, contend that the initial number came out on the same date as appeared in the masthead, that is, January 1, 1896." Following Pio Valenzuela's testimony, however, he argues that March is the actual date it came out. This is the view that Guerrero takes, and I could be persuaded to do so myself. But did I commit a "glaring error" in taking the line of all historians prior to Agoncillo? Then Guerrero asserts that I am mistaken in accepting the testimony of Bonifacio's wife that Sakay helped run the Katipunan press. However, she does not provide any counter-evidence, unless it is to be assumed that she has it on Agoncillo's authority. It is probably also the latter's pronouncement that, contrary to my account, Alejandro Santiago was not a member of Bonifacio's Supreme Council in 1896. But Artemio Ricarte explicitly states that Santiago was a member of the *Kataastaasang Sanggunian*.³² Was Ricarte mistaken, then? I doubt it. From 1892 to 1896 the composition of the Supreme Council changed several times. The names listed by Agoncillo and Guerrero³³ of the five secretaries (or ministers) of the fifth and last Council are included (with Pio Valenzuela in place of Enrique Pacheco for the finance post) in Ricarte's list, which provides an additional six names, Santiago's among them. What positions did these six hold? The puzzle is solved by Aguedo del Rosario's testimony in 1908 that there were six councilors in addition to the five ministers of the 1896 Supreme Council.³⁴

Another alleged error concerns my statement in a footnote (p. 109) that in Agoncillo's translation of Jacinto's Manifesto in

³² *Memoirs of General Artemio Ricarte* (Manila: National Heroes Commission, 1963), p. 3.

³³ *History of the Filipino People* (Quezon City: R.P. Garcia Pub., 1977), p. 172.

³⁴ Appendix no. 137 in the Watson Collection, in *Minutes of the Katipunan* (Manila, Quezon City: R.P. Garcia Pub., 1964), p. 116.

Kalayaan he “had to rely on the Spanish translation in *Retana* and on a translation, presumably by Epifanio de los Santos, in *The Philippine Review*.” Compare the above with Guerrero’s version of it: “The author also points out that the Agoncillo translation of the *Kalayaan* was based on *Retana’s* translation and on another translation ‘presumably by Epifanio de los Santos.’ ” (p. 254) *Retana* the compiler has become *Retana* the translator! Then Guerrero presents the “facts”: “Agoncillo himself says that he used the Caro y Mora translation and an English translation by Gregorio Nieva.” (p. 254) Now where does Agoncillo say this? My footnote was based entirely on the information furnished by Agoncillo himself on pp. 334-45, footnote 15, of *Revolt*, with only the added speculation that the English translation Agoncillo mentioned might have been de los Santos’. Guerrero not only misquotes my footnote but deceptively uses information (on Caro y Mora and Gregorio Nieva) that could only have been provided directly to her by Agoncillo. The latter’s clarification of his footnote from which I derive my information, is more than welcome to me, but not the use to which it is put by Guerrero.

Still on Jacinto’s *Manifiesto*, Guerrero asks how I could comment that the translation “seems to be faithful enough to the original,” if I had not seen the missing Tagalog original. Again, in order to make her point, she ignores portions of my argument. What I say is this: “Some of the nuances of the Tagalog language such as found in Bonifacio’s manifesto are missing in Jacinto’s manifesto, which is available only in Spanish translation. Nevertheless, the translation seems to be faithful enough to the original, for we find in it certain images that point to a ‘traditional’ frame of meaning in talking about revolution and independence.” (p. 112) The term “frame of meaning” is crucial here. My interest is less in the individual words and sentences of the manifesto than in its underlying patterns which are in fact repeated with variations in other texts of the Katipunan. The Spanish translation is faithful enough to its absent original in that the repetition of stock images and structural patterns can be clearly delineated. My re-translation of the Spanish version relies heavily on a familiarity with such recurring patterns. Agoncillo and Nieva, on the other hand, reading the Spanish text from the perspective of nineteenth-century liberal nationalism, render what I believe is a reductive translation.

Guerrero moves on to a news item in the *Manila Times* which says that the followers of Felipe Salvador “wore long hair and biblical type clothes” – data that is allegedly misused when I say that these same men were “all dressed like pasyon characters.” Here a little exercise of the historical imagination should have been granted. Throughout the chapter on Felipe Salvador, colonial reports and Salvador’s own statements are cited portraying Salvador as a Filipino Christ, a Messiah, a Redeemer, and his followers as disciples. Since there is absolutely no evidence that Old Testament characters had any appeal to the Santa Iglesia or to any Filipino religio-political group for that matter, can the reference to “long hair” and “biblical type clothes” be any other than to the New Testament or its Filipino version, the Pasyon?

THE LOST EDEN

The final criticism in relation to my handling of facts concerns the use of the image of the Lost Eden to capture a certain perception of the past. How could the Katipunan uprising have been recalled as a kind of Lost Eden when the evidence shows that the people experienced hardships then? A litany of facts is then recited to support this contention. (pp. 254-56)

First of all, none of these facts dispute Alvarez’ and Mojica’s contention that there was indeed an exhilarating experience of *kalayaan* “during the latter days of September 1896” (not, as the review puts it, “the first few happy months”). The data provided show that the people began to feel the crunch in the succeeding months when the rebel forces had to be materially sustained, banditry became frequent, and Spanish counter-attacks were severe. But that is precisely why the initial surge of September was “romanticized.” The time of suffering enabled the recent past to be interpreted as a Lost Eden. The latter became generalized to include the Katipunan uprising as a whole, during the even more difficult post-Katipunan period. One has only to go through the pages of Tagalog novels and dramas, periodicals like *Muling Pagsilang* and *Renacimiento Filipino* and even oral accounts by veterans, to be convinced of the popular perception of the Katipunan uprising or revolution as a time when the people came into their own after centuries of colonialism, when the sentiment of unity was strong, when the redemption of Inang Bayan seemed

at hand. At a certain point, in fact, Guerrero concedes that there was a perception of a Lost Eden, but she insists that it properly belonged to the authors of the sources I used. (p. 256) My extensive use in this regard of the awit *Casunod nang Buhay na Pinagdaanan ng ating manga Capatid* is belittled because it only reflects Tandiamá's perception. Guerrero chooses to ignore my careful demonstration of the awit as a *Kantahing Pulube* (Beggar Song) sung by wandering minstrels during at least the first two decades of this century.

Guerrero's arguments are made possible by collapsing the gap between the experience itself (i.e., what actually happened) and interpretations of it which are shaped by the contours of memory and the context of remembering.³⁵ The effort to prove that empirically the Katipunan uprising was no Lost Eden evades the whole complex of mediations that is involved in *remembering*. The Lost Eden is not in the final analysis, an empirically verifiable state of bliss but an emblem of the perceived difference between a past time and the present. When Rizal and other ilustrados wrote of the pre-Spanish past as a state of perfection and harmony, they not only attempted to resurrect an empirical past, but constructed it in terms of a difference between a Lost Eden and the Age of Darkness wrought by Spanish colonialism, a structure that is also found in the Pasyon. The logical aftermath is an awakening, a redemption, a passage to light. We have already made reference to the repetition of this structure in Katipunan literature. Now in post-Katipunan literature, the structure is repeated with the uprising against Spain occupying the Lost Eden position. Brian Fegan, using both historical records and interviews with veterans of the anticolonial struggles during the American regime, corroborates this reworking of the myth of the Lost Eden during the years of the Ricartist "disturbances."³⁶ And even in this day and age the pattern occasionally becomes visible to us. Working in the early 1970s among "people who call themselves seekers, tradi-

³⁵ Ever since the discovery by the physical sciences that their tools of observation and measurement necessarily though perhaps imperceptibly alter the state of the objects they are trained at, it has become impossible to speak of "independently existing objects," including the so-called "facts" of history. The "what really happened" is always subtly altered by the sources that refer to it. Thus the need to think in terms of "relation to" rather than the "thing itself."

³⁶ "Vigil and Continuities in Central Luzon Peasant Movements." This fascinating essay is currently being revised for publication.

tionalists, and curers" in Majayjay Laguna, Robert Love describes their ideas of time (*panahon*) as follows: "They reduce the *panahon* to a situation of absolute contrast between chaos and peace, wholeness and dispersion, power (*kapangyarihan*) and powerlessness. The result of this is that that which has been lost to man, the *panahon* of the Father, becomes possible of attainment again in the age of the Spirit."³⁷

All of this is nonsense to Guerrero. She suggests rather that in order to understand how peasants thought and behaved we must "establish the relationship between attitudes and patterns of thought, on the one hand, and the social and economic structures, on the other." (p. 256) I agree wholeheartedly. But the "methodological" prescriptions Guerrero lists in her penultimate paragraph make me wonder how she can usefully accomplish this: First, in doing away with "phenomenological explanations at least of the kind [Ileto] has made," Guerrero would continue to misapply "universal" categories to the past. Second, in treating the "growth of the collective mentality . . . as an articulation of conscious experience within the socio-economic milieu," Guerrero would assume an identity between the analytical domain and the empirical world, and probably fall back on some crude "reflection" theory of base and superstructure. And third, in failing to treat literature as language, in limiting its role to that of a repository of facts to be systematically culled, Guerrero would founder precisely on the critical issues that have been raised in this paper. With such time-honored conceptual underpinnings, we wonder what consolation there is in Guerrero's final statement that "there is a massive amount of excellent materials awaiting investigation."

³⁷ "The *Samahan* of Papa God: Tradition and Conversion in a Tagalog Peasant Religious Movement" (Ph. D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1977), p. 291. Another work that creatively deals with the units of historical apprehension is Renato Rosaldo's *Ilongot Headhunting, 1883-1974: A Study in Society and History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980).