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A Note on Pio Ga. Sedonio

Regina Groyon



Dr. Pio Ga. Sedonio is a poet who first wrote in Hiligaynon but shifted to English, perhaps because he chose the teaching of English as his life's work. Although he has had his works published in vernacular magazines, he still nurses the dream of seeing all his works published in a single book. He has provided invaluable assistance in my study of Hiligaynon literature, translating poems, his own and other poets', into English. He is a rich source of information on other writers. He continues to practice his craft and is presently working on a verse translation of Pedro Monteclaro's *Maragtas*.

Dr. Pio Ga. Sedonio was born on 12 July 1927 in Punta Taytay, Bacolod City. He chose to be a teacher and proceeded to earn his B.S.E. degree in Education, major in English at West Negros College, his M.A. in Education at the same college, and finally, his Doctorate in Philosophy, major in Educational Management, at the University of San Agustin in Iloilo. He has been elementary school principal of the Silay South Regional In-Service Training Center in Silay City and high school principal of West Negros College. He became Dean of the College of Education, and Dean of the Graduate School, of West Negros College. At present, although retired, he continues to teach a course or two at West Negros College.

Pio Sedonio began writing poems in the vernacular early in life. He was proclaimed "Batharing' Mamalaybay sa Pulong Hiligaynon" (Prince of Hiligaynon Poetry) by the Sumakwelan in the annual competition on 1 May 1955 in San Jose, Antique. He earned the title because he won first prize for his poem, "Banwang' Pilipinas," which he delivered before the assembly of poets. This event inspired him to continue writing in the vernacular, but he eventually shifted to English for poetic expression until he was able to compile a substantial number of poems in a book which is still to be published. It is a collection of inspirational religious verses entitled "Roses, Thorns, And The Flaming Heart." He has since resumed writing in the vernacular.

Having chosen the teaching profession, Pio Sedonio stopped writing in the vernacular for many years. In effect, he was committed to English. One of his notable achievements was the scholarship grant he received in 1971 at the Regional English Language Center in Singapore. He was named Outstanding Scholar for his research project, a book entitled *Guided Composition for Philippine Schools*. He has published other books but these are either textbooks in English or handbooks for teachers, namely, *Philippine Literature*, *Handbook of Research and Thesis Writing* (co-authored by his wife, Dr. Salvacion Sedonio), and *English Essentials for College Freshmen*.

Pio Sedonio belongs to that breed of Hiligaynon poets who believe that the purity of the language must be preserved. He visibly cringes at the way radio commentators transmogrify Hiligaynon by mixing it with English. He balks at the use of present-day Hiligaynon, better known as Ilonggo, for poetry. He seems reluctant to admit that the traditional Hiligaynon poet will ultimately lose his audience with the decrease in the number of people who can understand him. After all, language changes and evolves as it absorbs words from other languages. In the case of Hiligaynon and other Philippine languages, the principal source of new words is English, although there are young poets today who use a kind of Hiligaynon combined with both English and Tagalog.

This note focuses on the early poems in the vernacular of Pio Ga. Sedonio.

Banwang Pilipinas

The prize-winning poem, "Banwang' Pilipinas," is a good example of the patriotic verse favored by Hiligaynon poets during the first half of the twentieth century. It reiterates the nationalistic sentiments of Rizal's "Mi Ultimo Adios." The modern reader may find the poem naive in its glorification of a country rich in natural resources. The ardent protestations of love of country are rather generalized and repetitious. However, the craftsmanship is notable for its consistency in creating sixteen stanzas, each with nine lines and a rhyme scheme of abba/cdc/cd.

The hyperbolic manner is a poetic convention which Hiligaynon poets demand of any kind of patriotic verse. The first stanza glorifies the islands which the god Laon has strewn on the ocean. The Philippines is a precious, most beautiful land where love reigns by

virtue of its people's desire to give it a new life after all those years when destiny seemed sparing of its blessings.

In the second stanza, the poet speaks of the beauty given by Heaven as comparable to the honeyed richness and sweet fragrance of the "sampaga." He confesses his youthful inadequacy at versifying, even as he declares his intention to do his best to write a poem which will resound in all the earth's oceans, the love which he wishes to offer to his country.

In the third stanza, the poet uses the cliché of the Philippines as a priceless gem whose perfection inspires love. This beauty is not specified, but the poet uses the word *matahum* (beautiful) in its different forms like an incantation to underscore the idea that everything is beautiful in this extraordinary land.

The fourth stanza reiterates the land's beauty, by sunlight and by moonlight. This pure beauty evokes an immediate response of love because of the bliss that it creates in a person's heart. Here, instead of *matahum*, the poet uses another word for beauty—*kaanyag* or *danyag*. He also repeats that this land is a jewel from God.

In the fifth stanza, the poet visualizes that moment at dusk when the light is about to give way to night. He wishes to celebrate in song that golden benevolent light which he would not exchange for the glitter of silver. The beauty of dusk breeds in the soul of man the right sense of values.

In the same way, he regards the morning sun over the undulating ocean in the sixth stanza, and perceives smiles and laughter. Nature's smiling face is God's gift of love which brings peace of mind and immediate joy.

The seventh stanza is a declaration of the irresistible nature of this beauty. The poet enumerates its attributes: the land of light, the life of the people, the fountainhead of happiness which will never run dry. He makes a reference to the flag which waves freely overhead, the witness to the battles fought in defense of country by heroes who will forever be honored.

Next, the poet gives another reason for the surge of love he feels for his country. He specifies the cruel oppression of Spanish and Japanese which resulted in the extraordinary sacrifice of life and the continuing aspiration for freedom. He himself offers his soul and his life until he shall have been devoured by the earth.

The ninth stanza continues the recital of heroic sacrifices which have brought about true liberty. The poet mentions Mactan where the desire for freedom was first sown, and Bataan, where freedom

was truly reaped. As poet, he will sound his *agong*—that ancient gong used to summon people either to war or to revelry. The music of the *agong* will be brought everywhere by the four winds until it synchronizes with the beat of every heart full of love for this precious land.

In the tenth stanza, the poet points to the flag as the symbol of those who fell in defense of country and whose sacrifice ensures the continuing life and peace of this nation.

The poet speaks of the dove of peace in the eleventh stanza. This bird flies over the nation after the fires of war have been quenched. Freedom has finally been granted by God because of the people's great faith.

The twelfth stanza shifts to the poet himself and his youthful aspiration to become a writer. He speaks in general terms of the Philippines as the source of the creative gift of poetry. He cites young poets whose works may stand comparison with the best of the masters. The young poets have the daring and the earnest determination to perfect their craft even if the path to mastery is full of tears, sweat and blood.

In the thirteenth stanza, the poet draws a parallel between the creative gift lodged within the poet and the land's rich potential for power and prosperity. The people are ordained to bring about this progress by drawing forth from mountain, ocean and field the precious wealth given by God, a wealth the rest of the world recognizes and honors.

The fourteenth stanza continues with its praise of springs which will never run dry and will bring solace to those who suffer. The poet reminds his listeners that God's gift must be entrusted in turn to future generations that these too may enjoy the richness of the land.

The poet speaks of the youth in the fifteenth stanza. He believes that their hearts will beat with true love for their native land. These children will never allow the land to be exploited or conquered.

In the last stanza, the poet declares his vow that for as long as he lives, he will sing praises in honor of the land. He is ready to shed his precious blood for the sake of his nation's life. His country's name will remain immortal because he holds it most dear, because he truly loves his Philippines.

Banwang' Pilipinas

Sa kadaygan sinang' dagat nga maambong,
 Ikaw yanang' mutya nga labing pinili,
 Ginpugtak ni Laon sanglit kay hamili,
 Ban-awan sang anyag kag sang taliambong;
 Pilipinas, mahal, banwang' nalulutan,
 Ulogang sa diin ang gugma namuhi,
 Nga sadto sang kapalaran gindingutan,
 Apang sang kabikahan ginhandum dulutan,
 Ikaw sang himaya kag bag-ong kabuhi.

Duta nga natingban sang bugay sang langit,
 Sa diin natipon sa imo sang aga,
 Kayuyum sang dugus, humut sang sampaga,
 Nga sa akon dughan hinali sumangit;
 Akon nga ilaylay sa sining balaybay,
 Tulaling' pinasad bisan di malulut,
 Sa hablon sang pulong sining' binalaybay,
 Agud palanogon sa tanan nga baybay,
 Ang gugmang' sa imo akon ginadulut.

Pinili nga hiyas sa dutang' Malayo,
 Matahum mong dagway, tuman ka hamili,
 Gani sing tingub amon ka pinili,
 Dulutan sang gugma nga nagakalayo;
 Sa imo nga sabak, yarang' katahuman,
 Nga bisan sa diin tuman ka bunayag,
 Sining kabikahan among' malauman,
 Nga sarang kahatag kalipay nga tuman,
 Gikan sa imo pinasahing' danyag.

Kay sa katahuman sang imo baybayon,
 Akon maaninaw buhi nga himaya,
 Takus ko paglinggon sanglit wala daya,
 Ang iya pagdulut kalipay nga dayon;
 Sa imo sabak hinali kinulan,
 Ang tunay nga danyag nga dili maluo,
 Sinang kagab-ihon sa imo ginlulan,
 Ubong sang kaanyag sa sanag sang bulan,
 Hiyas nga nagikan sa aton Ginoo.

Sa silak sang adlaw kon ang kasisidmon,
 Padayon pagduag sa may taliwala,
 Kon ang iya silak buot na mawala,
 Sa tion ang adlaw sang gab-i lamunon;

Akon nga madunggan lulut sang tulali,
 Kabuylog ang bulawanon nga silak,
 Diin gapasilong anyag sang ugali,
 Nga sang akon dughan ginapakaali,
 Kag dili mabaylo sa inggat sang pilak.

Subong man ang aga sa silak sang adlaw,
 Kon ang kabaluran padayon pagkiay,
 Sa sining' baybayon sila 'gasampiy,
 May dagway sang tunay nga yuhum kag kadlaw;
 Ang imo nga danyag amo ang ban-awan,
 Nga sang Maka-ako ginhatag sing dayon,
 Sang gugma sang Diwa ikaw ang larawan,
 Sang panghunahuna takus makahawan
 Subong man kahatag kalipay nga dayon.

Kag sin-o pa ayhan ang di maghigugma,
 Sa imo banwa kong' taghatag kapawa,
 Ikaw ang kabuhi sang mga timawa,
 Tuburan sang kalipay nga dili matugma;
 Nian nga 'gapaladpad sing labing dalayon,
 Sa tagum sang kumbong sinang' kalangitan,
 Hayahay mong' mahal labing mahilwayon,
 Saksi sang inaway sa aton baybayon,
 Saksi sang baganihan tang' di malimutan.

Ang silabo sang gugma sa dugo nangita,
 Bangud sang pagpigus sa aton kahapon,
 Sang mga mapintas—Katsila kag Hapon,
 Lubos nga kaisug ila ginpakita;
 Tungud lang sa imo, Banwang' nalulutan,
 Balangdan sang lubus nga dalamguhanon,
 Nga kutub pa san-o dili malimutan,
 Kalag kag kabuhi ikaw ang dulutan,
 Tubtub nga sang duta ako ang lamunon.

Sa dagahay sang dugo nilang' may balani,
 Natuman ang handum, nangita landasan,
 Sang himpit kag putli ta nga kaluwasan,
 Nga sa Mactan gintudlak, sa Bataan gin-ani;
 Takus igalantoy sa budyong kong' daan,
 Nga sang apat ka hangin pagadalu-on,
 Dungog mong' hamili, Banwa nga bala-an,
 Sang tunay nga gugma di ka madulaan,
 Sanglit kay mahal ka sang tagipisuon.

Sa aton hayahay yara ang larawan,
 Sang mga natupok sadtong kagab-ihon,
 Ang ila maragtas amo ang nagdihon,
 Gihapon sang lab-as nian nga handumanan;
 Ila nga ginhalad dugo kag kabuhi,
 Pagdampig sa imo, Banwa kong' ginlinas,
 Ginhalad ang tanan agud ka mabuhi,
 Kag tubtub kon san-o ikaw magkabuhi,
 Sing mahidaiton, Banwang' Pilipinas.

Karon kay ang salampating' mahidaiton,
 Padayon paglupad sa may taliwala,
 Sanglit ang kalayo hinali napala,
 Sadtong kinagubot nga aton nabaton,
 Kay ang kaluwasan nga aton naangkon,
 Tutuong nagikan sa aton Ginuo,
 Sadto pa gid anay, dugay ginpanamkon,
 Ang lubus nga bugna nga aton naangkon,
 Natawo sa aton himpit nga pagtuo.

Sa latagon sang mga dilambong,
 May bugyanan kang bisan dili hamtong,
 Sang mga binuhat takus makasumpong,
 Sang *obra maestra* nga labing maambong.
 Kag ayhan sa lubus nga pagpaninguha,
 Kag sa sa paghimud-os agud maaguman,
 Bisan pa ang banas napun-an sang luha,
 Sang balhas kag dugo, apang gintinguha,
 Nga malambut lamang yanang' kalantipan.

Subong man sa imo, Banwa ko natago,
 Tantanan sang gahum kag sang kauswagan,
 Nga among taghatag mga kauswagan,
 Sang imo inanak dili mahinagu;
 Kay dira 'galuntad sa imo nga dughan,
 Ang ulay nga manggad gikan kay Bathala,
 Sa imo nga bukid, dagat kag kaumhan,
 Nga sang kalibutan nian ginaludhan,
 Sa dakung pagdayaw kag sa pagkilala.

Sa imong' tuburan sang kahamungaya,
 Nga tubtob kon san-o wala 'gakaubos,
 Sanglit padayon pagilig sing lubos,
 Sa mga tigbatas 'gahatag himaya;
 Tantanan nga mahal aton pinanubli,

Sa ila nga dughan nga labing balaan,
'Gadulod ang manggad nga aton ginsubli,
Kag sa buas-damlag mangin manunubli
Kon wala na kita ining kabataan.

Sa ila nga kalag kag tagipusuon,
Nanugdo ang gugma nga labing bilidhon,
Bahandi sang tunay gid nga Pilipinhon,
Kag sa ila dughan tutong daluon;
Kay dili magtugot nga ikaw malinas,
Sanglit tubtob san-o ikaw ang dulutan,
Sang gugma sa dughan nga wala paginas
Banwa kong hamili, Banwang' Pilipinas,
Mutyang sidlanganon, Dutang' nalulutan.

Gani, samtang ako nagakabuhì,
Akon ambahon, dungog mong' balaan,
Bisan pa ako isang magulaan,
Dugo ko nga mahal, lamang ikaw mabuhì;
Kay ang imo ngalan tuman gid karimis,
Nga tubtob kon san-o dili gid mapanas,
Ang amon pagkabig tuman gid katam-is,
Sa amon nga bibig wala gid pagyam-is,
Sanglit kay mahal ka, Banwang' Pilipinas.

The following translation of "Banwang' Pilipinas" was made by Pio Sedonio himself, upon my request. I explained to him that I needed a faithful rendering of the poem's meaning and that he need not approximate the rhyme scheme of the original poem. Being a poet, however, he succeeded in capturing the original rhythm.

Philippines, My Native Land

Set in the ocean's scenic margin,
You're the pearls so fairly chosen,
Strewn by Laon. O your beauty
Casts a spell of wondrous art;
Philippines, O land beloved,
Eden where our love has sprouted,
Though in past years love forsook you,
Your sons have kept their dreams
To give you new and glorious life.

Land so blessed by gifts of heaven,
Where the mornings breathe aroma
Of wild honey and sampaga,

Leaving memories in my heart;
 Let me sing my songs in verses,
 Though devoid of melodic rhythms,
 Woven in the words of my creation
 To echo in the islands' shoreline,
 These, our love to you we offer.

Chosen gems of Malayan islands,
 With shapes so lovely in their pureness—
 We, your sons, remain united
 In offering you our flaming love;
 In your lap there lies the beauty
 That is real and beyond compare,
 To your sons give expectations
 Of great joy from all the bounty
 From the scenic land of resources.

In the beauty of your seashores,
 I discern the living glory
 That I heed; for it deceives not
 In the joys it freely gives;
 In your lap were laid so sudden,
 Scenes of real, unfading beauty,
 In the grandeur of the evening—
 Peerless beauty in the moonlight,
 Jewels that the heavens sent.

When the sunrays during sundown
 Paint the heavens with their splendor,
 When the earthly light is fading
 As the day yields to the night;
 I could hear the music tender
 With the golden rays of sunset,
 (When the creatures seek their shelter)
 These are what my heart holds dearly,
 Uncompared to money's worth.

At the dawning of each new day,
 When the wavelets in flirtation
 With the beaches, dash together,
 There is laughter and a smile;
 In your sceneries are reflected
 What the Lord has kindly given,
 Of God's true love you're a reflection
 That could wipe away mind's burden
 And give joy to everyone.

Who is he who would not love you,
O my land, my own light giver,
You're the life of all the depressed,
Spring of joy with depths unfathomed;
Now our banner flies forever
In the azure span of heaven,
O so freely it unfurls there,
Witness of the many battles
Where our heroes once did fight.

Love has mingled with our blood,
Caused by oppression once we suffered,
From the foes so cruel, Nippon and Spaniard,
So fiery courage did our heroes show;
Because of you, my country, my beloved,
Cause of our true and roseate dreams;
Never, never shall I e'er forget you,
My life and soul to you I offer
Until I perish from this earth.

In the blood of heroes, the dreams conceived
Have come into fruition; and made a foundation
Of freedom attained, we long have desired,
Once sown in Mactan and in Bataan reaped.
In that ancient *budyong* I'll have to blare
Your untarnished virtue for the winds to caress,
O my sacred country, true love we offer,
True love that will be forever yours,
For you are treasured forever in our hearts.

In your banner we see the heroes that fell;
In the fields of battle, in the gloom of night;
Their stories bring lasting memories
That live and are never to be forgotten.
They offered all, their blood and lives.
To defend you, my country oppressed,
They have sacrificed so that you may live,
Until you shall have everlasting peace,
My country, O my beloved Philippines.

The dove of peace in the bright atmosphere
Of our land flies, without being oppressed;
The war-fire is gone, the fire that we feared
Once when conquerors ruled over our land;
The freedom that we dearly possess,
Comes truly from the almighty God;

This in the past, we long have conceived,
Born, a result of our unfaltering faith.

In the field of artistic endeavors,
You're the prized one, though unskilled,
But whose creations could truly equal
The master's work of exquisite beauty;
This is the fulfillment of a dream
Of what we desire to fully attain
Unmindful of the pathways of tears,
Of sweat and blood; but on we trod
Until we reach our destined goal.

Enshrined in you, beloved country,
The magic of power and unfading light,
Progress abounds—all coming from you,
These and more to your sons revealed.
There in your breast in great abundance,
Treasures so pure from the great Bathala,
In mountains, valleys and wide open seas,
That people all on bended knees praise
In their great respect and recognition.

O your infinite spring of progress
Flows forever, giving gladness,
Despite the years, remains eternal—
To the depressed remains a source of joy.
Boundless treasures we inherit,
From your sacred breast keep on flowing,
Coming from you, for us to hand down
To our children when in the future
We, from this earth shall bid adieu.

In the hearts and souls of heroes,
Sprouts the love, so pure and divine
(Heritage of true, loving Filipinos)
That their breasts will e'er caress;
Never will they see you trampled,
For true love to you they offer,
A love which will never change,
My country, beloved, O Philippines,
Pearl of the Orient, our dearest land.

This is my pledge, while I live,
Your name I'll sing in fervent praises,
To you, my bloody self I'll offer
And die so you would ever live.

Your name to me is ever sweetest,
In my heart it's engraved forever,
For 'tis the sweetest name I've known,
The name that my lips will forever utter,
For you are dear, Philippines, beloved.

Romantic Reflections

The other poems of Sedonio are romantic reflections on the beauty of nature. They are well-crafted poems, hewing close to a regular meter and a consistent rhyme scheme. He uses the quatrain, the six-line stanza and the eight-line stanza, and sometimes changes the placement of lines in order to highlight certain words.

"Baybayon Sang Punta-Taytay" is a nostalgic piece on the poet's birthplace. In memory, Punta-Taytay seems a perfect place, the beauty of its shore lending sweetness to the poet's childhood, even as he recalls the sadness of its sunsets. He speaks of a happy home and loving parents. There is a reference to the death of loved ones whom he does not specify. He evokes the beauty of the morning when fishermen set out to sea, and when the air is suffused with the fragrance of flowers. He ends with a declaration of love to a cherished place which will always be a part of his life.

Baybayon Sang Punta-Taytay

(Halad sa minuro sang Punta-Taytay,
Dakbanwang' Bacolod)

Mahal nga duog sang akon kabuhi,
Tagdulut sa akon subong sang tantanan,
Matam-is kag lubos, putling' handumanan,
Sang akon nga dughan ginhandum daluon
'Gadapu sa akon nga paino-ino,
Yanang' kagayunan sang imo baybayon,
Nagtunod ang adlaw—mabinalaybayon'
'Gatuga kapung-aw sa tagipusuon.

Akon mahanduraw ang among puluy-an,
Diin nagahari ang himpit nga gugma,
Dili matularan—dili ko matugma,
Gindulot sang amon mga ginikanan;
Tubtob sa hinali ang gal-um sang sakit,
Sa amon puluy-an amo ang nagsangga,

Kumuha kabuhi sang amon palangga—
Nabilin na lamang mga handumanan.

Akon mahanduraw yadtong' kaagahon,
Ang danyag palibut, tion sang habagat,
Ang mga lab-asero sa tunga sang dagat,
'Gakihad sang tubig sa baybay padayon;
Akon nga madunggan, mga kabulakan,
Nga daw 'gapanamyaw mag-abut ang aga,
Ang mga adelfas, jazmin kag sampaga,
'Gapulog sang humut sa imo baybayon.

Barriong' Punta-Taytay, duog kong' pinili,
Sang akon nga gugma ikaw ang dulutan,
Kag tubtub kon san-o dili kalimutan,
Mahal nga bahandi sang akon kahapon;
Ang imo gindulut, mga handumanan,
Nga nangin kabahin sang akon kabuhi,
Sa akon nga dughan lunhaw nga mamuhi,
Manugdo, magapa tubtub sa gihapon.

The Seashores of Punta-Taytay

Beloved place of my life,
Giver of all that I desire,
Sweetest and purest of my memories,
Which my heart wishes to caress,
Come to my mind the beautiful sceneries,
The rare beauty of your shoreline,
At sunset—so poetic,
Bringing nostalgic feelings to my heart.

I recall our home,
Where reigned the truest love
Which I could not compare—I could not fathom,
The love of our parents;
All of a sudden, the dark clouds
Hovered over our home,
Took away the lives of our dearest ones—
Leaving just a lasting memory.

I recall those beautiful mornings,
When the south wind blew,
The fishermen's boats in the midst of the sea,

Slicing the waters of the sea;
I can remember the flowers,
Which seemed to greet the morning,
The adelfa, jazmin and sampaga,
Which filled your shores with their sweetness.

Barrio Punta-Taytay, the place I have chosen,
To you my sincere love was offered
And I never will forget
The dearest heritage of all my yesterdays;
You have given this gift of memories
That have become part of my life,
In my heart will live ever green,
Will grow and flourish forevermore.

"Pamanagbanag" is a variation on a favorite theme: the beauty of dawn as a gift from God. The rosy light of dawn has the allure of a young girl. The poet draws attention to the golden sun—the stuff of poetry and dreams, designed by God to bring comfort and joy to the soul. Truly, there is a caress in the light of dawn which infects birds, flowers and all that exists with smiles and laughter.

Pamanagbanag

Ang mapulapula nga pisngi sang aga,
May kinaugaling' tuhay nga kaanyag,
Kay nagpanagiya lumay sang dalaga,
Sa buhi sa duta iya ginatanyag.

Ang silak sang adlaw—tudlong' bulawanon,
Gikan sa butlakan, 'gabulubalangit,
Dilambong, tagtuga sang dalamguhanon,
Ginduag sang Diwa sa nawong sang langit.

Kaanyag—gindulut sang Diwa sa duta,
Agud nga maglipay sang may balakhuon,
Kasubong sang silak sa dulum sang kuta,
Tagtuga kalipay sa tagipusuon.

Daw sa may pagangga ang dalu sang silak,
Sa kinaugali pagbutlak sang adlaw,
Nakunyang ang pispis kag ang mga bulak,
Ang tanan sa duta may yuhum kag kadlaw.

Dawn

The rosy cheeks of the morning
Have their own special loveliness,
They have the alluring beauty of a young girl,
Which they offer to the living.

The sunbeams—fingers of gold,
Weaving their brightness in the east,
A work of art, the stuff of dreams,
Fashioned by God on the face of the heavens.

Beauty—God's gift to earth,
Brings joy to those in pain,
Like the light in the darkness of prison,
Bringing joy to the heart.

There seems to be affection in the caressing beams
Of the rising sun,
Thrilling the birds and the flowers,
Everywhere on earth, joy prevails.

The brevity of life is the theme of "Laya Na Ang Bulak" and "Dalag Na Ang Mga Dahon." In the first poem, the withered flower has lost the love which it once enjoyed. Its alluring beauty has been burned away by the heat of the sun. It has been betrayed by a false bird, thus becoming a symbol for all beings who have been betrayed by false love. The second poem is more than just a description of leaves that litter the ground. The poet implies the irrevocable passing away of everything that was once beautiful. The leaves, which once provided shade, go the way of all that is mortal.

Laya Na Ang Bulak

Laya na ang bulak sang akon nakita,
Nga sadto gindigug sang gugma kag angga,
Laya na ang bulak nga nagapangita
Haluk nga matam-is sa iya palangga.
Laya na ang bulak!

Wala na'ng lumayon niya nga kaanyag,
Sa init sang adlaw hinali nalaya,
Sanglit kay nagsalig sa mga gintanyag
Sang isa ka pispis nga labi ka daya.
Laya na ang bulak.

Tapus na ang handum sang una'ng panahon,
Nga magpanagiya sang tunay nga gugma;
Wala na'ng kalunhaw sa sanga kag dahon,
Nalaya sa sakit nga dili matugma.

Laya na ang bulak!

Wilted Now Is The Flower

The flower now is wilted
That once was bathed with love and caresses,
Withered now is the flower
That once yearned for its love's sweet kisses.
Wilted now is the flower.

Gone now her enticing beauty,
By the heat of the sun, suddenly withered,
Because it had believed all the promises
Of a treacherous bird.
Wilted now is the flower.

All the dreams of the past are gone,
The dream of finding true love,
There is no greenness in branch and leaf,
As flower withered in unfathomable pain.
Wilted now is the flower.

Dalag Na Ang Mga Dahon

I

Dalag na ang mga dahon!
Amat-amat luya ang pagpanguyaput
sa gulang nga puno;
Amat-amat luya . . .
tubtub nga madagdag na lamang, manuy-od
kag magpakig-impon sa duta.
Sa duta mabilin nga mangin sagbut,
pagatasakon, pagapatumbaya-an.

II.

Apang, daw kahapon lamang
Ini nga mga dahon lunhaw kag magapa,
sa lambad nga puno.
Madamu'ng nagapasilong, nagadayaw,

nagapakig-ambit sang kaayuhan
nga ila madulut.

Apang, yadtong panahon nagligad na,
Kag ang nagligad nga panahon dili na
mas-a magbalik.

Sickly Pale Are The Leaves

I.

Sickly pale are the leaves!
Slowly loosening their hold
on the old tree;
Slowly wasting away,
until they fall to the ground and remain
to mingle with the earth.
On the earth, they remain, scraps of leaves,
to be trampled, disregarded.

II.

It seems but yesterday
When these leaves were green and thick
on the sturdy trunk.
Many sought shelter, all praise,
sharing the goodness
these leaves could offer.
But that time now is past,
And time past can never come back anew.

The end of summer is the subject of "Lipas Na'ng Tingadlaw." The poet notes the flowers which have fallen to the ground, there to mix with the soil and the birds whose songs have lost their sweet melody. The melancholy moment suggests the universal nostalgia for past joys.

Lipas Na'ng Tingadlaw

Lipas na'ng tingadlaw, kag ang mga bulak
Wala na kasadya magbutlak ang adlaw,
Sa duta hinali nagakalapulak,
Wala na sa ila ang yuhum kag kadlaw.

Sa sanga sang kahoy, mga kapispisan,
Wala na kalulut ang pagambahanon,
(Nga sadto may lami kag may katam-isan)
Sa ila palangga kon kahapunanon.

Ang buhi sa duta daw may balakhu-on,
Nga gikan sa likum nga dili matugma,
'Gasantu sa ibok sang tagipusuon,
Sang kubus sang palad nga uhaw sa gugma.

Sanglit ang kalipay nga wala kangilin,
Nga sadto ginlag-ok sang may pagkahidlaw,
Sa dughan na lamang amo'ng nagpabilin,
Bilang handumanan sadto nga tingadlaw.

Summer Is Past

Summer is past, and the flowers
Have lost their joy at break of day,
To the earth, they suddenly fall,
Gone are their smiles and laughter.

On the branches of trees, the birds
Have lost their melodic songs,
(That once was filled with sweetness)
For their loved ones at twilight time.

The living of this earth seem to have an anguish,
The source of which is a mystery,
It throbs with every beat of the heart,
In those unfortunate ones thirsting for love.

For the joys are gone, without regret,
That once could quench our yearnings,
In the heart will these remain forever
As a living memory of summer.

Conclusion

The poems in Hiligaynon of Dr. Pio Ga. Sedonio evince a thoughtful craftsmanship which is also found in his devotional verses in English. These verses are actually prayers and meditations on the mysteries of the rosary and the way of the cross. They do not have the florid quality, the exaggeration of the poems in Hiligaynon. The

poet strives for precision and compression, ever conscious as he is of the devotional nature of his verses and the wholehearted desire to commune with God.

Sedonio has a romantic sensibility which draws inspiration from nature. The contemplation of its singular beauty leads to sometimes joy at nature's enduring loveliness, and sometimes grief at its passing away. He writes of love of country but significantly enough, has not taken up the country's real problems, i. e., poverty and social inequity. His poems, in effect, do not give a real picture of the times. Sedonio writes of the oppression of Spain and Japan, omitting America, and refers to the heroic uprisings in our history, but he seems content to sing a paean of love to his native land, enriched as it is by the beauty endowed by God.

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