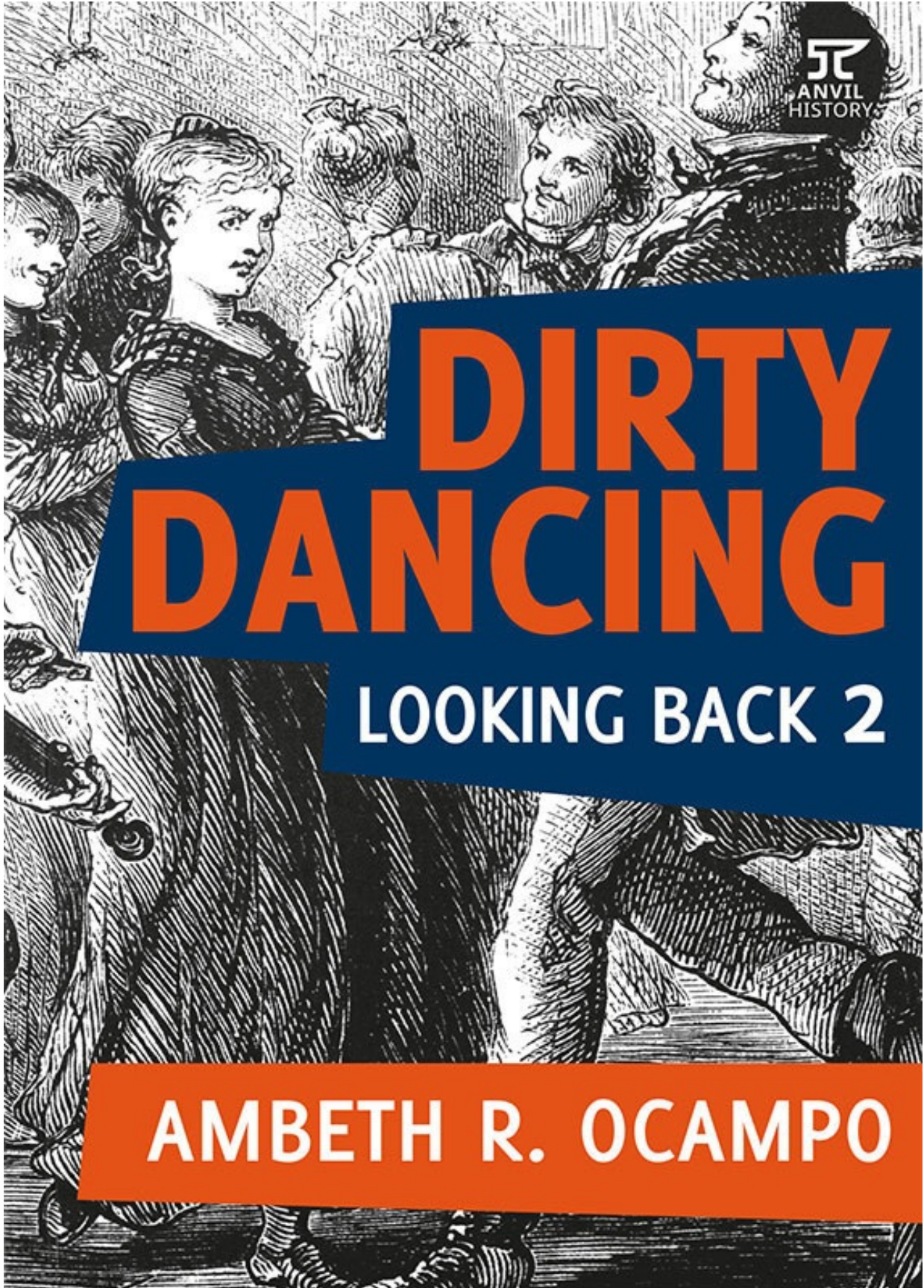


52
ANVIL
HISTORY

DIRTY DANCING

LOOKING BACK 2

AMBETH R. OCAMPO



52
ANVIL
HISTORY

DIRTY DANCING

LOOKING BACK 2

AMBETH R. OCAMPO

AMBETH R. OCAMPO has, for over three decades, brought history down from academia and returned it to the public where it also belongs. Drawing from extensive archival research, at home and abroad, he has written on Philippine history focusing on its art, culture, and the heroes who figure in the birth of the nation.

Dr. Ocampo is an associate professor and former chair, Department of History, Ateneo de Manila University. He writes a widely read editorial page column for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, moderates a growing Facebook fan page, and also connects on Instagram. An independent curator, he sits on the advisory boards of the Ateneo Art Gallery, Ayala Museum, BenCab Museum, Lopez Museum, and the President Elpidio Quirino Foundation.

In other lives and other times, he was a Benedictine monk; president of the City College of Manila; chairman, National Historical Commission of the Philippines and the National Commission on Culture and the Arts; chairman, Incoming State Visits, Office of Presidential Protocol, Malacañang Palace; and adviser, Numismatic Committee, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. After an eventful professional and personal life, he looks forward to the perks of a senior citizen card.

Other books by AMBETH R. OCAMPO:

The Paintings of E. Aguilar Cruz (1986)

Rizal Without the Overcoat rev. ed. (2011)

Makamisa: The Search for Rizal's Third Novel rev. ed. (2009)

A Calendar of Rizaliana in the Vault of the Philippine National Library rev. ed. (2011)

Aguinaldo's Breakfast (1993)

Bonifacio's Bolo (1995)

Mabini's Ghost (1995)

Teodora Alonso (1995)

Talking History: Conversations with Teodoro A. Agoncillo rev. ed. (2011)

Luna's Moustache (1997)

The Centennial Countdown (1998)

Bones of Contention rev. ed. (2014)

Meaning and History: The Rizal Lectures rev. ed. (2013)

Bones of Contention: The Andres Bonifacio Lectures rev. ed. (2014)

60 Years and Bon Vivant: Philippine French Relations (2008)

101 Stories of the Philippine Revolution (2009)

Looking Back rev. ed. (2009)

Looking Back 3: Death by Garrote rev. ed. (2015)

Looking Back 4: Chulalongkorn's Elephants rev. ed. (2016)

Looking Back 5: Rizal's Teeth, Bonifacio's Bones (2012)

Looking Back 6: Prehistoric Philippines (2012)

Looking Back 7: Storm Chasers (2014)

Looking Back 8: Virgin of Balintawak (2014)

Looking Back 9: Demonyo Tables (2015)

Looking Back 10: Two Lunas, Two Mabinis (2015)

Looking Back 11: Independence X6 (2016)

Looking Back 12: Quezon's Sukiyaki (2016)

Looking Back 13: Guns of the Katipuan (2017)

Looking Back 14: Dirty Ice Cream (2019)

Looking Back 15: Martial Law (2020)

Rizal Without The Overcoat new ed. (2018)

Looking Back 2

Dirty Dancing

Ambeth R. Ocampo

Anvil Publishing

Looking Back 2

Dirty Dancing

Copyright © Ambeth R. Ocampo, 2010

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form
or by any means without the written permission
of the copyright owner and the publisher.

Published and exclusively distributed by

Anvil Publishing, Inc.

7th Floor Quad Alpha Centrum

125 Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City

1550 Philippines

Trunk lines: 477-4752; 477-4755 to 57

Fax: 747-1622

www.anvilpublishing.com

First printing, 2010

Second printing, 2012

Third printing, 2017

Cover design by Ariel Dalisay

Copy editing by Renán S. Prado

Cover art from Scribner's Monthly an Illustrated Magazine for the People (New York: Scribner & Company, 1874) VIII:585

eBook conversion by JP Meneses

eISBN: 978-971-27-3609-4

Contents

[Dirty Dancing](#)

[Mabini's English](#)

[False Economy](#)

[The Capture of Aguinaldo](#)

[Laws and Time](#)

[Aguinaldo Was No Puppet](#)

[Famous Names and Pseudonyms](#)

[Fun with Car Plates and Hilarious Place Names](#)

[Names Filipinos Prefer](#)

[Fun in Names](#)

[Names of Boundless Mirth](#)

[What's in a Name—Again?](#)

[Names and Meanings](#)

[Nicknaming the Famous](#)

[Friar Murder in 1617](#)

[An Earthquake in 1645](#)

[Doomed To Be Like the Yoyo We Invented?](#)

[Siamese Twins](#)

[The First Filipino Englishman](#)

[Gays in the Philippine Revolution](#)

[The Beatles in Manila I](#)

[The Beatles in Manila II](#)

[The Beatles in Manila III](#)

[Postscript on the Beatles in Manila](#)

[The Human Side of Bonifacio](#)

[Heroes in Disguise](#)

Dirty Dancing



Apolinario Mabini has been so stereotyped by the label Sublime Paralytic that we cannot imagine the time when he could walk, run, and even ride horses. As a student, he lived in a boarding house on 6 Cabildo Street in Intramuros that was full of fun-loving people from Cagayan. Mabini was obviously glued to his books because his well-meaning friends sought to coax the nerd out of his shell.

Although Mabini did not have much of a social life, he once tried to learn how to dance. A certain Agapito “Pitong” Villanueva from Ilocos Norte was the chosen dance instructor. Music was provided on the guitar by a mathematician from Capiz named Rafael Lozada. The only thing needed, though, was a dancing partner. To compensate for the lack of feminine company, Mabini contented himself with a chair. He practiced every day and imagined the chair to be a bailarina or even a kankarot.

Unfortunately, polio overtook Mabini when he was thirty-one years old, and we will never know if his feet were as nimble and brilliant as his brain. Is it possible that Mabini’s sharp remarks against the lavish socials engineered by Pedro Paterno during the revolution was due, in part, to his inability to dance and have fun? And speaking of prudes, I found some titillating pre-war magazine articles on the evils of dancing and of moviehouses.

J.M.B. Medina, a dance instructor whose profession was endangered by the negative feedback on ballroom dancing, explained that evil-minded people gave dancing a bad name. He wrote:

The reason for ugly and improper dancing is because so many people try to dance without proper instruction. They murder the art. They have the wrong conception of what is supposed to be done and how to do it.... The fact that a small number of misguided individuals have used the dance to express their baser moods is no reason why ballroom dancing as a whole should be condemned. If anything, we must condemn the dancers, not the dance.... Do not be misled by the few who abuse the dance...dancing pursued under the wrong environment in low class beer or dance halls where dancing of yet the worst type is to be seen nightly—vulgar men and women of the demimonde class rushing here and there and everywhere over the floor in familiar embraces and in all

sorts of antics and contortions of face and figure.... This type of dancers believe they are keeping-up with the times when as a matter of fact they are rudiments of it. They are like jumping jacks or mechanical devices. You put a nickel in the slot and the things hop. And the climax is reached when they call this 'Western Dancing.'

In 1927, the columnist Batikuling writing in La Vanguardia complained about "immoral pairs who go to the movies, not to see the films but to be themselves the characters in an actual story scandalous and violative of the sense of fitness and modesty of those who are compelled to be near them."

And he continued thus:

...we see certain doings that not even in 'red' houses are seen! And we hear certain things even brutes would not want to hear! All these done with the public-bedamned air, especially if Sheik Rudolph [Valentino] gallivants on the screen.

It is a shame what these boys and these girls do, which would make even she-goats and camels blush, such that we hanker with nostalgia anew. For the decency of dogs and of hens the cocks can't rush.

In the movies you shall see Nicolasa, who left the paternal roof with ten books in hand, But there she nestles in the arms of Anacleto Basabasa, another student who she says is secret another in her husband.

Worse, the column ends indignantly by instructing the Manila Chief of Police: "Go there, Colonel, or send a patrolman, to the movies where the day is the night and I swear to you, jest aside if we can, you shall be tired out arresting pairs who are a sight."

The Independent, reacting to La Vanguardia, suggested that movie operators assign ushers, use more light in the moviehouse, place a wider gap between seats, and refrain from screening stimulating movies. If anything has changed since 1927, it is technology and morals. Moviehouses are more advanced today and the viewers more adventurous, providing the guardians of morality more reason to be upset. But apropos Mabini's sour remarks about Paterno's fiestas and the crusading articles against movies and dancing in the late 1920s. I would think H.G. Wells right about moral indignation being nothing but jealousy with a halo. (12.9.1994)

Mabini's English

Rereading Mabini's writings recently, I came across Mabini's letters to Luisita Blanchard, an anti-imperialist American writer with pro-Filipino sympathies. The letters are interesting not because they are among the few he ever wrote to women, but because they are in English. He calls her *querida amiga* and begins one letter thus:

As you desire, I reply in English your kind letters of August 21st and September 14th just received. I hope you will excuse any incorrectness, for I have studied also that language by myself, therefore I do not speak it, though I understand any writing of it with some easiness.

I am very much obliged to you for your deep sympathy and true friendship toward me as well as for your sorrow for my illness. Let me shake very friendly and warmly your hands across the seas, seeing that it is indiscreet to kiss it. To correspond you familiarly I tell you that about thirty-five years ago I was born in a town of Batangas province south of Manila between Cavite and Laguna provinces and between the lake of Bai and the lake of Bombon or Taal. By my father and mother I am of pure native origin. [Hindi siya mestizo.] Although my parents were poor I have got some instruction and became a lawyer, thanks to persistent efforts. Since January 1896, I cannot stand because of weakness in my waist and legs. [His polio.] I do not suffer any other ache and I look as if I were not sick. The physicians however say that I will never recover my health; but I do not despair because I am still able to do something good for my country. Fortunately, I have neither wife nor children, for this reason the sadness of my life is more tolerable, for I do not suffer in my loves except in that of my country. My father and mother are dead.

...I am fond of reading, but ignorant of music. Please accept as a remembrance the enclosed national and Independence hymns. [The Lupang Hinirang we sing today was the tune played during Independence Day on June 12, 1898, that is different from the National Anthem sung during the Malolos Congress. This anthem was not popularized because the Aguinaldo government was under siege by the Americans in 1899 and other pressing problems.]

I enclose also a photograph of myself and will highly appreciate a photograph of yourself...I enclose also a translation of an article published by me in a Manila newspaper. I am not familiar with the particular construction of English language; so I ask you the favor of correcting and sending it to a review or newspaper if you find it publicable [publishable]....

Mabini then sent another article so that Luisita may understand the real nature of Filipino problem and, if necessary, rectify the misjudgements of American people.

With the re-election of President McKinley, it is probable that Americans here will soon inaugurate the era of oppression and cruelties to repress by force the so-called insurrection. Many abuses are already being recorded, among which you may count women with hair recently shaved by American soldiers, after having been plundered. [And raped!] Excuse me these troubles.

An early feminist, he ends one letter as follows:

I appreciate the American women in their culture and independent habits which render them utterly helpful workers to the aggrandizement of womankind. You are a highest sample. Your very thankful and affectionate friend, Ap. Mabini.

I continue to wonder what his views on Philippine womanhood were. In closing, the only thing I can add is that Mabini's English was better than Rizal's. (9.25, 1991)

False Economy



One of the books that got me started in history was *Cartas sobre la Revolución* by Mariano Ponce (1932). I remember the delight with which the late E. Aguilar Cruz handled his worn copy explaining the physical properties of good books: sturdy paper, uncut pages, hand-sewn binding, the typefaces and accents which became extinct when we stopped printing in Spanish, etc. He opened to one of the illustrations and asked, “Do you know who Sun Yat Sen is?”

Before I could answer, he covered the caption with his hand and said, “Here is a photograph of Ponce and Dr. Sun. Tell me which is Sun Yat Sen.” Looking at the picture, I thought the choice was simple, Sun Yat Sen was the man in the Japanese costume. With a sly smile, Aguilar Cruz took his hand off the page to reveal both the caption and my ignorance. Mariano Ponce of Bulacan, friend of Rizal, was in the Japanese outfit. Dr. Sun was in Western garb.

Browsing through *Cartas* recently, I came across Ponce’s expense account for December 1898 to February 1899. On March 6, 1899, Ponce explained the increase in his expenses to Galicano Apacible. As representative of the Aguinaldo government in Japan, he had to entertain a lot, which led to the purchase of furniture and decorations for his sala: a pair of sillones, a mesa-escritorio, two cushions, and a desk clock.

As PR man for the Philippines, he received many visitors in his Yokohama home. These guests were an assorted lot that included: a Korean prince; ex-ministers and politicians of Japan, China and Korea; journalists; and others sympathetic to the Philippine cause. It was necessary to spend the following: \$37.10 for Christmas and New Year gifts; \$6 on cigars and cigarettes; \$1.25 for visiting cards (engraved?); \$6 on half a dozen cubiertos; and \$9 on wine, biscuits, and other snacks.

Because VIPs needed more than home hospitality, Ponce often took guests to dinner either in Yokohama or in Tokyo. As he had to dress according to his position as Philippine representative, he bought an overcoat for \$23; some wool camisetas worth \$4.50; a winter suit for \$30; a set comprised of a Japanese-style coat, gloves, and overcoat for home use for only \$14.40; a wallet worth \$4; and a dozen hankies and travelling mirror for \$5. Most amusing was his spending \$5 for a pair of charol dress shoes “para pisto,” meaning “to put on airs.”

All these fashion expenses, however, could not match the biggest single expense of January 1899—\$109 for silk camisetas and socks for the president. Imagine Aguinaldo at war wearing silk undershirts and silk socks? That's real style—everything charged to the Republic. (And we think Imelda's shoes extravagant!)

Few people know about Ponce, Sun Yat Sen, and the Chinese connection during the Fil-American War. These revolutionaries shared the same “business”—arms smuggling. Dr. Sun helped us buy arms hoping that Aguinaldo would win the war. He planned to launch an attack on China from a friendly nation.

In 1899, Dr. Sun helped dispatch the following: six million rounds of ammunition; 10,000 rifles; one artillery piece; ten machine guns; seven field telescopes; one ammunition loader; and other military supplies bought cheaply from the Japanese army as scrap. Loaded on a miserable secondhand ship, the Nunobiki Maru, everything sank halfway to the Philippines due to a typhoon.

Ponce was liberal with small expenses for PR, yet he was thrifty with larger sums meant for arms. If they had not been kuripot with the Nunobiki Maru, could the arms have reached home? Would the baratillo arms bought from the Japanese Army as scrap, though impressive in terms of quantity, be useful against the U.S.? Perhaps, this was a case of false economy.

When the U.S. requested the Japanese government to keep an eye on Ponce in 1900, it became difficult to send the 65,000 yen worth of arms he bought from a Japanese aptly named Nakamura. Dr. Sun asked to borrow these arms for an uprising in Huichow, China, and Ponce agreed. Well, when Dr. Sun received the “arms shipment,” it turned out to be nothing but scrap iron. Nakamura had swindled them. Nakamura nga sila, pero niloko naman.

Had Aguinaldo received the first shipment of arms, maybe we could have won the war and Sun Yat Sen could have used the Philippines as a base for his own revolution in China. If Nakamura did not swindle us, and our arms were used successfully in a Chinese uprising, the history of Southeast Asia would have taken a different twist. (6.1.1994)

The Capture of Aguinaldo

FOR me, the most revealing documents on Aguinaldo's life in Palanan are the diaries of Dr. Santiago Barcelona and Col. Simeon Villa that are a part of the Philippine Insurrection Papers in the National Library. Years ago, I consulted these diaries that came in a box filled with a gnarled leather portfolio and miscellaneous papers, including a hand-drawn map of Palanan (?) on which Aguinaldo had begun the draft of a speech or message to the Filipinos:

A la República Filipina

Ligaya nawa sa sintang Ynang Bayan ang ating pagcacatipon [n]gayon: mapigil na sumandali ang caniyang mga cahapisan sa pagmamalas sa ating pagraraya alang-alang sa dalawang taong buhay sa pagcahalal ng ating Republica, na cahiman nawa ay lumawig at kilalanin ng buong Sinucuban.

It appears that the text was the opening of Aguinaldo's 1901 New Year's Speech. Palanan, then capital of the Philippine Republic, was not as boring and lonely as I first imagined it to be. Aguinaldo's nipa and bamboo house was definitely not Malacañang, but he directed war from there and sometimes presided over socials. An extant list of presidential expenses reflects disbursements for salaries and "tips" (pabuya) for soldiers, spies, messengers, cargadores, laundrymen, musicians, and even milkmen. Naturally, expenses for food were also noted, as well as other essentials like mosquito nets, hats, tobacco, and cigarettes. This may not be appropriate, but I do wonder if there were other forms of rest and relaxation available. Was there a budget for alcohol and prostitute that form a part of the stereotype soldier's life?

In September 1900, the accounting records stated that the magnificent sum of

P9.40 was allotted for “Prizes given to children in the races—coconut and bamboo—organized in commemoration of Independence.” This proves that Aguinaldo’s camp was not an all-male, all-military reserve but one that included women and children—perhaps even whole families. For a long time, Aguinaldo had his mother transported on a hammock everywhere he went. Imagine carrying nanay around during the war? When she became problematic baggage for the trek to Palanan, she was deposited in Pangasinan.

But to return to our story. When Funston and his men arrived in Palanan on March 23, 1901, presidential security was scandalously lax. First of all, they were presumed to be well-wishers who had simply arrived a day late for Aguinaldo’s birthday party. As a matter of fact, the last entry in Col. Villa’s diary says, “March 22nd. Today is Aguinaldo’s birthday and many people come to greet him.” Aguinaldo had just turned thirty-two, not knowing that he would be captured the next day while his men were still recovering from the party or nursing hangovers. When they got up to smell the coffee, as the saying goes, it was too late.

The traitors Lazaro Segovia and Hilario Tal Placido walked straight into the president’s house and found him surrounded by half a dozen officers. They could not arrest Aguinaldo immediately because about fifty of Aguinaldo’s bodyguards were waiting at attention outside the house ready to fire their Mausers to do arrival honors for the “comrades” who missed the party. Segovia and Tal Placido had to chatter away anxiously as the Macabebes crossed the river into the camp and took their places by 3:00 p.m.

When Segovia gave a signal to fire, Aguinaldo and the officers did not mind it, someone even shouted that they stop firing to conserve ammunition. By then, two guards were already dead, and Aguinaldo realized that bullets were flying in their direction. The fat Tal Placido grabbed Aguinaldo by the waist, pulled him under a table, and literally sat on him.

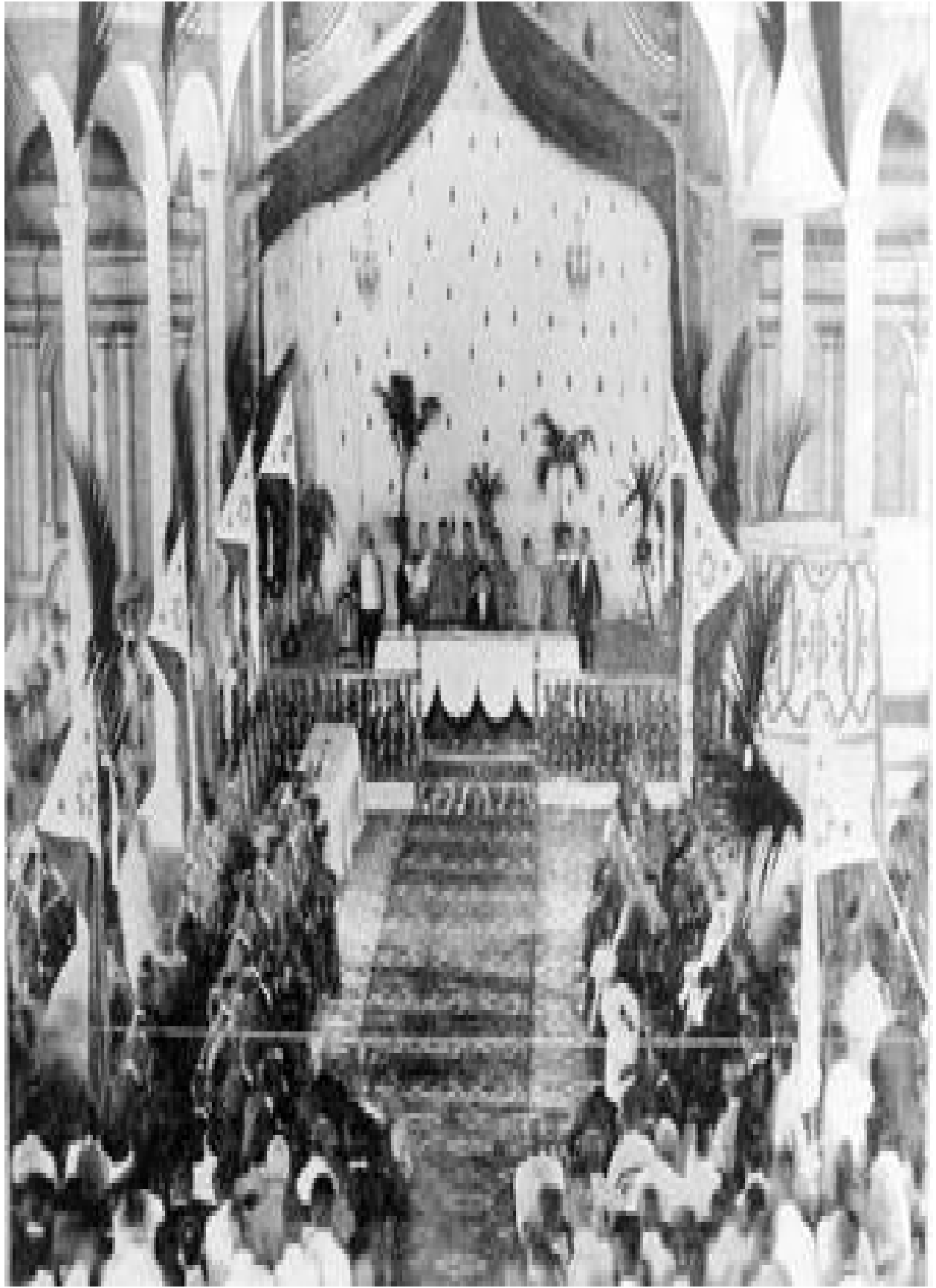
Segovia shot Col. Villa while the other officers jumped out of the window. There is another account that says Aguinaldo was stopped from pulling out his gun. Whether he resisted or not, Aguinaldo would have been spared because Funston gave explicit orders that the president was to be taken alive. March 23, 1901, depending on your history teacher’s viewpoint, is the date that marks Aguinaldo’s capture and is often said to be the end of the Fil-American War and resistance to American annexation.

Research undertaken during the 1998 centennial have opened the dustbin and brought out forgotten heroes like Malvar, Sakay, San Miguel, and others who have been branded as bandidos and contravidas by a history biased against Filipinos. Now, these obscure men and women will be given their proper places in the pantheon of heroes. (9.20.1995)

Laws and Time

ANTONIO Luna was a member of a radical faction in the Malolos Congress that favored the separation of Church and State. His group called for the expulsion of Spanish friars and other religious from the Philippines, as well as a constitutional provision that would prohibit the formation of new religious orders. Despite a marked anticlerical bent in our patriots, half of Congress were conservatives in favor of the continued stay of the Spanish friars. Heated debates were exchanged on the floor of Congress, but these always fell short of a resolution by an actual vote. Both sides carefully weighed their chances in the event of a vote. Luna met the radicals and asked them to be conspicuously absent from the sessions on a particular day but to be ready to appear at a prearranged signal. That day, the conservatives seized their chance and called for a vote, while the few radicals registered token opposition. As the votes were being cast and the conservatives almost assured of victory, Luna brought all the radicals marching into the hall. The provision for the separation of Church and State won by a slim margin of two votes.

Reading through a list of the decrees issued by Aguinaldo and the laws passed by the Malolos Congress, I realized that it reflected the concerns at the time. Our founding fathers faced the same problems we face today, like absences in Congress. On July 7, 1899, a law was passed stating that if appointive delegates fail to attend ten consecutive sessions in Congress, they are deemed to have renounced their seats.



On June 5, 1898, a law was passed directing town officials to fix prices of essential foodstuff to prevent speculation during wartime. Human nature remains constant indeed because even then some Filipinos took advantage of the adverse conditions to fleece their fellowmen. Knowing that a war with America was inevitable, the government issued a decree on January 26, 1899, ordering fields to be planted to provide food for the people. Shortly before Todos los Santos when the enterprising made a killing on candles, a decree was issued on October 20, 1898, prohibiting priests from selling candles. Other examples of price-control measures were decrees of November 2, 1898, regulating fees for public telegraphic services and another prescribing fees for civil and canonical marriages.

Peace and order was another concern. On June 29, 1898, a law was passed punishing cattle rustling. On August 13, 1898, the day Manila was taken by the enemy, Aguinaldo signed a decree regulating prostitution. This was apt because the enemy needed “rest and recreation.” Aguinaldo also decreed on August 16, 1898, that cockfighting, cardplaying, and other forms of gambling should not be allowed to youngsters who should, instead, spend their time in athletics, such as swimming, drilling, boxing, and other sports.

Concern for the youth was likewise manifested in the law of June 7, 1899, encouraging attendance of pupils in established primary schools. Rizal himself tells us how he hated the beatings he received in school as a further incentive to study, the decree of February 28, 1899, was passed, forbidding the whipping of schoolchildren because this degraded the human personality. Most amusing was the decree of September 17, 1898, which prescribed methods by which young persons could marry against the wishes of their parents.

Today, people complain about the indiscriminate changing of street names. Well, this was also a concern in the revolutionary days. On September 29, 1898, the name of a town Tayabas was changed to “Aguinaldo,” referring not to Christmas but to the President. The petition, however, of the residents of Paete, Laguna, to rename their town to “Rizal” was denied on November 7, 1898.

The list is rather long, and it contains laws that prescribed the form of salute to be given by the troops, and prohibited the slaughter of carabaos and the carrying of cadavers in open coffins. Unfortunately, these laws were not enforced because

the government was busy fighting a war of independence. The laws of the revolutionary government only prove the sad fact that, in many ways, Filipinos have not changed in a century. (1.20.95)

Aguinaldo Was No Puppet



*Portrait of
General Canale,
of the 22^d of Major
General's Regiment
of the 4th of August 1867.*

Ed. M. Smith

Agassiz as President of the Republic. Born the May, 1868

THERE is a photograph of Aguinaldo in uniform, holding a saber in his left hand and a Bostifol [Sebastopol hat] on his right. He wears high-cut boots $\frac{3}{4}$ the same, decaying pair presently on display in the basement museum of his home in Kawit. An autographed copy of this photograph appears in *The Philippines and Round About* by Major G.J. Younghusband, a British officer who visited the president in Malolos in 1898. The caption to this photograph says Aguinaldo was born on May 9, 1869, but Aguinaldo's distinctive scrawl reads, "Tumubo sa Kawit (Cavite) ng ika-22 ng Marzo horas ng paguitang 8 at 9 ng umaga 1869." A historical astrologer should make a birth chart to see what made him tick.

History has not been kind to Aguinaldo because he lived too long. To this day people are still arguing about heroes and villains. I always check myself when I judge Aguinaldo as the failed broken man in old age. Can't we examine his proper place in history? It took a British officer to drive home this point.

On Halloween 1898, Major Younghusband took the 6:30 a.m. train from Manila to Malolos to seek an audience with Aguinaldo. He had been warned by the British Consul in Manila against bringing any letter of recommendation or giving an impression that this visit was a British recognition of the Philippine Republic. He had breakfast at the Union Restaurant in Malolos, "first class omelet, three Oxford sausages (observe the scope of the British Empire) and some cafe au lait," before proceeding to the convento that served as Aguinaldo's office and residence.

There, promptly at 9:00 a.m., he was kept in a waiting room by an aide. Later, the president's secretary, who spoke excellent English, informed him that the president was kept up till 2:00 a.m., and was thus still asleep. Younghusband amused himself by strolling around town and criticizing fellow sufferers waiting for the president. Finally, at 1:30 in the afternoon, he was ushered into the study where Aguinaldo was by a table deep in papers and books. He writes:

Aguinaldo is a young man of only twenty-nine years of age, stands about 5 feet 4 inches in height, is slightly built, and was dressed in a coat and trousers of drab tussore silk. He is a pure Philippine native, though showing a slight trace of Chinese origin, of dark complexion, and much pock-marked [I wonder, due to battle or plain acne?]. His face is square and determined, the lower lip protruding markedly. On the whole a man of pleasant demeanor, even tempered, and with

strong characteristics. Slow of speech, and perhaps also of thought, his past career has hallmarked him as a man of prompt decision and prompter action. Many people, and amongst others Admiral Dewey, were much puzzled to find in so quiet and apparently unintelligent and listless a young man the acknowledged and undisputed head of so great a movement. Many thought that he was a mere puppet in the hands of stronger men . . . but Aguinaldo was no puppet, but sailed decisively on his own bottom.

They discussed weapons and recent Filipino victories while Aguinaldo's son, in uniform, played in the room. Then conversation moved towards the question of an American Protectorate, because in the beginning Aguinaldo and his government had "openly declared that it was their wish to start their new life under the protective of a recognized power, and preferably that of the American nation." But Younghusband continues:

On this day, October 31st [1898], Aguinaldo most emphatically declared that he and his followers had fought for complete independence, and that they would shed the last drop of their blood in securing it. These were practically his very words, and forsaking his quiet demeanor, he went so far as to thump the desk with his fist for emphasis. This was a most weighty utterance, and if seriously meant was tantamount to a declaration of war against America should the result of the Peace Conference include a provision that the Philippine Islands were to be handed over to that power.

As predicted, we had the Fil-American War. Younghusband ends his account with words that should be kept in mind in 1998, especially by those who belittle the celebration and thus belittle their own people:

He may be ignorant according to a civilized standard, he may appear stolid and wanting in quick intelligence, but if we judge men by their deeds rather than by the tittle-tattle of conventional criticism, Aguinaldo has, in the face of every disadvantage, and at the early age of twenty-nine, placed himself in the ranks of the great and acknowledged leaders of popular risings, which when unsuccessful are stigmatized as rebellions, but which when successful bear the honoured title of legitimate revolutions. (5.19.1995)

Famous Names and Pseudonyms

ASH Wednesday used to be known in the Philippines as *miércoles de ceniza*. This made me remember Professor Claro Ceniza who patiently taught me symbolic logic at La Salle. His name translates into “Clear Ash.” Although we come across such colorful combinations of names every day, we seldom stop to wonder what they actually mean; thus we lose much beauty and irony in daily living. The name Claro prompts us to think of Claro M. Recto, a nationalist with an appropriate name because his mind was not only clear (*claro*) but straight (*recto*) as well. That the senator was “Clear M. Right” was lost on the electorate who didn’t understand Spanish. They withheld the votes and Recto lost his bid for the presidency.

In art history, one small puzzle was left by Juan Luna who sometimes signed his paintings with two pre-Hispanic Philippine letters: the inverted heart that meant “Bo” or “Bu” and the letter read “La” that resembled an inverted kris. Writers who did not understand what Luna meant ignored the pre-Hispanic writing on the paintings. After reading a letter of Luna (moon) signed “Buan,” I was suddenly struck by the idea that the pre-Hispanic signature could have meant Bulan, the Ilocano equivalent of moon.

Probing into names can be a delightful way of filling the time waited when one is caught in traffic. Apolinario Mabini, for example, used obvious pseudonyms like Dakilang Lumpo or Paralítico. Other names give us clues into his personality, like Tahimik. My favorite is Bini, from Mabini, which has a feminine ring to it and prompts me to connect it with Lakambini and Lakan Bini, the names used by Gregoria de Jesus. This similarity becomes hilarious because Mrs. Bonifacio did not hide her dislike for Mabini. That Bini also alludes to binibini strikes another chord. Remember the opportunists who quarrelled over access to Aguinaldo? No one could get past Mabini who they described as, “a jealous woman who wanted the President for herself!”

Andres Bonifacio signed with his initials A.B. or gave it some text like Agapito Bagumbayan. Reversing the same initials, he sometimes used Bagong Albion. When he wanted to indulge in sarcasm, the proletarian Bonifacio would sign

himself with the honorific and become Don Andrés. However, he is more popularly known under his suggestive Katipunan name Maypagasa (hopeful). Hopeful for what? Independence? Triumph of the revolution? Well, he did not live to see his dreams shattered.

Naturally, writers came up with the most number of names and very imaginative ones, too. Marcelo H. del Pilar wrote so many subversive articles that he required a corresponding number of names. Sometimes, he signed with his middle name Hilario or his nickname Selong. Or he played with variations on his surname, inverting it into the familiar Plaridel that is now a place name in Bulacan. Variations of Marcelo became: Carmelo, D.M. Calero and L.O. Crame. He also used Dolores Manapat. Why? For literary allusion, he became Balagtas. Ako is not as complicated as Piping Dilat which means someone who is mute but awake.

Aside from Rizal and del Pilar, the forgotten member of the Propaganda Trinity is another Bulaqueño Mariano Ponce. He signed with his nickname Naning or else Kalipulako, which was another name for Lapu-lapu. I like his choice of Tigbalang and I wonder if this had anything to do with Antonio Luna being called kafre behind his back. A nagging question is why Ponce used R. Samper or Robert Samper.

Foreign sounding names were preferred during the Fil-American War. Felipe Agoncillo, the first Filipino diplomat, reported to Aguinaldo under the name D.W. Jones or simply William Jones. Rafael Palma, a journalist for the revolutionary paper La Independencia and later president of the University of the Philippines, signed himself Luciano Miller or Robert Paul (from his initials R.P.). Like Ponce he also used a pre-Hispanic datu's name Lakandula. Personally, I prefer the suggestive names R. Panganib and Rafael Ressurrecto. Rafael Palma's brother Jose, who has gone down in history as the poet who composed the Spanish lyrics that fit into the national anthem, wrote under the names Esteban Estebañez, Juventino, and Ana Haw.

Finally, we end up with Rizal who used his nickname Pepe or, to be followed by a comma a clue to his birthplace Calambeño. Then there are pseudonyms that have become famous Manila, streets: Dimasalang (Tagalog for "untouchable" or Noli me tángere) and Laong Laan (ever-prepared). He also converted the derogatory term indio into a badge of courage, as in Indio Bravo. Signing himself as Philippino, he appropriated a term reserved for Spaniards born in the

Philippines. It is no wonder Rizal is called the “First Filipino.” Unimaginative historians who declare this exercise with pseudonyms as trivial lose the insight that gives life to history. (3.1.1995)

Fun with Car Plates and Hilarious Place Names

To keep our sanity in traffic, the late E. Aguilar Cruz and I played a game with license plates. We would take the letters for acronyms and complete them. For example, PDA 666 could be either the “Philippine Dental Association” or the “Philippine Dog-eaters Association.” Naturally, the more outrageous acronym won. Over time, plates that began with “P” always became “Philippine” and those with “N” tended to become “National” as in NHA—National Housing Authority or National Hyenas Association. There were plates that did not need much imagination, as they were words into themselves like “SAD” or “SAG” or even “DED.” This game played in traffic was very much like Scrabble and did wonders for my vocabulary. It also kept me from observing the favorite pastime of drivers in traffic—picking their noses.

Other people, it seems, kept their eyes on more than license plates and came up with a list of establishments with funny names. These are all around town, tucked into those abandoned little esquinitas where we try to avoid traffic only to discover that everyone else had the same idea. The famous listing by Mark and Jaime Fournier was mixed with email responses to my columns on Rizal’s girlfriends. The Fourniers have a list in a website, www.freeyellow.com/members2/mrk4nr/index.htm used without acknowledgment for an Inquirer article ages ago. Thus, without checking, some fictitious establishments were included in the article with real ones.

富記海鮮酒家

Fu Kee Sea-Food Restaurant

TEL. 5-9828516



The Fournier family listed its favorites, some of which I have actually seen like 10/Q (a convenience store on Shaw Boulevard), Ali Baka (a shawarma chain), Aristoback (really a restaurant behind Aristocrat).

However, I have yet to see Star-Backs (a Quezon City coffee shop near ABS-CBN and GMA Networks) or Susan's Roses (a flower shop). I have seen Tapsi Turbi (a tapsilog stand), Beery Good (a real bar), Goodah, Goto Heaven (in Baguio where they have a dish called Goto Hell).

My sisters are always in dire need of domestic help and I know they have tried these employment agencies: Maid to Order, Maid to Last, and Ready Maid. I have heard of the flower shop called Petal Attraction and I think I have seen Net Café and not really connected it with Nescafé.

The favorite signs of the Fournier family are listed alphabetically as follows: 25 Hours (watch store), Anita Bakery, Bali Gulp (drinking place behind Valley Golf in Antipolo), Beads and Pieces (naturally, a bead shop), Beefer 150 (a meat shop), Caintacky Fried Chicken (chicken specialty restaurant in Cainta that has yet to get into Doreen Fernandez's list), Common Cents (sari-sari store), Crispy per minute (a crispy pata store), Curl Up and Dye (beauty salon), Doctor Sebago (shoe repair shop), Doris Day and Night (24-hour eatery), Elizabeth Tailoring, which reminded me about an unconfirmed shop called Pierre Carding. There is Farmacia with Love (drugstore), Felix the Cut (barbershop) and Funeraria Mabuhay that reminded me of a shingle in Ilocos advertising the services of Attorney Pakulong or someone we met taking an MBA whose surname was aptly Lague. The Fourniers also list Income Taxi, Goldilooks (a Fairview barbershop) and Goldirocks (gravel and sand). How about Juice Co. (fresh fruit juice stand), Labo Optical and L.B.M. Restaurant? There is a Mane Attraction (beauty parlor) and a Cebu roadside eatery called Let's Do Eat. A nacho shop called Nacho Fast, a beer garden called O'Beer Time and Passers Buy convenience store. It is really the salons that have the most amusing names: Saudia Hairlines (established perhaps with hard-earned dollars from Saudi?) or Scissors Palace and Sylvestre's Salon.

To think we still have jeeps that have signs that warn non-paying commuters that "God Knows Hudas Not Pay." We are a country filled with so many "punny" places. The rest of the Fournier favorites: Washup Doc (laundry in Alabang),

Wash and Carry (Laundromat), To Home It May Concern (furniture shop), The Way We Wear (boutique), The Last Resort (a resort that went bankrupt in Minalin, Pampanga). Juan Sarmiento sent in more contributions like Babalik Carinderia (in Sto. Tomas, Batangas), Blue Marilyn (sing-along bar on Sucat), City Cleaners which is a San Juan janitorial service whose slogan is “Talk dirty to me!”, Launderland (a Laundromat in Legaspi Village, Makati, reportedly run by a woman named Alice). Of course, for husbands who need an excuse for a night out, they can tell their wives they were at The Library (along Adriatico), The Other Office (on Mabini) and The Conference Room (in Makati). What I have yet to see though is Cooking ng Ina Mo (a carinderia on Boni Avenue) and its competitor, Cooking ng Ina Mo Rin.

Someone should really go out with a camera and document these places, just to prove they exist. We have pictures of places abroad that made us laugh. In London was the Kadiri Indian Restaurant. Or the famous Hospital Patay in Paris, and of course in Hong Kong the Fu Kee Seafood Restaurant. How I wish I had taken the camera around town just to document other “punny” places! One of my favorites is a hardware store on a small street off Rizal Avenue in downtown Manila that specializes in nuts and bolts. Its signboard has a large screw in the center, loudly proclaiming that the owner or at least the store is the “King of Screw.” (23.2.2003)

Names Filipinos Prefer

To distract myself during a traffic jam in Manila, I look at other cars and other drivers to see how they cope. The most common sight would be people listening to the radio or stereo, while others text or talk using their cellular phones. Nothing, however, beats the sight of the driver (always male) who whiles away the idle moments by picking his nose as if there is no tomorrow. Despite being modest as a people, I find no trace of shame in this display, no attempt to cover up. If traffic is really bad, you can observe how the excavated particles are rolled neatly into a disgusting little ball and discarded with a dexterous flick of the index finger. Now, that is one sight you will not see anywhere else in the world. This is truly Pinoy as the riddle I remember from the late Armando Malay, “kinakalikot ng kinakalikot, saka nilapirot.” Lolo Mando bombarded me with hundreds of riddles when we had nothing better to talk about yet the only one I remember is kinakalikot...

Another productive way of spending time in traffic would be to look at the names of taxicabs. One can try and guess the background of the taxi operator from the name of the cab. “Filamer” was someone who was named after “Fil-American” Friendship Day, July 4, definitely not the Filipino-American War. “Luzviminda,” formerly a common Filipino name, is a contraction of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. “Agrifina” the name of the circle in the Luneta between the National Museum and the Department of Tourism, has nothing to do with ancient Roman history, it’s the contraction of Agriculture and Finance, the Departments once housed in those two American colonial buildings that border the circle.

Unfortunately, there are more cabs than the names of saints or names of relatives and lovers of the taxi operators resulting in taxicabs with outrageous names. The best one I have seen so far is called “Varicose Veins.”

Someone should compile a list of Filipino names so that we have a lot of choices in the naming of a new generation of Filipinos or a new fleet of taxicabs. My father’s family is quite large with each sibling being different. My parents gave us nicknames that all began with “A.” Cousins from one branch of the family

have names that all begin with “M,” while another uncle had four daughters: Corito, Divina, Evita, Finina to make C-D-E-F. A-B were reserved for sons they never got. One aunt was the 10th child and her husband also the 10th child, so they produced 10 children with names that all begin with “G.” The joke in the family is that they had to stop at 10 because there was no name left for the 11th child except “Gago.”

My youngest sister is expecting and wants a unique name that begins with “A” thus, we have taken to calling the poor unborn child “Azereje.” I noticed that on my sister’s bedside table was a small book, “4,000 Names for Baby” which reminded me of Bulletin 9 of the Bureau of Education (1915) being, “A list of Philippine Baptismal names,” compiled by E.E. Schneider, who served as a teacher in the Bureau of Education and also a wood expert at the Bureau of Forestry. This list was meant to help schoolteachers with their class lists at the start of the school year. While the pamphlet might seem like a waste of taxpayers’ money, one cannot imagine if such lists were compiled and printed to our time. We would have seen social history in the preferences in names and the slow shift from Spanish names of Catholic saints to English names. The first list compiled in 1905 had 1,100 names; the 1915 edition had 2,700 names not counting duplicates and the names that had both masculine and feminine forms.

Most names were drawn from the martyrology of saints. These were listed on calendars together with other liturgical feasts resulting in the following women’s names: Angustia, Dolores, Guadalupe, Lourdes, Loreto, Nieves, and Paz.

The whole life of Christ can be seen through the names: Concepción (December 8, Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary), Anunciación, Visitación, Natividad (Nativity), Presentación, Purificación, Epifanio/ia, Resurrección, Transfiguración. The only thing missing here are the two events that begin with “C” namely Circumcision and Crucifixion. Then there are the virtues of faith, hope and charity—Fe, Esperanza, and Caridad. The pious allusion had been lost over time just as the reference to Tolstoy is lost to people who watch the telenovela “Anna, Karen at Nina.”

The 1915 list makes you think about a number of things. Are names different because of spelling? Is Bibiana the same as Viviana? Is this where my friend Vivien V. Visaya got her name? (Take note, it’s pronounced Bibyan Bisaya and she is not from the Visayas.) Why the change in emphasis when you shift from masculine to feminine? Lucía changes stress in Lucio, or better still, María is not

the same as Mario. Many familiar names dropped the “h” as in Adrian, Elena, Enrique (Henry in English). The double “ll” familiar in Spanish as in Guillermo and Llorente is dropped from names such as Braulio and Emilio. The only entry for “Y” is Yolanda because the spelling of names like Ysagani, were placed under “I” as in Isagani.

The 1915 list reflects more than names, it shows the shift from Spanish to English, a long history and a reference to the times. A list of Filipino names is a source for social history. (11.7.2003)

Fun in Names

KADRI'S. INDIAN CUISINE

www.kadris.com

020-2421 1728 | 020-2421 1729



Email response to last Friday's column on Pinoy names was numerous and interesting. Two expatriates corrected me about public nose-picking. Peter Chong reports that, "In Singapore it is not uncommon to see picking of noses when waiting for traffic lights to turn green. Over here we hardly have a traffic jam to boast of..." The sheer boredom of waiting drove Filipinos to develop this habit into an art form. Mike Tan, the Inquirer's resident anthropologist, surely has more to say on this but Dennis Concepcion wrote: "Your article today in the Inquirer, as usual, is good reading. However, I have to disagree with you on one point—that picking noses in public is a uniquely Filipino invention. I have been on temporary work assignment here in Bangkok for two weeks now and I always see people picking their noses. They do it while walking, while driving, while working on their PCs, while riding in buses—even while eating at restaurants! But I must agree with you that rolling the fruit of the picking into a small gluey ball on the fingertips is one truly unique Filipino invention. Only in the Philippines!"

in the
Gylica



CHOCOLATE

GIANT

2017年11月27日

2017年

Sorry to disappoint those who think I fabricated the “Varicose Veins Taxi.” Linda P. Tibby emailed, “Believe it or not but I have seen taxicabs called Dyslexia and Vomit. I couldn’t believe my eyes when I saw Vomit Taxi written on the door of the cab. Do these people know what they really mean?” Frankly, Dyslexia has a feminine ring to it and can be mistaken for a name but Varicose Veins and Vomit are things we can proudly call our own. A list of taxicab names is worth a future column. Why is it that if we have more taxis than Christian names, how come they are never available when you need them?

I was being playful when I wrote that the only names missing in the 1915 list that outlines the whole story of Jesus Christ, from birth (Natividad) to resurrection and ascension into heaven, were two events that begin with “C,” namely Circumcision and Crucifixion. Bopeep Ladrado of UP Iloilo says her daughter had a bank client named Circumcision. One of the memorable moments of my paternal grandfather’s wake was when my aunts had a laughing fit while going over the mass cards—one was from “Circumcision Garcia.” Harder to believe was that the little old woman’s nickname was “Tuli.” But all this is no laughing matter for “Miraflor” from Stanford University who emailed:

“For your information, Circumcision was used by a girl who went to school in Dumaguete. Unfortunately, I cannot remember her last name. In Cebu, the surname ‘Balig-oten’ also exists. Literally, it means bent penis. A female student in Cebu carrying this name always had to cover her name tag embroidered on her uniform with a handkerchief or towel to hide this embarrassing surname.

“I do not take this issue lightly for many of these names were given to them by evil people manning the birth registry who thought it fun to arbitrarily give embarrassing names to the naïve, illiterate citizens who came to their offices to register their children.

“This injustice is still heaped upon poor, innocent people coming to town with no preferred names at hand and are therefore left to the mercy of an unthinking, if cruel, prankster clerk at the birth registry. You are the historian. Look beyond Manila and in Church archives you will find how surnames were given.

“Circumcision was given in the 20th century and Balig-oten was probably handed down for generations during the Christianization of the Filipinos.”

Although I have previously written on the 1849 Catálogo Alfabético de Apellidos and the funny names therein, going through the list for the nth time is worth another column. Names today are so different from the Spanish-sounding names of old. For example, Bibiana has been anglicized into Vivian, then given the French flavor and transformed into Vivien. Fidel Nemenzo of the UP Math Department wrote, “Ikaw lang ang taga-Ateneo na kilala ko who would pronounce Vivien as Bibyan! My father, who spent years in Manchester would definitely say Vivyin Vesaya.” In the Philippines, there is a world of difference between the written and the spoken word. So it’s settled, Vivien Visaya should be Bibyan Beshaya. Fidel also adds that his father had townmates named Adolf Hitler and Yamashita. Now that’s really scraping the bottom of the barrel.

Rudy Arizala, former Philippine Ambassador to Chile, emailed: “My late mother gave names to her four children, mostly taken from what she read from the society page of the Manila Tribune. Although my parents had a ready name for me, it was the Red Cross nurses who happened to be in our town after a strong typhoon in 1929 who gave me the name ‘Rodolfo’ after the US famous actor at that time, ‘Rodolfo Valentino.’”

Arizala also mentioned the trouble people go through when they produce a birth certificate to apply for a passport. In days past, it was usually the hilot or a kind neighbor who registers the name of a newly born child. Thus, my mother, known as “Belen” all her 70 years was horrified to discover that her birth certificate carried the name “Valeriano,” the masculine form of her wicked stepmother’s name. A friend we all know as Romy turned out to be a “Gorgonio.” There is no end to fun in names. (16.7.2003)

Names of Boundless Mirth

The columns on names and naming generated so much email I could not get myself to write the follow-up on the 1915 Bureau of Education list of Philippine Baptismal names. In 1915, the baptismal names had a very wide context reaching back into the Roman Martyrology and the Catholic saints, feasts, and solemnities. There were allusions to Ancient Greece and Rome that would delight a historian but I don't think we can find young people today who would want to be named: Agricola, Areopagita, Aristofanes, Aristoteles, Auxilio, Cleopatra, Cariton (which we associate with scavengers of *dyaryo bote*), Erasmo, Esopo, Seneca, Tecla, or Torcuato. I wouldn't want to be named after places too: America, Africa, or Asia. One look at this ancient list and you rejoice that you live in the 21st century. There is a familiar sweet bread known as "Pionono" that for some strange reason was named after Pope Pius IX. The compiler of the 1915 list also had another pope, Pioquinto or Pius V that came with an amazing feminine counterpart—Pioquinta! This reminded me of two competing beauty parlors in the 1950s, the original was named Tres Chic and the one across the street thought it could do better with Cuatro Chic. In modern times, we have the place called Cooking ng Ina Mo. I have yet to validate the existence of a rival Cooking ng Ina Mo Rin. Urban anthropology can be a diverting pastime, all one needs is an open mind, observant eyes, and a notebook.

One of the readers who asked not to be identified (lest people think she has nothing better to do) has been listing down taxicab names since 1999 and supplied me with some arranged by type:

"Names referring to the driver's attributes? Queer, Silent Type, Handsome, Shy, Big Eyes, Goodboy, Poorman, Clueless, Weirdo, Wild Woman, and Mr. Excitement.

"Names referring to the taxi service? Aboveboard, Legitimate, Unbeatable, Smokin', Midas Touch, Matipid, Stealth (my personal favorite), Unexpected, User Friendly, and Hi-Ho Silver.

“Names meant to entice one into the taxi? UR 2 CUTE, Lukatme, Your Way, Just Call Me, Ride with Us, Onward, Hernando’s Hideaway, Cadilock, Taki, Kotseko, and Coheco Tacsimo.

“Slightly creepy: Sit Beside Me, Gremlins, 12 Fingers, Teeth & Bones, Sea-Ducer, and Screaming “O.”

“Pinoy names: Inosario A. Tubil, Simeon D. Macayacyac, Boyoyong, Palaka, Love ko si Rona, Ma. Buhay and Darna.

“Names referring to how the taxi was funded? Sukiyaki, Redundancy, Ancient Rome and Indaying’s Dream.

“Strange names: Fish-a-Holic, Oink-Oink, EKEK, Howling Gale, and Bluish Green.

“No thanks: Butt (yes, really, this is the most recent one I saw).”

From the above, one can see that taxi names are a potential subject for a doctoral dissertation, but then when studied academically we might lose the Pinoy humor that lightens our stress on the traffic-choked roads of Manila.

“Bojo” emailed me: I had an uncle who named his children so that the first letter of their names read ‘a dios todos.’ So the first child was Alfredo, then Daniel, etc. He had an 11th child whom he named after himself—Elpidio. His oldest son Alfredo tried the same but for some time had only six kids so he could only spell ‘a dios t.’ An auntie of ours one day suggested that since it seemed difficult to complete the phrase, as Alfredo and his wife were getting on in years, they should give their all and have at least one more child and give him or her a name that starts with the letter ‘a’ thereby forming a famous Ilonggo phrase ‘adios ta.’ Ask your Ilonggo friends what that phrase means.”

I have long heard about women with the surname “Bagongghasa” but since I have not verified this, I’m waiting for proof. Jhonald Ilagan wrote about a certain “Virginia Bagongghasa” again unverified. The rest of his email though was informative:

“A few years ago, while studying for the medical board, I heard my board mates talk about their classmate named Christmas, I smiled at the thought and couldn’t believe it when they told me her surname was Bonus. Weeks after, the board

results came out, and there she was, among those who passed (unfortunately, it didn't include me), Dr. Christmas Bonus. I think she has a sibling named Holiday.

“Toybee” emailed from Saudi:

“I was once a MedTech intern assigned in a rural Cebu town. Back then it was common to encounter names of kids such as ‘Tom Cruise Duhaylungsod,’ ‘Jackie Chan Labadan,’ ‘Fernando Poe Capunay,’ etc. Certainly a vast improvement over those Spanish-era saintly names of old (mine included). You would think parents of those kids were diehard movie fanatics who wanted to append their idol’s screen names to their kids’. But once, while taking a blood sample from a baby girl with profusely runny nose and ‘Phoebe Cates’ as given name, I kidded the mother that she must be a Phoebe Cates fan. To which she replied that living in a rural barrio she seldom watched movies actually, not to mention that she could hardly afford it; she didn’t know it was a movie star’s name until much later. It was the midwife who attended to her when she gave birth to her baby who pinned a paper with that name on the baby’s lampin. Needless to say, she and her husband found it unique. So the name stuck. Go figure how many more babies that a midwife christened with her own idol’s fancy names. The baby’s parents nevertheless were proud of it, mind you.”
(7.18.2003)

What's in a Name—Again?



Email response to the column on names, surnames and naming in the Philippines was very encouraging. While I received material for a dozen more columns, this will have to be the last column on the topic (at least for a year) because I think my editors are not amused anymore. Today's column just had to be written because in an earlier column I expressed doubt about the existence of "Virginia Bagongghasa." The surname seemed like another urban legend—you always hear about it from a friend of a friend. I remained skeptical because I didn't know anyone who could tell me that he or she knew someone named "Bagongghasa." Then the emails poured in.

CAFE PANIS



Eduardo B. Mosqueda Jr. said that someone surnamed Bagonggahasa was buried in Sgt. Mariano Cemetery in Pasay. I wanted to rush to Pasay in search of this particular tombstone but then Mr. Mosqueda's informant happened to be his father whose credibility (with me at least) slipped since he is wont to misexplain the markings on graves, such as: R.I.P. as Raped in Pasay and S.L.N. as Sa Lugaw Namatay. We all know that R.I.P., the first letters of the Latin phrase *Requiescat in Pace*, has since been translated exactly into Rest in Peace. On the other hand, S.L.N. has the same message but is not an exact translation from the Latin, and means Sumalangit Nawa.

Many people emailed that Bagonggahasa is spelled with only one "g" and that people with this surname came from Laguna. Ike Sambajon wrote: "The surname 'Bagonggahasa' if I am not mistaken is from a nearby town of Laguna. My wife also comes from Laguna and she is the one who knows all about that name. The family that owns the name, after a long legal request, got their name changed to the short and simple "Basa." "Toybee" from California wrote about a friend who changed their surname from PANTI to PONTI for obvious reasons. We know people who also changed their surnames from DUCUT to DUCAT. But then, these are not as interesting as Mr. Sambajon's other story: "it was more that 25 years ago when I graduated from high school and during the practice for our commencement exercises, instead of getting a laugh, I really pitied one of my batchmates when her surname was called to the stand as 'LABATETE.' And she happened to be a girl."

Frank Jimenez attended a "giling-giling" in Paete, Laguna and heard the surname announced and thanked as one of the sponsors of the event. Josie Fuentes had acquaintances in Laguna who were Bangongahasas who shortened their surnames to Basa. Alexander Basa of Paete said their ancestors came from the nearby town of San Antonio and that his grandfather was born a "Bangongahasa" but died a "Basa." Amador Acuran Basa, Jr. asked that people stopped laughing and look at the original meaning of the surname: Bagong in old Laguna Tagalog meant a new arrival (bagong dating) and gahasa was a synonym for impatient (apurado). Tony Basa emailed from Tokyo, saying his father Ador shortened their surname to Basa. Family lore was that an ancestor during the choosing of surnames in the late 19th century wanted to jump the long line, leading the official charge to remark, "Kabago-bago mo kagagahasa mo," therefore, your name shall be Bangongahasa!

In time gahasa changed meaning from “impatient” to “rape.” This explains why we seldom hear the rebuke, “Huwag kang gahasa!” (Don’t be impatient) or Teka muna, huwag mo akong gahasain!” (Wait, don’t rush me.) Consider that rape is often done in haste.

Another example is bakla, which means a gay person today. But in the 19th century Pasyon, you will be surprised to find a line that says “si Cristo’y nabacla.” Christ is not gay but during the agony in the garden he was “confused” (nabacla).

A historical and etymological dictionary for Tagalog and other Philippine languages will enrich our knowledge of the words we speak every day. There is much research needed in language and our surnames, and the first place to start would be the Catálogo Alfabético de Apellidos reprinted by the National Archives in 1973. While one can comb the list for surnames like; baboy, ongoy, ongoyan, pototoy, otong and utut, just reading the entries for “A” gave me so much gas. I share my favorites here and leave the readers to their own explorations; Abad, Abat, Abas, Abaya, Abaca, Abala, Abayari, Abalahin, Abadilla, Abanceña, Abelgas, Abellana, Abella, Abogado, Abolorio, Abobot, Abot, Abotan, Absurdo, Abuso, Academia, Acapulco, Acido, Acin, Acyat, Acyatin, Adan, Adapon, Adriatico, Advincula, Africa, Africano, America, Asia, Agoncillo, Agua, Aguas, Aguada, Aguado, Aguirre, Agustines, Aha, Ahas, Ahit, Ahitin, Ahitan, Alac, Alagao, Alacdan, Alaga, Alagad, Alboroto, Alcalde, Alcala, Alcantara, Alcasid, Aldaba, Allegro, Alegria, Aleman, Alemango, Alimasag, Aligato, Aligue, Alipin, Alipinin, Alipostahin, Alila, Alisin, Alipongga, Alibangbang, Alinbayogon, Amag, Amarillo, Ambag, Ambagan, Ambe, Ambit, Ambita, Ambut, Ambuta, Amboy, Ambot, Ambota, Ambon, Ampalaya, Amsterdam, Anay, An-an, Anticristo, Apostol, Apellido, Apalit, Apurado, Aquin, Apac, Aquit, Aquitin, Arac, Araro, Aray, Arao, Arai, Ari, Aristoteles, Artillero, Artista, Aruta, Arugay, Asin, Aslam, Asuan, Asunto, Ate, Atienza, Atun, Auay, and Auay-auay. If the letter “A” can give one so much entertainment with names familiar and unfamiliar, you can imagine what the whole list is like. (6.8.2003)

Names and Meanings

Someone suggested looking into pre-Hispanic, Filipino surnames to find out whether these described people or reflected the traits of warriors. An everyday surname like Macabalo, for example, could have proclaimed to potential enemies that if they tangled with him their wives would become widows. Macapagal suggested someone who wore out or exhausted his enemies in battle. Macaspac, another surname from Pampanga, indicated someone who was strong enough to break things, including the heads of those who challenged him or her. Did Macatangay imply someone who pulled people? Other surnames like Macabuhay, Macalinao, Catacutan, or Malabanan are self-explanatory.

Unfortunately, I have no time to pursue further research, but if someone is inclined to do so today's column may furnish some leads. Since we inherit surnames we are often a far cry from the ancestral warrior at the root of our family trees. It is easier to look into revolutionary names and determine the reason behind their adoption as a particular *nom de guerre*.

Textbooks tell us that Aguinaldo was known as Magdalo and that his troops and the revolutionary faction he led later became known as Magdalo. But this is not all: Magdalo reveals that Aguinaldo was from Kawit, Cavite, whose patron saint is Mary Magdalene. Antonio Luna, who joined the revolution rather late and squealed on the Katipuneros when interrogated in Fort Santiago, took a pseudonym in *La Solidaridad*, that hints at his birthplace. An Ilocano by blood, he was born in Binondo, near the Pasig river; hence he took the name *Taga-ilog*.

SINGHIA

LAGER

BEER

Trade

Mark



विशुद्ध

बियर

ब्रांड

HOON RAO BREWERY CO., LTD.

BANGOR

Compress Taga-ilog into Tagalog and we remember Bonifacio who assumed the name Maypagasa. Did he choose this name because he was optimistic about the eventual outcome of the revolution? History played a cruel trick on him, for despite his pagasa Bonifacio did not foresee that the very same revolution he began would ultimately swallow him up and kill him. The other names that signified hope were those of Rizal's sisters who joined the women's branch of the Katipunan: Josefa became Sumikat and Trinidad Sumibul. However, despite their encouraging names they ended up spinsters—one of them cranky pa!

A survey of revolutionary names gives us clues into the personalities of the bearers. Antonio de Isaac was Lindol, who probably wanted to make the Spaniards tremble with fear. Artemio Ricarte was Víbora, a deadly Viper. Eusebio Roque, probably a schoolteacher because he was popularly known as Maestrong Sebío, took a different hat as Katipunero—as Dimabungo he became someone you couldn't push around.

I assume Santos Nocon was dark-skinned due to the name Duhat, while Rufino Ramos was tough enough to be called Matigas. Braulio Rivera went into the thick of battle and was called Guitna. The quiet physician Pio Valenzuela was Madlang-Away. Jose Turiano Santiago was a good spy or Tik-Tik, but Ladislao Diwa, charter member of both Rizal's Liga Filipina and Bonifacio's Katipunan, was probably the most tsismoso. Being the bearer of news, both good and bad, he was known as Balita.

Several revolutionary names are easy to decipher because they were nicknames. Melchora Aquino, the little old lady who gave lodging to the Katipuneros at the risk of her life, is Tandang Sora. Aguinaldo's foreign representative Galicano Apacible was simply Canong, or Kanoy. Aguinaldo's hatchet man Agapito Bonzon was Coronel Yntong. Edilberto Evangelista was plain Edilberto, if he did not use Ipil. The romantic Gregorio del Pilar was Heneral Goyo to his men and Liwanag to the hearts of many women.

Marcelo H. del Pilar sometimes used his nickname Selong, while Mariano Ponce used Naning and Rizal used Pepe. Juan Luna translated his Latin surname into Ilocano and signed himself Juan Buan or Juan Bulan in the ancient Philippine script. Yet, in my opinion, the most absorbing pseudonyms are those which puzzle and delight.

Isabelo de los Reyes used Platanos or bananas. Does this mean banana was his favorite fruit or was he making anatomical allusions? Baldomero Roxas, physician and friend of Rizal, used Dr. Pangloss. By using a character from Voltaire's *Candide*, Roxas proved he was a true francophile. His stay in Paris made him take another pseudonym *Lumiere Rouge*, most intriguing because it means "Red Light." History can truly be a source of amusement and insight if you will only open your eyes to details that boring academics claim are trivial and useless. (11.25.1994)

Nicknaming the Famous

Despite the photograph that comes with this column, I still receive mail addressed to “Ms.” Ambeth Ocampo. Often, these persistent envelopes go unopened into the trash can, but sometimes I stop and wonder whether the senders imagined me to be a Miss or a Mrs. Once, I even received an invitation to cover a prelactation seminar in Cebu! This amuses me no end because I’m not the only one with this problem in this newspaper.

Before I met him, I had always thought Recah Trinidad was the third and youngest person in the Newshen Trinity, together with Cita and Doris. I was rather disappointed when I finally met the bemoustached man who appears in San Miguel Beer ads. I used to marvel at the grasp and insight “she” had on sports, especially basketball. After the initial shock and embarrassment, I managed to blurt out, “Ah, ikaw pala si Recah.”

Because this also happens to me all the time, I have become used to introductions that begin with a blush or a scratch on the head and an “Oh, I thought you were a woman...it’s the name kasi eh.” Another letdown was browsing through pre-war magazines and finding out that Lola Basyang, who I always imagined to be the late comedienne Chichay, was a fat, bald playwright named Severino Reyes. Names mean a great deal because they project images of the persons who bear them. When word and image do not match, you have a comic situation.

There is a story, hopefully apocryphal, about the famous designer Pitoy Moreno taking a bow after a successful fashion show in Madrid. He could not understand why the well-heeled crowd laughed like mad when his name was announced. The emcee, probably Filipino, saw nothing wrong with using the more popular nickname of Pitoy, ignorant of the fact that pito or pitoy is the vulgar Spanish words for penis and Moreno, as in Tagalog, means dark. The Spaniards put the two words together, took one look at Moreno, and had a riot.

Moreno is not the only one to experience scatological delight. The late Renato “Katoks” Tayag, writer and director of the Philippine National Bank, took great

pride in handling out official PNB calling cards that made him out to be “R.D. Bayag.” In daily life, our conversations surf through the three languages of English, Tagalog, and Spanish, producing puns and numerous word associations that will be unintelligible to foreigners.

Had we a better command of Spanish, we could have found something hilarious daily or at least understood the people behind their names. I once asked Jose Ma. Sison why he took the pseudonym “Amado Guerrero.” Before we met, I always imagined him plotting a revolution since I mistranslated his pseudonym to mean “lover of war.” Joma corrected me and said that Amado Guerrero should be translated as “beloved warrior.” As we laughed, he added that his nom de guerre was nothing compared to the arrogant “Salvador del Mundo” that this friend chose as nom de guerre. What appears to be an ordinary pinoy name literally means “Savior of the World!” One wonders what will happen to this country if ever the left takes over.

When news broke that Gang Gomez officially entered the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Malaybalay, some monks from the founding Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat in Manila went about speculating whether the famous designer would be allowed to keep his nickname. If so, what would his monastic name be? To retain “Gang,” he had to take as patron saint either Wolfgang (as in Mozart) or Chrodegang (an eighth century French Bishop). A nationalist suggested something Philippine—how about Sinigang? Gang Gomez, however, was mercifully given the name “Martin” and is now known as Dom Martin de Jesus, to differentiate him from a monk of the same name in Manila.

The former music critic Rodrigo Perez III was able to keep his nickname “Bobby” by taking the monastic name Bernardo Ma. In my case, the closest to my byline was Ambrose or its dissonant Spanish version Ambrosio. In an effort to change completely, I decided on something different. My choices were Wilfrido Maria (after a former abbot, not the playwright) or Ignacio Maria (after Ignacio de Loyola). My abbot wisely chose the latter. This explains why this column can be combative—Ignacio was a soldier converted to Christianity after his military career was shattered by a cannonball.

A future historian will learn a lot about people and their times by studying ordinary every day things like nicknames. (11.23.1994)

Friar Murder in 1617



Prof. J. J. ...
Dominicanus ...

Intramuros in 1617 was terrified by a bad omen. A white cat was found in San Agustin church suckling three rats. How did these natural enemies become bedfellows? Manileños expected something terrible when the cat eventually devoured the rats that were sufficiently fattened. This cat was found after the deaths of Diego Vázquez de Mercado, archbishop of Manila, and Fray Jerónimo Salas, newly elected Augustinian provincial. Since misfortune was believed to come in threes, another death was foretold.

Salas did not have enough time to prove his administrative skills because he died suddenly on May 17, 1617, twenty days after his election. Foul play was suspected but could not be confirmed until the next provincial Fray Vicente Sepulveda died, too. Sepulveda was described as follows: “thoroughly inflexible in character, he undertook to secure the most rigorous observance...became a second time provincial...but he did not change in the least his harsh and rigid mode of government. A lamentable and unexpected event put an end to his already harassed life on August 1, 1617.”

During his first term, Sepulveda already made enemies, prompting friends to advise him against taking another term. Religious zeal, however, drove him to ignore these warnings. Nothing could stop him from doing his job, not even poison. Ground glass was administered eight times in his chocolate, food and even the wine he consecrated and consumed at mass. Poison merely caused eruptions all over his body and made him sick for a few days. Despite his small frame, he remained robust and looked as if he would live to complete another three year term.

When the plot thickened, Sepulveda became more careful about his food and began to lock his cell at night. He suspected Fray Juan de Ocadiz and ordered him out of San Agustin and into Cavite where a ship would return him to Spain. Knowing he was to be formally expelled from the order, Ocadiz acted swiftly and enlisted the help of Fray Juan de Quintana, Fray Andres Encinas, and Fray Ignacio de Alcaraz.

Fray Ignacio, the provincial's secretary, copied the keys to Sepulveda's cell. They struck towards midnight of July 31, 1617-incidentally the feast of Saint Ignatius Loyola. The vigilant Sepulveda slept lightly and stopped the assassins in their tracks by shouting. Ocadiz's accomplices were all in their twenties and feared

the provincial. They wanted to back out, but Ocadiz threatened to stab them.

After some hesitation, all four men attacked Sepulveda, threw him on the bed, and covered his mouth. Ocadiz put his knees against Sepulveda's stomach and began to strangle him. When the provincial begged for confession Ocadiz remarked, "Father, repent of your sins, and in token of this clasp my hand." As Sepulveda did so, Ocadiz stated, "Trust, Father, in our Lord, who will pardon your sins." After choking Sepulveda, they made sure he was dead by twisting his head around till the neck broke. Sepulveda's bloody head dangled like that of slaughtered fowl.

Everything happened under cover of darkness. Later, someone found a candle and cleaned the provincial's body of blood, changed the bed linens, and arranged everything to make it appear as if he had died in his sleep. They even bolted the door from inside and jumped out the window. When the bell rang for matins around two in the morning of August 1, 1617, the community proceeded to prayer, including the murderers.

When the provincial did not appear, the prior Fray Alonso del Rincon knocked at his door. With no response from within he had the door forced open. Although murder was obvious, the culprits were not. Before the requiem mass, the prior ordered the entire community to pay their last respects individually. The prior stood by the body and observed each friar's face as they came to kiss the dead provincial's hand. Earlier, one of Sepulveda's fingers was arranged such that it seemed to point towards the person bowing to kiss his hand. Naturally, the innocent did not mind this, but the guilty felt an accusing finger from the grave. To cut a long story short, three of the murderers were hanged, while one managed to escape. Buried somewhere under San Agustin, these murderous friars now lie with their victim as they await the promised resurrection of the dead.

It is indeed no exaggeration to say that early friar accounts of the Philippines sound like Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. Only, ours is based on truth, not fiction. (1.11.1995)

An Earthquake in 1645

Bernardo Carpio is a legendary hero believed to be chained under the hills of Montalban. Each time he struggled to break free, he caused earthquakes. Devastating earthquakes in the late nineteenth century led some people, including Andres Bonifacio, to assume that Bernardo Carpio would soon be free to liberate his land from Spain. The recent earthquake in Japan jolted historical connections in my mind.

That certain parts of the Philippines had a long history of earthquakes can be seen in our architecture. Ilocos churches, for example, are characterized by bell towers built separate from the churches supported by massive, sometimes ornate, buttresses. In Quiapo, the all-steel San Sebastian church stands as proof of man challenging nature. The historical marker by the door omits recent evidence that the church was designed by Gustave Eiffel (or his firm), prefabricated in Belgium, and shipped piece by piece to Manila where it was assembled like a child's Lego set. The present San Sebastian church has defied fire and earthquakes that destroyed earlier structures.

Material for roofs changed through time in response to the challenges posed by nature. Most structures in Intramuros began with the nipa hut, which is now so quaint that miniature versions have become available in souvenir shops or playgrounds. Damaged by pests, typhoons, earthquakes, and fire, the nipa hut evolved into the bahay na bato that was more sturdy. This also came with thatched roofs, but frequent fires made people switch to red tile, which was not only pretty but also helped keep the house cool.

Tiled roofs, however, were discouraged after the devastating 1863 earthquake that forced the governor-general permanently out of Intramuros and into the "summer" residence at Malacañang. Metal sheets, or later galvanized iron sheets, replaced tiles. Those who insisted on tiles had to comply with regulations made after the 1880 earthquake. When I walk around Binondo and San Nicolas, I am drawn to tottering old houses with red tiled roofs complete with cogon, imagining these to have been built before 1880.

Speaking of historical earthquakes, Manila suffered one on the night of November 30, 1645, the feast of San Andres. A Spanish priest left the following account:

The sky was clear, the moon bright, and the air calm and still, after a long period, even months, of clear and dry weather. Suddenly a frightful crash was heard, and the earth began to quake so violently that it seemed as if it would become a sepulcher for all the inhabitants. As a result, during the space of four Credos [chanted Profession of Faith], the time from which the first shock lasted, the earthquake passing from north to south, and then from east to west, with a rapid movement... flung to the ground the most beautiful and magnificent buildings in this city. The stone walls were shaken and bent like sheets of paper or parchment fluttered by the wind; the towers swayed and bent like trees; and the largest trees broke like masts of a ship in the midst of a fierce hurricane. Nothing was heard but the crash of buildings mingled with the clamor of voices entreating Heaven for mercy, the cries of the terrified animals adding to the horror. In the streets could only be seen the heaps of stone from the ruined houses, which hindered the flight of those who in frightened haste were leaving their homes... they could not find refuge...no one felt secure, for the shocks did not cease, although they were less severe than the first. They were accompanied by so loud a crash that the noise could be heard, even before the quaking of the earth.

On the fifth of December, five days after the first...another one occurred as violent as the first...the destruction of many other buildings was completed; and the city was left in such condition that one could not walk through it. The effects of these shocks were terrible, also, in other provinces...whole villages were over-thrown as their huts...were leveled; rivers were dried, which afterward flowed again; others leaving their beds inundated the villages; great fissures, and even chasms, appeared in the open fields. In [the Pasig] the disturbance and commotion in its waves was so great that it seemed as if they would flood all the country; for the fury urged the river from its bed and its waters flowed over the bridge.

People who have experienced earthquakes will recognize the truth in the details given above. What amused me, however, was a description of the Jesuit Colegio de San Jose, which had a chapel decorated with pictures of the twelve Apostles. According to the account, “Not one of these pictures was thrown down, except that of San Andres, in token that on his feast day his church and even the city were destroyed.” (1.27.1995)

Doomed To Be Like the Yoyo We Invented?

Would you believe the yoyo was invented by a Filipino? Some sources even say the yoyo was used by the pre-Hispanic Filipinos as a weapon! This may be a bit far-fetched, but even Rizal in one letter mentions that he was once in a boat and he amused other passengers on board by doing tricks with a yoyo and showing them how to use it “as a weapon of defence.”

Just because he is Rizal does not mean he is right. I doubt the yoyo-as-a-weapon theory — but one thing for sure, it is a documented fact that it is a Philippine invention.

Sometime in the 1920s, a certain Pedro Flores was working as a houseboy for an American family in California. To amuse his ward, a little boy, Pedro fashioned a crude yoyo from soft wood by using a kitchen knife. He taught the boy, who in turn showed the toy to his friends. Since he was the first kid on the block to have one, he started the interest in the yoyo. Later, his classmates wanted yoyos, too, so Pedro made more.

Pedro’s master saw the yoyo’s potential as a toy. In 1928, he made Pedro Flores register a patent for the yoyo, and provided capital for the manufacture of the toys, thus founding the first yoyo factory in the United States.

A certain H.B. Preston from Chicago got hold of one of these yoyos and sought out its inventor to see what other tricks could be played with it. He was disappointed that there was little one could do with the yoyo, except bounce it up and down.

Returning to Chicago, he rounded up some Filipinos and discovered they could not do any tricks better than Pedro Flores could. So, he studied the yoyo and developed new tricks which have become the staples of the perennial yoyo contests on noontime TV shows: “The Spinner,” “Walking the Dog,” “Breakaway,” “Around the World,” “Over the Falls,” “Creeper,” and “Three-Leaf Clover.”

Having developed these new tricks, Preston, together with some friends, decided to mass-produce the yoyos. They bought Pedro Flores's rights to the toy and in 1929 founded the Duncan Yoyo Company, starting a fad which spread throughout the United States and Europe. It eventually reached the Philippines, where it all started, halfway across the world.

In 1933, Preston arrived in the Philippines amid much fanfare as "the" yoyo expert. In a press statement, he said:

Our company guarantees 150 different varieties that can be performed on our yoyos. Of course, such tricks can only be performed on a genuine Duncan yoyo, for the toys you make locally are hard to play with. In the first place, they are not evenly balanced. The edges of the groove are sharp and the axle big. The weight, too, is not exactly right. Some of your yoyos are either too heavy or too light and many of them are made so thin that they are not appropriate for the 50 or more tricks that we can do with a Duncan yoyo.

There is also another secret in the yoyo game. It lies in the kind of string used. I noticed that your boys play it here with the spool thread that can be bought from any corner store. In our yoyos, we use a string especially made of Egyptian fiber cord. It is not only durable but also smooth, and gives the top an easy flow.

And so it came to pass.

A Filipino invented the yoyo centuries ago, but it took an American to develop it and make something out of it. What is ironic is that in 1933, this American representing the Duncan Yoyo Company came to our shores to tell us how inferior our yoyos are compared to theirs.

That was looking back.

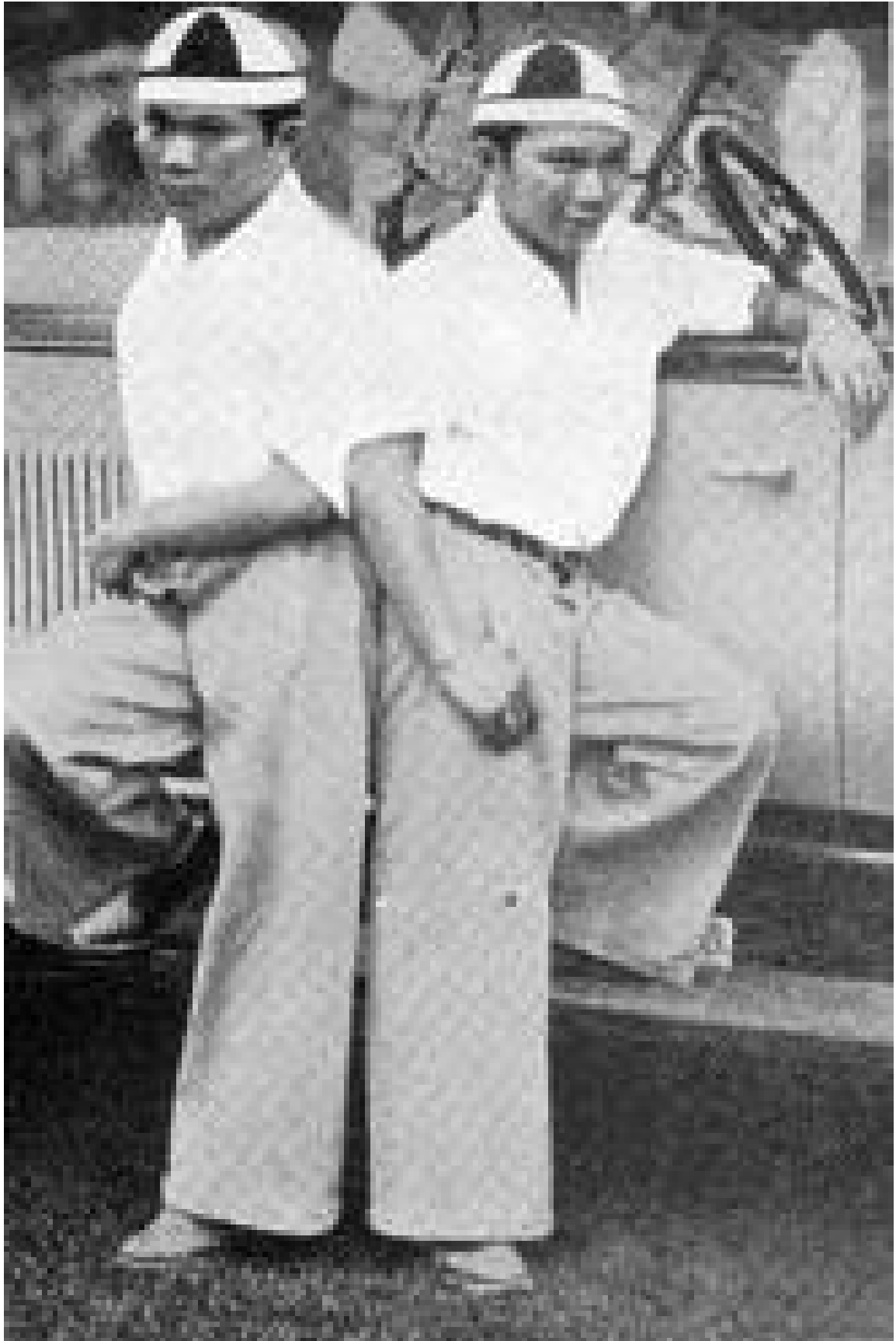
Today, they still do the same thing. They take our natural resources, even our people, to make their country rich.

When will we ever wake up? (11.15.1998)

Siamese Twins

THAILAND, as every schoolboy knows, used to be called Siam. Long before the sinus-clearing, piles-inducing, hell-hot Thai food became popular in Manila, I associated Siam with three things: first, the musical *The King and I* that was banned in Thailand because it put their king in a bad light; second, a sleek brown cat called Tinay in the home of Maribel Ongpin (though I have never seen a Siamese cat in Bangkok); third, Siamese twins.

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) says that the word “Siamese” to refer to a native of Siam was first used in 1693, and “Siamese Twins” entered the language only in November 1829 when it originally referred to “two natives of Siam Chang and Eng (1814–1874), who were united by a tubular band in the region of the waist.” OED even quotes *The Times*, “It is announced in the Paris papers of Monday that the Sardinian girl with two heads died on the preceding day. The Siamese Twins will therefore have a clear field in that capital.” Surely, there have been other Siamese twins before Chang and Eng, but what were they called before 1829?



Courtesy Lopez Museum

One would think that being born Siamese twins would be a misfortune, but that depends on how one looks and deals with life. Chang and Eng enriched not only the English language but themselves as well, being one of the attractions of the Barnum and Bailey Circus. With their savings, Chang and Eng bought a plantation in Carolina, married two Englishwomen, lived to celebrate their sixtieth birthday, and sired many children. (How they did this is left to your imagination.) Chang passed away in New York in 1874, and since he shared certain vital organs with his twin brother, Eng died two hours later.

In the 1920s, the Philippines had its own version of Chang and Eng in the person of Lucio and Simplicio Godino who were more popularly known as the Yangco Twins. Although originally from Samar, they made their way to New York and were “discovered” in a Coney Island circus by the shipping magnate Teodoro Yangco, then Philippine Resident Commissioner in Washington. Yangco, already famous for his philanthropy, brought the twins home to Manila and adopted them.

Naturally, a perverse kind of curiosity greeted the Yangco Twins in Manila, but their novelty eventually wore off and Yangco then began their education. I would assume they had private tutors. The Yangco household was likewise famous because all the servants were required to learn to play a musical instrument. The joke used to be that Yangco’s domestics had no time to clean since they were busy practicing their music. Piano lessons for the twins proved difficult as they were joined at the back, thus they were given saxophone lessons instead.

Although Yangco was a Protestant who advocated birth control and a ban on liquor and tobacco, he allowed the twins to choose their religion (they opted to remain Catholic). To tempt them away from smoking, Yangco promised them ten thousand pesos if they reached the age of twenty without smoking a cigarette. Finally, to round off their education, Yangco took the twins on extended travels abroad (what old folks still refer to as “around the world”). They were hounded by the press at every port. An Italian newspaper, for example, noted certain things:

“They sleep on one side only and when one awakens he waits patiently for the awakening of the other. Then they make a leap and behold them standing on foot. Coming from the bath, they dress themselves in their underwear, a kind of combination suit buttoned at the shoulders. The trousers are put on at the same time, one pair before and the other behind, with the legs opposite each other. To put on their joint coat they lift their arms, causing it to slide down, afterwards adjusting it in the back.”

Numerous doctors examined the Yangco Twins and declared it impossible to separate them. However, Oreste Muzzi, a Neapolitan surgeon, disagreed with the usual diagnosis: since the Yangco twins did not share any vital organs like other Siamese twins, their two bodies that developed independently can be separated safely. However, the twins flatly refused the operation.

Two reasons were given. First, that Lucio and Simplicio had been “together” for so long they were already inseparable — literally and figuratively. Second, Yangco’s fortune was estimated at six million pesos. Being a childless bachelor, half his estate would go to his sister, and the remaining three million distributed equally among nine nephews and nieces, plus the twins. If the Yangco Twins were made “normal” they would lose both stepfather and inheritance. I wonder whatever became of the once famous Yangco Twins. (5.31.1995)

The First Filipino Englishman

MANY Filipinos, including me have never seen nor met a Quaker. Yet, we have a vague idea of what they look like from the illustrations on oatmeal cans. Part of my childhood memories contains the image of that smiling man with rosy cheeks, long hair, and a black hat, the man who resembles Benjamin Franklin minus the glasses, on a can or carton of Quaker Oats. Funny that I should associate Quakers with breakfast or merienda food rather than with the members of the religious group, Society of Friends, founded by George Fox in 1648. I don't know if oatmeal is the staple food of Quakers, but I am told that they usually trembled during religious meetings. These visible signs of religious emotion (very much, I guess, like today's Charismatics) gave them the name Quakers. Aside from "quaking," they were also noted for the plainness of their clothes; thus, in English, Quaker also refers to certain drab or plain-colored birds and moths that resemble the clothes worn by Quakers.

Despite the criticism leveled at the late Gregorio Zaide's multivolume *Documentary Sources for Philippine History*, I would still recommend it to students interested in reading primary sources but are handicapped because they cannot read Spanish. Even I find a few odd but interesting documents that add spice to an otherwise boring compilation. Leafing through the volumes, one can find a document on the first sundials in the Philippines or on the first Filipino naturalized British citizen who was also the first Filipino Quaker.

Francisco Rodriguez (1790-1857) was born in Manila to Philippine-born Spaniards. He was educated in Manila and, of all places, Calcutta. Hence, he was fluent in Spanish, English, Tagalog, Latin, and, I would presume, Indian, too. He married a mestiza, Dolores Virgil, whose untimely death left him childless and a widower. Since Rodriguez was a prosperous and noted businessman, he attracted the usual amount of envy.

At dawn on June 2, 1823, a mutiny broke out in Manila led by Captain Andres Novales who declared himself "Emperor of the Philippines." Novales had a very short reign though—the revolt was crushed by the government and the Emperor of less than twenty four hours was shot. After the revolt, many prominent

citizens were arrested and exiled, among them Francisco Rodriguez who was sentenced to imprisonment in Cadiz. However, he managed to escape and landed penniless in England. His property in Manila was taken and his relatives refused to send him any kind of help. Fortunately, Rodriguez was taken in by the Quakers in London. He became a Quaker himself and a British citizen, as well.

In 1828 following the amnesty granted to people implicated in the Novales revolt, Rodriguez returned to Manila and eventually regained his former wealth and social position. Naturally, the long lost relatives and friends crept out of the woodwork hoping to be mentioned in his will, which still exists in the British Public Office in London. The will begins:

In the name of God, Amen. I, Francis Rodriguez, a Filipino Spaniard, widower by condition and Christian, being of sane and perfect judgment, but of broken health and aware of the uncertainty of life do resolve to make and do make this my last and final will . . .

At the time of his death in March 1857, Rodriguez owned a block of houses that could be entered through the Callejon del Embarcadero de San Gabriel in Manila. Aside from the personal property inside these houses, he also received rent from Smith, Bell, and Company that occupied two of his bodegas and Kerr and Company that occupied five shops in his block of houses. A great Anglophone, Rodriguez specified that “It is my will that my houses be rented and occupied by Englishmen only; and if at any time my Executors should decide on selling my houses, I desire that they be sold to English subjects.”

Rodriguez willed that his funeral be simple and inexpensive and that he was to be buried in La Loma—in the site reserved for English citizens. It is not specified in the will, but according to Zaide’s notes Rodriguez’s entire wealth was bequeathed to Queen Victoria, in trust, for the widows and orphans of British soldiers who fell during the Crimean War (1854-56).

What significance does this have to Philippine history? Frankly, not much, but in the last Association of Asian Studies meeting, American scholars got excited over a panel on “Obscure(d) Filipinos.” Had I known about it earlier, I would have written about Francis Rodriguez and half a dozen truly obscure Pinoys. Why do we leave such explorations to foreigners? Can’t Filipino academics be similarly stimulated and publish more engaging research? (6.2.1995)

Gays in the Philippine Revolution

A NUMBER of friends have suggested that I broaden my present research area and try to dig out material on the role of women in the Philippine revolution. While going through the Manila Times of 1899, I thought of obliging my feminist friends, and I was pleasantly surprised to find more than I bargained for—probably the first documented transvestite in Aguinaldo's army.

Readers of this column will surely remember the numerous references I have made about Bonifacio traveling to Balintawak dressed as a woman, or about Rizal and his barkada posing in drag so that Juan Luna could finish his famous canvas *La Muerte de Cleopatra* (The Death of Cleopatra). I have no doubts about the masculinity of our cross-dressing heroes, but what about gays in the Philippine revolution?

Jun Terra, expatriate artist in London, says I do not have to look farther than the late 1960s to find gays in revolutionary activity. Terra relates a detail in one particular demonstration in Manila that makes him teary-eyed not with nostalgia but with uncontrollable laughter. During a *Kabataang Makabayan* march to the Senate, they were joined by a group of boisterous gays in drag, who taunted the trigger-happy policemen into action by ceaselessly chanting the rude verse, *Pulis! Pulis! ang - - - mong matulis!*

Frankly, nobody knew how to react to these militant gays. Eventually, the majority were so embarrassed by this legitimate minority in the march that they literally distanced themselves by breaking ranks, thus leaving a yawning gap in the march between the guys and the gays. I remembered Pete Lacaba's clenched-fist account *Days of Disquiet Nights of Rage*, which I read in college, and I realized that the limp-wristed will never get into the standard histories and reminiscences of the so-called First Quarter Storm. Because I'm too busy with other concerns, I'm hoping that someone will follow up on this obscure item I found in the Manila Times of August 16, 1899:

An insurgent spy has been captured and now languishes in the Anda street police station. His name is Baldomero de Leon, at least that is what he calls himself. De

Leon was captured yesterday by Corporal John Moore and Private Thomas of the 24th Infantry while he was endeavoring to pass through our lines near Mariquina, disguised as a woman and in company with two females.

The trio carried baskets upon their heads containing salt, cigarettes, and rice. The arrest was made because the soldiers had reason to believe the trio were endeavoring to smuggle contraband articles through the lines. The sale especially aroused the suspicion of the guards which at the time they believed to be saltpetre.

Based on the news report, I cannot tell whether de Leon was cross-dressing as a disguise, or he/she was straight, gay, bisexual, or a transvestite. However, the newspaper gives significant clues:

De Leon is an adept at playing the part of a Filipino woman. So cleverly does he imitate her manners that even the keen eye of the chief of police found difficulty in assuring himself of the sex of the prisoner. If Baldomero only had smaller feet and not such large swollen hands, he could pass for a woman on the strength of his outward appearance any time.

Did he/she have long tresses like the Macabebes? Was he/she endowed with a pretty face? How come the enemy was almost fooled by his/her action? A feminine walk is hard to imitate and it seems de Leon has had a lot of practice with it. I hate to imagine the kind of teasing the macho-playing enemy soldiers inflicted on de Leon. Worse, it seems de Leon was displayed like a circus freak to the uzi-seros who flocked to the jail near the Manila Cathedral and cheered or jeered at inmates, particularly at this cross-dressing revolucionario. The newspaper article concludes: "Naturally the soldiers had considerable rude fun at Baldomero's expense, but he took it well and smiled so sweetly back and was so decidedly feminine in all his actions that he completely won the crowd to his side."

While Filipino academics are still trying to get their hapless students to digest issues in post-structuralism, feminism, and ecology, their Western counterparts are almost through with gay and lesbian studies and are already searching for something else to argue about. We may have that landmark anthology of gay literature *Ladlad*, edited by Danton Remoto, and a collection of Margie Holmes's clinical essays on homosexuality, but we have yet to find similar books in the other disciplines—like history (or is it HER-story?)

It is one thing for a Filipino historian to uncover gays from the past, and quite another to write about them, making them a part of mainstream history.
(10.27.1995)

The Beatles in Manila I

IN PERSON

GEORGE, PAUL, JOHN & RINGO
1 DAY only

JULY 4
ELIZABETH MEMORIAL
FOOTBALL STADIUM

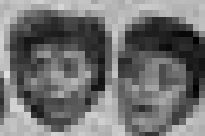


THE
BEATLES
SHOW

WITH
REYCARD DUET



WITH
WING DUO

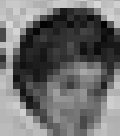


WITH
LEMONS THREE

WITH
DOWNBEATS

WITH
DALE ROBERTSON

WITH
PILITA CORRALES



JULY 4th

**1st SHOW
4:00 P.M.**

**2nd SHOW
8:30 P.M.**

SPONSORED BY

EMERSON ELECTRIC



FREE AIRCRAFT SERVICE



Eduardo de los Santos Collection

Four years ago when I held the drafts of what was to become his monumental novel *Empire of Memory*, Eric Gamalinda asked me for the exact quotation from Rizal about looking forward to the future by opening the book of the past. His novel, among other things, was about Marcos hacks rewriting Philippine history. However, I got struck reading the very first chapter that was set in the swinging 1960s with the short and eventful Manila visit of the Beatles. Gamalinda was able to recreate the mood of the time that made me envious. If only I could write like him, but then he was drawing on his memory of the recent past and I cannot do the same for events a century ago.

All I know is that the Beatles were roughed up in the airport when they left because they kept the Marcoses waiting in Malacañang for a courtesy call that never was. I dug up newspaper files on the Beatles visit and was surprised by the security arrangements that rivaled that of U.S. President Eisenhower's state visit. The Beatles were scheduled to arrive in Manila on Saturday, July 3, 1966, from Tokyo. From the airport, they were to be flown by helicopter to Manila Bay where Manolo Elizalde's yacht, *Marima*, would be waiting. Here, they were to take a short rest before a press conference that according to their contract, was to be conducted under the following conditions:

no standing room;

a raised platform, a table, and four seats would be prepared for the Beatles;

each Beatle was to have his own microphone; so four table microphones were to be prepared together with one handheld or standing microphone for pre-conference announcements, etc;

a high quality sound amplification system to insure that everything said by the Beatles could be heard in all parts of the room;

facilities for direct tape-recording from the press conference public system was to be used by the radio and TV reporters. (Unlike today when microphones and tape recorders crowd the table—if they are not shoved in the speaker’s face—the Beatles’ table was to be clear of clutter except for their individual microphones);

no one under eighteen years of age was to be admitted to the press conference, the only exception being the Beatles’ Fans Club chapter secretary. (This explains why a certain Josie Leorado, president of the Beatles’ Fans Club of the Philippines, threatened to jump off the seventh floor of the Bank of the Philippine Islands building if she didn’t get to shake the hands of the Beatles. Earlier, she organized fans for a march to the residence of Her Britannic Majesty’s Ambassador where they were to proclaim their love for the Beatles. I presume she got her wish because there was no newspaper report about someone jumping off a building for the Beatles.); and

no autograph seeking please (I presume this meant no photo opportunities, too).

On the day of the Beatles’ arrival, the airport was manned by 200 PC troopers and 700 policemen. The problem was that this was a different kind of security detail. Unlike heads of state whose lives are always in danger, the Beatles were being protected not from assassins but from enthusiastic fans. This was long before terrorism became a fad. The man in charge of the Beatles’ security, Col. Querubin Mabugat, said, “It’s quite a problem. We’re not dealing with hoodlums. These are our teenagers and we don’t want to hurt them.” Everything went well—the 10,000 fans were kept at bay and security was flawless. However, a bad omen came in the form of Airport Customs Collector Salvador Mascardo who did not offer courtesies of the port and insisted that the Beatles, who disembarked on the far end of the runway (there were no airport landing tubes yet!), surrender their hand-carried luggage and clear everything through customs.

Mascardo said. “I’ll see to it that you return to the plane if you don’t surrender those things.”

Naturally, the Beatles were surprised by this and Ringo said. “If this is how you treat us, I’m not coming back here.” This was the first sour note in a concert tour

that would end in near disaster. The Beatles eventually yielded to someone who was merely doing his job. Things went so well that the plan to fly them to Manila Bay by helicopter was abandoned and they were driven by car instead to the pier, thus giving the fans a glimpse of the Beatles.(11.24.1995)

The Beatles in Manila II



Edward de los Santos Collection

WHAT did the Beatles look like when they landed in Manila in July 1966? Ringo Starr had a peppermint-red sports jacket with white stripes, a foulard shirt, black pants, and, according to the late Joe Quirino, “shoes that defy description.” All the newspaper reports on the Beatles’ visit actually gave color to the faded black and white photographs I found in the files of the Lopez Museum. To think that Ringo was supposed to be the one with the best taste in clothes made my skin crawl—ang baduy! This is one reason why I hate looking at my old photo albums—I cannot imagine myself in clothes I once wore and thought were stylish.

George Harrison wore a red coat with a white silk shirt and striped shoes. John Lennon had the longest hair and, like our Randy Santiago, refused to take off the long slim sunglasses that have become his trademark. Fans, who saw him on the first day, asked him to take off his shades. He refused. I cannot tell what Paul McCartney was wearing because all the press people found him so cute and kept describing only his looks. One thing the press noted was their hair. The “mopheads” really looked like mops and smelled like mops, too—mops used for a toilet. Everyone was polite about it, but one reporter wrote, “They smell awful!”

The press conference was held at the Philippine Navy Headquarters for security reasons and for making the transfer to the Elizalde yacht, Marima, much easier. When informed that a fan threatened to jump off a building if she did not get to shake their hands, Ringo was reported to have said, “She’s crazy.” But Paul declared, “I’d like to be there when she jumps.” From the looks of it, the press conference was a smashing success because the Beatles were articulate except for John Lennon who sometimes answered with grunts and strange noises when he was not being sharp. Asked how he wrote his songs, he answered, “Ugh! Ugh! Ugh!” Newshen Jo Quiambao of the Daily Mirror heard the same monosyllables and put them down as, “Wuf! Wuf! Wuf!” One wonders if Lennon was really saying something that got lost in translation—remember that the English we speak is American while theirs is British with their own heavy regional accents.

Naturally, some press people came unprepared and asked stupid questions. One reporter asked Lennon, "What do you mean by Spaniard in your latest book?" He shot back with another question, "Have you read it?" The reporter replied, "No." And Lennon said, "Then read it!" The press didn't like Lennon very much and called him a smart-aleck (in Filipino he would be labeled a pilosopo); but knowing how notoriously ignorant some reporters can be, I think they deserved each other.

Other quotable quotes:

Q: "How will you solve the Vietnam War?"

A: "Give it back to whoever deserves it!"

Q: "What attracted you to your wives?"

A: "Sex!"

Q: "How much taxes do you pay?"

A: "Too much."

Q: "Would you be as popular without your long hair?"

A: "We can always wear wigs."

Q: "What's your latest song?"

A: "Philippine Blues."

Q: "When did you last get a haircut?"

A: "In 1963."

Q: "What is your favorite song?"

A: "God Save the King!"

Q: "It's the Queen now."

A: "Then it's God Save the Queen."

Q: "How many rings do you wear, Ringo?" (He had a ring on every finger which explains why he is called Ringo.)

A: "I never count them."

Q: "Were they given by your wife?"

A: "No, by friends."

Q: "What will you be doing ten years from now?"

A: "Why bother about ten years from now? We don't even know if we'll be around tomorrow!"

On their arrival, the only hassle was dealing with the Customs Inspector who, they claimed later, grabbed their hand-carried luggage from them and insisted that they pass through Customs like ordinary mortals. Remember, Lennon would

later get the group into deep trouble by declaring that, “We are more popular than Jesus Christ.”

While the Beatles were busy with the presscon and hiding from overenthusiastic fans, the Rizal Memorial Stadium was being prepared for their concerts. Pilita Corrales and the Carding Cruz orchestra, the Reycards, the Wing Duo, the Lemons Three, Dale Adriatico, and other “local” performers practiced the “front act” that would eat up most of the concert time. The Fab Four would only sing less than a dozen songs that would take less than an hour.

The Beatles made a dent in Philippine history because within twenty-four hours of their arrival in Manila, Beatlemania would be transformed into Beatlephobia. I was told that they were beaten up in Manila because they stood up Imelda Marcos and her children who waited in vain in Malacañang for a “courtesy call” that never was. What really happened then? (11.29.1995)

The Beatles in Manila III

SOUVENIR PROGRAM

THE BEATLES

BRANDON, A. PAUL, OFFENSE
MICAL, MEMORIAL
FOOTBALL STADIUM
JULY 6, 1966



Edward de los Santos Collection

BY today's concert standards the Beatles' performances at the Rizal Memorial Stadium in July 1966 were relatively short. They sang less than a dozen songs and were thus on stage for less than an hour. The matinee performances reportedly had a record-breaking 25,000 spectators. However, crowd estimates like today, were varied: one report gave crowd of 35,000, while another 50,000 people. What is the seating capacity of Rizal Memorial? Was there a standing room policy? Uniformed policemen numbering 720 and thirty-five plainclothes detectives, under the guise of protecting the Beatles, got the best seats in the stadium for free. The police kept walking around, blocking the view of paying customers, but the fans did not mind. No one complained about the faulty sound system that distorted the Beatles' performance.

Both Filipino and Japanese audiences were "well-behaved" and the few hysterical shrieking women in the audience were foreigners. On the whole, the concerts were a success and everything would have turned out well except for the non-appearance at Malacañang. Reading the reports with hindsight twenty-nine years, I am still confused. What really happened? The bare bones of the story can be summarized as follows:

Cavalcade Promotions, the Manila producer, arranged the Beatles' courtesy call on Mrs. Marcos at Malacañang for 11:00 a.m. on July 4, 1966. Protocol-wise, the president could not officially meet them, but had it pushed through, he would have "taken time off his busy schedule to meet the Beatles." After all, the presidential study is beside the Malacañang Music Room. Acting without the prior approval of the Beatles' manager Brian Epstein, Cavalcade Promotions sent a wire to Tokyo regarding the courtesy call, received no reply, assumed acceptance and finalized the schedule. Upon arrival, the Beatles were harrassed by Customs' officials; later, they were irritated by the lack of privacy in the Elizalde yacht they were invited to (the owner had asked over a dozen friends on board). Nobody confirmed plans. When the Malacañang limousine arrived at the Manila Hotel to fetch the Beatles, the trouble began.

When the limousine returned to Malacañang empty, we find that Mrs. Marcos,

her children, and 400 other people were disappointed. Why a crowd of 400 for a simple courtesy call? The Beatles were being imposed upon by the hosts. An opportunistic businessman waited in Malacañang, holding four hair dryers for the mopheads. He was to gain media mileage by gifting the Beatles with hair dryers. Quotable quotes from the Palace came from newshen Jo Quiambao. Mrs. Marcos declared, "Beatles music is too fast for me." This was echoed by Imee who probably was forced to be there, said: "I really do not like their music. They are monotonous. I prefer the Rolling Stones." Bongbong had this to say, "I'd like to pounce on the Beatles and cut off their hair! Don't anybody dare me to do anything, because I'll do it, just to see how game the Beatles are." By far, the most ominous remark when read with hindsight today was Irene's who innocently said, "There is only one song I like from the Beatles and it's 'Run for Your Life.'"

The rest, as the cliché goes, is history. The Bureau of Internal Revenue refused to let them go until they paid taxes on their earnings; security and other VIP courtesies at the airport were withdrawn. Escalators were shut off so that the Beatles had to climb up with their luggage. It was an obstacle race as they were pushed, shoved, hit, and kicked all the way to the departure area. They literally ran for their life. Epstein, the manager, tripped and was beaten by people pretending to help him up. Epstein later threatened to sue for a sprained ankle.

On the day they left, television emcee Bobby Ng found Epstein and Harrison on the sofas in their Manila Hotel Suite 402. McCartney was sitting on top of the television set. They were arguing about Malacañang. Harrison said, "We came here to sing. We didn't come here to drink tea and shake hands. We didn't even want to come here. The only reason we came was because these people were always saying, 'Why don't you ever come here?' We don't want to offend anyone especially since we are visiting in this country."

Paul added: "We just want to sing. . . . Besides, what were we going to do? Show up and say, 'We're here! Sorry we're late.' We weren't supposed to be there in the first place. Why should we apologize for something that's not our fault? . . . We didn't ask for this appointment, why should we be forced to keep it? How would you feel if you were told what to do?" Then they were joined by Ringo and John Lennon who looked out the window and said, "We got a few things to learn about the Philippines. First of all, is how to get out of here."

Safe in London, the Beatles were asked whether they would ever return to

Manila, and McCartney had replied, "Only with an H-bomb." So much for Filipino hospitality. (12.1.1995)

Postscript on the Beatles in Manila

THE response to the three columns on the Beatles and their 1966 Manila concert a few weeks back forces me to write one more—a postscript, actually. I was only five when the Beatles were in Manila, too young to remember anything. Although not a Beatles fan, I find it doubly difficult to make sense of the rough send-off they were given in our airport. I was writing about 1966, only thirty years ago, and yet it was a challenge to paint color into the black and white photos I found in yellowing newspaper clippings. My Beatles columns were written from my vantage point in 1995, thus raising a few questions for which I got a lot of answers. The longest and most organized letter came from Edgar Cruz of Pandacan, which says in part:

The Beatles that performed in Manila on July 4, 1966 was no longer the clean-cut, hungry-for-fame group that conquered popdom via American television with their Ed Sullivan show appearances in 1964. Known for their Liverpudlian cockiness and propensity for oddity, the group perennially absorbed cultural influences—drug use among them—that gave the posture of continuous reinvention of themselves. The lapsed time between the Ed Sullivan show and the Manila concert, a span of over two years, showed an evolved Beatles, from cuddly moptops to sophisticated potheads.

1501
RIZAL MEMORIAL FOOTBALL STADIUM

MANILA

THE BEATLES

July 4, 1966 - 4:00 P.M.

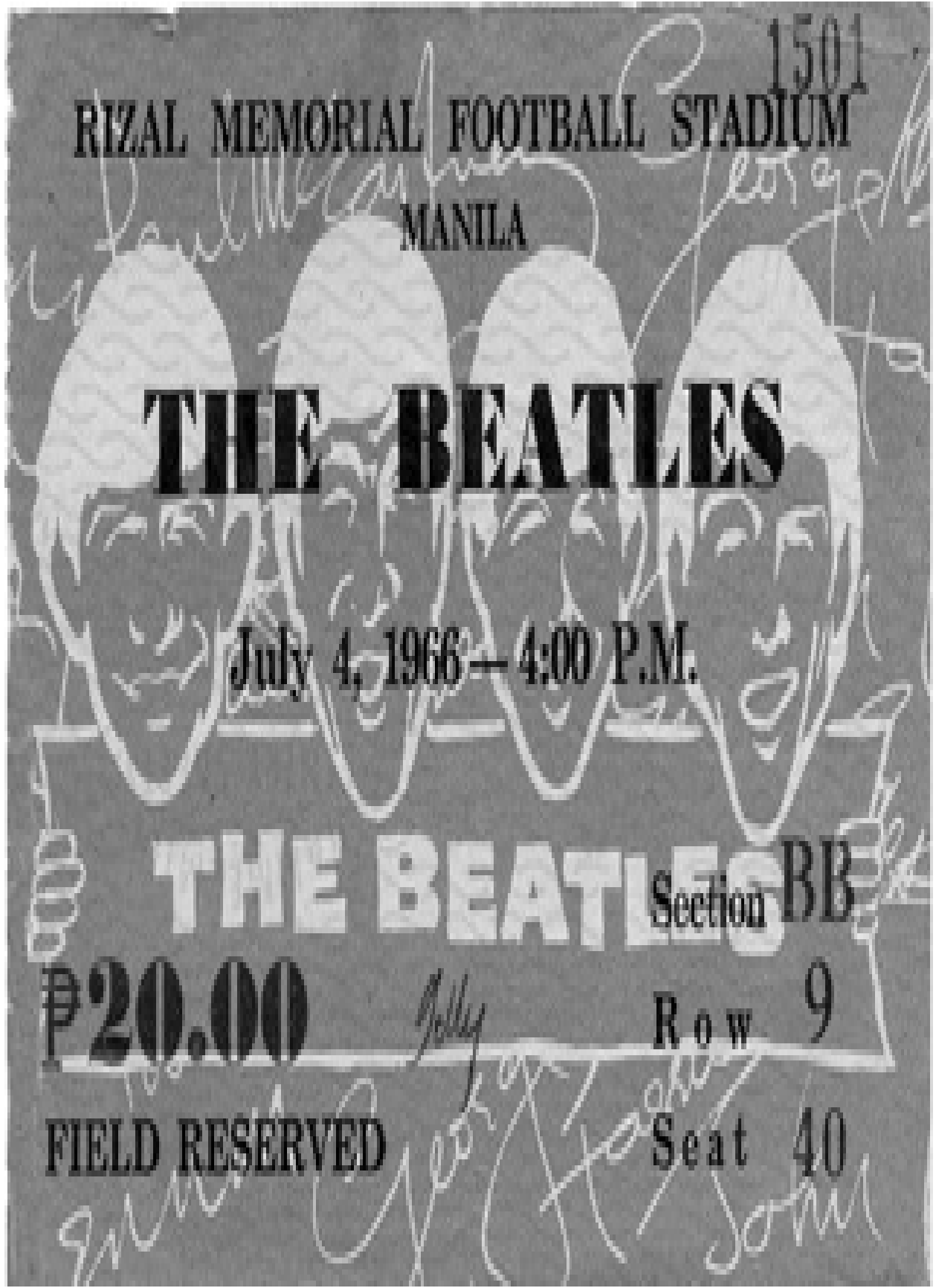
THE BEATLES Section BB

₱20.00

Row 9

FIELD RESERVED

Seat 40



Edward de los Santos Collection

The group was regularly using mind-altering substances, from the giggle-inducing cannabis [better known as marijuana] to the hallucinatory LSD. Having finished the Revolver album, four of its songs being oblique references to their drug experiences, they felt mentally and emotionally powerful with drug use. John Lennon was heavily into recreational drug use, an esoteric pastime during those halcyon days.

Upon the Beatles' arrival for their Manila concert, bored with fame, the travel-weary members failed to hide their agitation. Flaunting the sophistication of their hippie affiliation while leaving its drug component obscured, the Beatles exposed their real selves. The inordinate protectiveness over handcarried luggage implied the presence of drugs in its recesses.

The insistence of the Manila Customs Inspector to inspect their hand luggage was the first sour note in the tour. At the press conference, Lennon was seen to be antipatiko and McCartney simpatico. Mr. Cruz writes:

Lennon, known to loosen up and be communicative under the influence of drugs, displayed his foul character during the event. This was symptomatic that he was drug-free as they prohibited public appearances under its influence. His smart-alecky responses almost spoiled its proceedings had Paul McCartney not covered up for him. By clarifying Lennon's pronunciation and cracking jokes at his expense, McCartney saved his group from being panned by the local media.

I wrote about Lennon refusing to part with his shades like Randy Santiago. Cruz explained:

There were three probable reasons why Lennon refused to remove his dark spectacles during the occasion. One, he felt it was an intrusion of his privacy. Two, it was part of artistic image he wanted to project, an imitation of Bob Dylan's familiar black shades. Three, he was covering tell-tale signs of habitual drug use on his eyes. I would like to speculate about the real reason—all of the above.

Cruz further clarified my jigsaw puzzle image of the Beatles from my sources:

The mop-top referred to in your account was not the original, trimmed haircut that made the early Beatles distinctive, what Filipinos termed then as the bunot style. The hair they wore was longer and unkempt. The baduy comment on their dress style was an early manifestation of the multi-color, freewheeling dress code of the hippies. The attribution that Ringo Starr was the best dressed among its members was more of an indication that he was the most conventionally-dressed.

On the “hospitality” given the Beatles after they snubbed Malacañang, Cruz reads this as “an early manifestation of the dictatorial tendencies of the palace tenants.” He also noted that:

The Beatles embarked on their last US concert tour one month after the Manila incident. After that, they decided to terminate all live performances. This made the Manila concert important . . . In a sense, the 1966 concert helped force the Beatles to move over to a new phase of their artistic career, what became known as ‘the studio years.’ This phase produced the Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band LP. For Filipinos, having failed to realize the implications of the airport incident involving the Beatles, we had to suffer the consequences of a twenty-year autocratic rule.

In the same way that I have specialized on Rizal, there are Beatles experts in Manila, and it is very informative—as well as important—to learn from each other. (12.20.1995)

The Human Side of Bonifacio

DESPITE the creature comforts of Manila in the 21st century, I sometimes wish I had lived in pre-war Manila—if only to converse with people who charted the course of our history. Imagine how much this column would have been enriched if I had interviewed Aguinaldo, Pio Valenzuela, the Rizal sisters, Artemio Ricarte, Mariano Ponce, or even the slimy Pedro Paterno! Even if they were six feet underground, I could have resorted to their relatives and personal friends to fill in missing information. Today, I content myself only with their third, or sometimes fourth generation.

In the late 1980s, the National Historical Institute organized a reunion of the descendants of the heroes of the Philippine Revolution. It was a historian's dream to see them gathered for lunch under the shade of Aguinaldo's mango trees in Kawit. What struck me, however, was the conspicuous absence of Bonifacio's kin. After discreet inquiry, I found out that the Bonifacio relatives could not get themselves to step into the home of the man they blame for the execution of their ancestor.



Later, this original group grew to include descendants of the members of the Malolos Congress. I finally met some of Bonifacio's kin in a reunion held at the lakeside home of Paciano Rizal in Los Baños. What made a lasting impression on me was seeing how simple and uncelebrated the Bonifacios were compared to the descendants of the Malolos Congress, many of whom dominated the gathering by their wealth, education, social standing, mestizo-white skin, and straight noses. Almost a century after the revolution, social class continued to reign. When an organizer asked why I was not as enthusiastic as at the initial reunions, I made the mistake of being truthful. I said, "I ran out of genuine heroes. . . some of these so-called 'heroes' ruined the revolution." Needless to say, I was never invited again.

Had I lived before the war, I would have chatted with Gregoria de Jesus, widow of Andres Bonifacio. She lived in a Quiapo house that, if I am not mistaken, happens to be the headquarters of Kaanak 1896 ng Maynila, a group of descendants seeking to keep the memory of the revolution alive. I had dealt with Aling Oriang's memoirs in previous columns, but saved a pre-war interview for today to add to our picture of Bonifacio and the revolution.

They first met in a place that was, notwithstanding the candlelight, far from romantic—a Katipunan meeting in Teodoro Plata's house. Courtship ended in March 1893 when, despite the opposition from Oriang's parents, they were married. Oriang talked about Bonifacio's leaving for Balintawak in August 1896 thus:

He left me alone in our home in Caloocan to meet up with his followers and initiate the revolution. As his wife I was sought after and pursued by the Spanish police who wanted to shoot me. Naturally, I hid and later transferred from one place to another to avoid capture.

One gloomy night I covered my head with a pañolon in order not to be recognized. I left my hideout and crossed, alone and on foot, the extensive cemetery between Caloocan and Manila. I leapt over hills and rivulets, careful to avoid noise because the barking of dogs might wake the suspicion of the residents in the area and of course the police.

I arrived at the house of my parents at four in the morning and when she saw me

my mother began to cry. My relatives were all detained by the police. I stayed in the house of my parents to be near the police headquarters, and I spent some days in Lavesares street, San Nicolas where I received a note from my husband through our lavandera instructing me to meet with him in a certain place.

In this struggle we did not have medicines at our disposal and we cured the wounds of our soldiers with a mixture of the bark of banana tree, the stinging leaves of certain medicinal plants, and salt. Sometimes mealtime passed without tasting a morsel. Moved with compassion Andres told me, 'I do not know how much sacrifice you can lend to our cause. Posterity will recognize you and this makes me glad. In case I fall in battle, re-marry so you will be protected, but choose a man who will have the same love and affection which I have for you.'

Direct quotations from Bonifacio are rare. The above gem provides the human side to a hero who is portrayed, literally and figuratively, as a man of steel.
(11.30.1994)

Heroes in Disguise

Ever since I encountered a photograph of Rizal in a Cleopatra tableau, I have always wondered what Bonifacio looked like in a baro't saya. My curiosity was whetted one day when I leafed through the catalogue of the pre-war National Museum and discovered that they once had Bonifacio's bolo. Its provenance is quite amusing. Worried about passing through a Guardia Civil check-point, Bonifacio disguised himself as a woman. (I wonder how he padded his chest). Unfortunately, the bolo simply did not match his costume, and neither could it be concealed under the saya. So, Bonifacio left his weapon with a friend. The historic bolo never returned to its rightful owner. Years after the revolution, it was donated to the museum. This historical relic was believed destroyed during the Liberation of Manila.

During his long trek to Palanan, Aguinaldo likewise resorted to disguise to elude the Americans, but he never tried cross-dressing. Whenever Aguinaldo's group passed by a town, everyone was instructed not to identify the president in any way. As a matter of fact, Aguinaldo's aide Dr. Santiago Barcelona pretended to be "Captain Santos Baltazar, chief of the column" whose secretary "Lt. Esteban" was the president himself. Another aide, Simeon Villa was introduced as "Sr. Alvaro," a hospital steward. The assumed names could be one reason why Americans got nowhere questioning people in towns Aguinaldo had just passed. Besides, we cannot discount the loyalty of Filipinos who were given gifts by the living symbol of the revolution.



Galicano Apacible was another patriot who was a master of disguise. While working for recognition of the Philippine Republic and dealing with the Anti-imperialist League in the U.S. East Coast, he was constantly moving from hotel to hotel, registering as a wealthy Mexican, a Greek immigrant, a Chinese coolie, or even a Japanese national. Necessity, really, is the mother of deception.

In his frustrated attempts to capture Miguel Malvar in Batangas, Gen. Bell issued a circular on December 24, 1901, which described the elusive Filipino general in these terms:

Complexion rather dark, weighs about 145 pounds, about 5 feet 2 inches in height, short and heavy set, with unusually thick and heavy jawbones, hair black, with perhaps a few gray hairs, about 40 or 42 years old, wears a gold ring with a stone set on the third finger of the left hand, feet a little broad, wears a size 5 or 6 shoe (when wearing shoes), has well-shaped hands.

His hair is liable to grow long in front of his ears, giving an appearance of small side whiskers. He usually wears a small black moustache, and while conversing with anyone is liable to bat his eyes in peculiar way.

For the Americans all Filipinos looked alike, and in the absence of photographs more particulars had to be supplied. Bell's circular adds:

Goes about the country with an Indian shirt and trousers cut off or rolled up to the knee (to avoid detection). If captured will affect being a very simple, inoffensive, and ignorant native who knows nothing and will give a wrong name. Mouth large, nose ordinary, but slightly resembling Philippine nose, eyes black. Sometimes chews betel nut.

Bell also noted that Malvar never slept in the same place twice and sometimes changed lodgings the same night. Malvar was so ordinary he actually passed American troops with a rooster under his arms as if he were going to a sabong. Another time, he rode a carabao through Santo Tomas and Lipa and talked to the town presidente without being detected. Sentries thought he was a farmer.

No good pictures are available of Malvar, and yet for a historian the Bell circular is better than a dozen photographs or those funny NBI artist's sketches of hoodlums. The irony of it all was that despite this detailed bulletin, Malvar

evaded capture until he was persuaded by his wife to surrender in April 1902. General Paciano Rizal, who was fighting the Americans in Laguna and who evaded capture until 1900 when he was weakened by malaria, was never photographed until the 1920s.

Given more time, I would do further research on revolutionary disguises. With what I have been publishing in this space, I may just need these tricks one day. (3.16.1994)